

**HIPSIR Research Series, No. 5/2021/01**

# **CONFLICT MONITORING IN AFRICA FOR STRATEGIC INTERVENTION**

## **HIPSIR Conflict Monitoring Tool (CMT)**

### **Case Studies:**

**Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**

**South Sudan**

**Kenya**

**Elias Opongo, SJ (Editor)**

with **Linus Kawuondi, Joyce Gakii Raichenah and Nelly Kibet.**



**Centre for Research, Training and  
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**Hekima University College**



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HIPSIR Conflict Monitoring Tool (CMT)  
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## ACRONYMS

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>AU</b>            | African Union                                       |
| <b>CPA</b>           | Comprehensive Peace Agreement                       |
| <b>DRC</b>           | Democratic Republic of Congo                        |
| <b>IDPs</b>          | Internally Displaced People                         |
| <b>IGAD</b>          | Intergovernmental Authority for Development         |
| <b>LRA</b>           | Lord Resistance Army                                |
| <b>SPLA</b>          | Southern People Liberation Army                     |
| <b>SPLM-FD</b>       | Sudan People's Liberation Movement Former Detainees |
| <b>SPLM-IG</b>       | Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Government    |
| <b>SPLM-IO</b>       | Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Opposition    |
| <b>SPLM-IO-Riek</b>  | SPLM-In-Opposition, led by Riek Machar              |
| <b>SPLM-IO-Taban</b> | SPLM-In-Opposition, led by Taban Deng               |
| <b>SSR</b>           | Security Sector reforms                             |
| <b>UN</b>            | United Nations                                      |
| <b>UNMISS</b>        | United Nations Mission in South Sudan               |
| <b>UNSC</b>          | United Nations Security Council                     |

# INTRODUCTION

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# INTRODUCTION

The end of the cold war witnessed a rise in the study of armed conflict, including its causes, effects, and much more extensively its mitigation and prevention. The problem of conflict, especially between communities and nations has always been a dominant concern for societies and civilizations.<sup>1</sup> The Second World War (1939-1945) was a turning point in the tolerance of war. It was the largest armed conflict in human history, raging across the world and causing an estimated fifty million military and civilian deaths.<sup>2</sup> This stimulated an awareness of the need to develop preventive strategies to mitigate conflict and its devastating effects. During the Cold War, a bipolar system of world politics emerged along with new contenders for international leadership which included the invention and subsequent proliferation of weapons. Thereafter, the post-cold war period in the 1990s saw the emergence of intra-state conflicts in several nations and increased civil wars. Presently, despite a decline in intra-state conflicts in Africa<sup>3</sup> since the early 2000s, there are still civil conflicts in the Central Africa Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo(DRC), Somalia, Libya, and South Sudan, whereas violent extremism has been experienced in Somalia, Nigeria, Kenya, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, among others.<sup>4</sup>

To explore strategies of managing and possibly resolving conflicts, an in-depth analysis of the causes, trends, and manifestations of conflicts is important. Additionally, the psychological and behavioral elements as well as the systematic order of sectarian exclusion that generates conflict needs to be understood. This means that the development and implementation of an appropriate conflict-monitoring tool as a model of conflict analysis are requisite to the peacebuilding discourse. From the conflict monitoring exercise, preventive measures can be considered to ensure that the conflict is transformed and peace restored among the various parties involved. Hence, this project focused on the development of a Conflict Monitoring Tool (CMT) with the selected sample countries being Kenya, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

South Sudan, Kenya, and DRC were selected for inclusion in the study because of the following reasons. First, South Sudan represents other countries across the continent that have been plagued by protracted conflict. The country has experienced intermittent conflict since it gained its 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, 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. Consequently, on 22 February 2020, the two protagonists signed an agreement to form a government of national unity, raising hopes for peace and sustainability in South Sudan, and subsequently putting an end to the violent conflicts and atrocities that have plagued the country.

<sup>1</sup> J. Burton, & F. Dukes, eds, *Conflict: Reading in Management and Resolution*, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> E., Roosevelt, *World War II (1939-1945)*, Accessed June &, 2019, url: <https://www2.gwu.edu/~erpapers/teaching/glossary/world-war-2.cfm>.

<sup>3</sup> S. A. Rustad, *Conflict Trends in Africa, 1989–2018: An Update*, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> J. Cilliers, *Violence in Africa: Trends, Drivers and Prospects to 2023*, p. 2.

Secondly, Kenya represents other countries across Africa experiencing occasional conflicts and terror attacks. While the country is generally stable and enjoys strong economic performance regionally, it has had numerous overlapping conflicts ranging from ethnic clashes, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), election-related violence, and terrorism. Just like many other countries in Africa, the number of incidences of violent conflict, their severity, and intensity has continued to be on the rise over the recent past. At the core of Kenya's conflicts are issues concerning social fragmentation, negative ethnicity, political animosity, corruption, and impunity. Other issues include land disputes, discrimination, and marginalization, penetration of Al-Shabaab's ideologies into the country's local politics, and the proliferation of small arms.

Finally, DRC represents African states that have been experiencing protracted conflicts especially along with competition for natural resources, inter-ethnic conflicts, national boundaries, poor governance, and the multiplication of militia groups. 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, and palladium amongst others. However, the unending state of violent conflicts that have characterized the country's history remains a major concern of the country.<sup>5</sup>

The remaining part of this report is divided into four main 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 will be 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 HIPSIR CMT. The final section outlines the diverse areas of concern in the study and some recommendations for action.

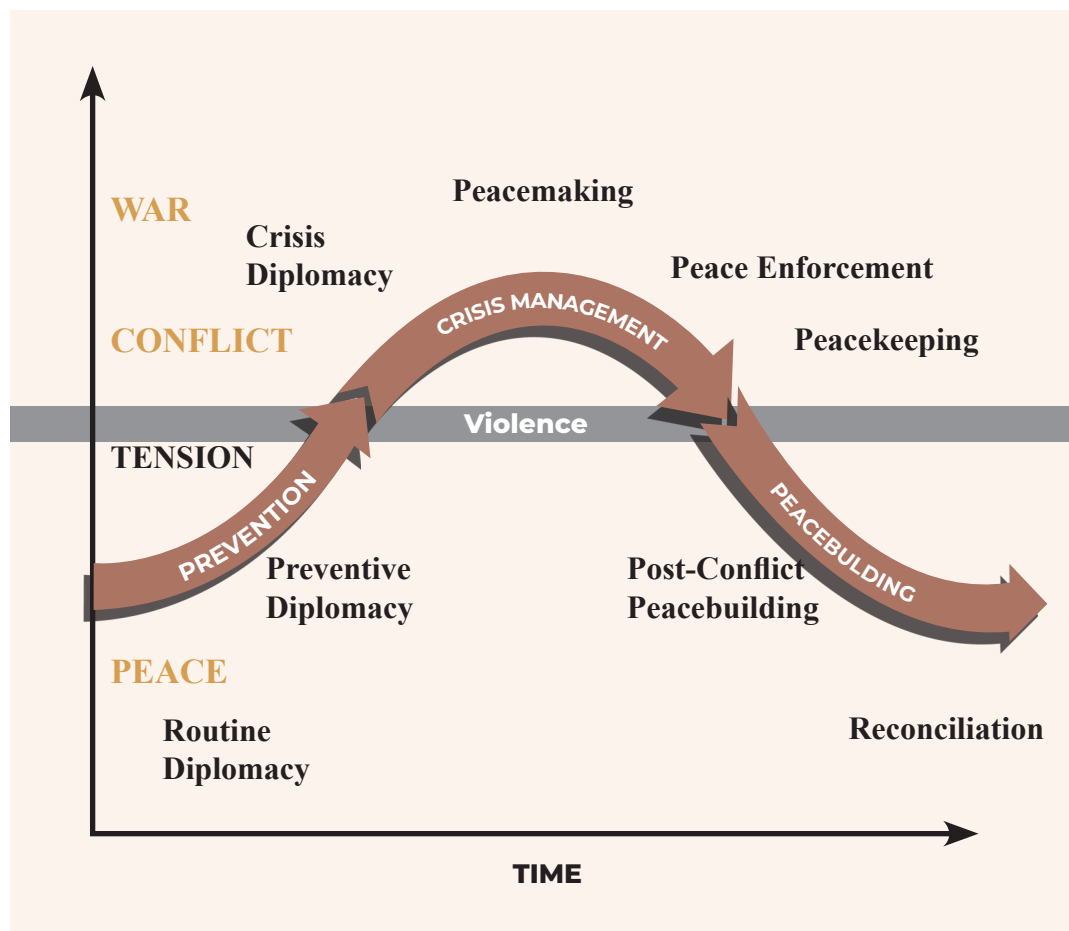
## Conflict Curve Assessment

In order to monitor conflict levels, the HIPSIR CMT was designed for conflict curve assessment. To accomplish this, a modified version of Lund's Curve was adopted (See Lund's curve in figure 1 below). Lund's curve is elaborate and gives different methods of intervention employed in conflict resolution. In addressing the ongoing conflicts, Lund's curve of conflict is a useful tool<sup>6</sup> to indicate the various stages of a conflict. According to Marian Hassan, the 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.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Democratic Republic of Congo." Internal displacement monitoring Center, Last modified: June 7, 2019, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo>

<sup>6</sup> "Curve of Conflict," United States Institute of Peace. <https://www.usip.org/public-education/students/curve-conflict>

<sup>7</sup> Marian Hassan, "Conflict Curve/Stages Of Conflict," The Peace and Collaborative Development Network (PCDN), June 27, 2010. <https://pednetwork.org/blogs/conflict-curvestages-of-conflict/>

**Figure 1: Conflict Curve Representing Different Levels of Conflict**

(Source: *Conflict Curve Representing Different Levels*<sup>8</sup>)

Also, Niklas Swanström and Mikael Weissmann discuss the life cycle of conflict. Noting that conflict is dynamic<sup>9</sup>, it is essential to understand the life cycle of a conflict to know when and how to make a strategic intervention. Once again this highlights the need for a conflict monitoring tool that monitors the conflict cycle to understand how and when to strategically intervene to avoid an escalation of conflict and its (more often than not) devastating consequences. The conflict model is therefore simplified to look like an “upside down U”<sup>10</sup> denoting an ideal conflict cycle that is divided into different phases of a conflict.

<sup>8</sup> Conflict Curve Adopted from United States Institute of Peace, Accessed June 7, 2019, url: <https://www.usip.org/public-education/students/curve-conflict>.

<sup>9</sup> Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann. Conflict, Conflict Prevention, Conflict Management and beyond: a conceptual exploration, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 10.

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

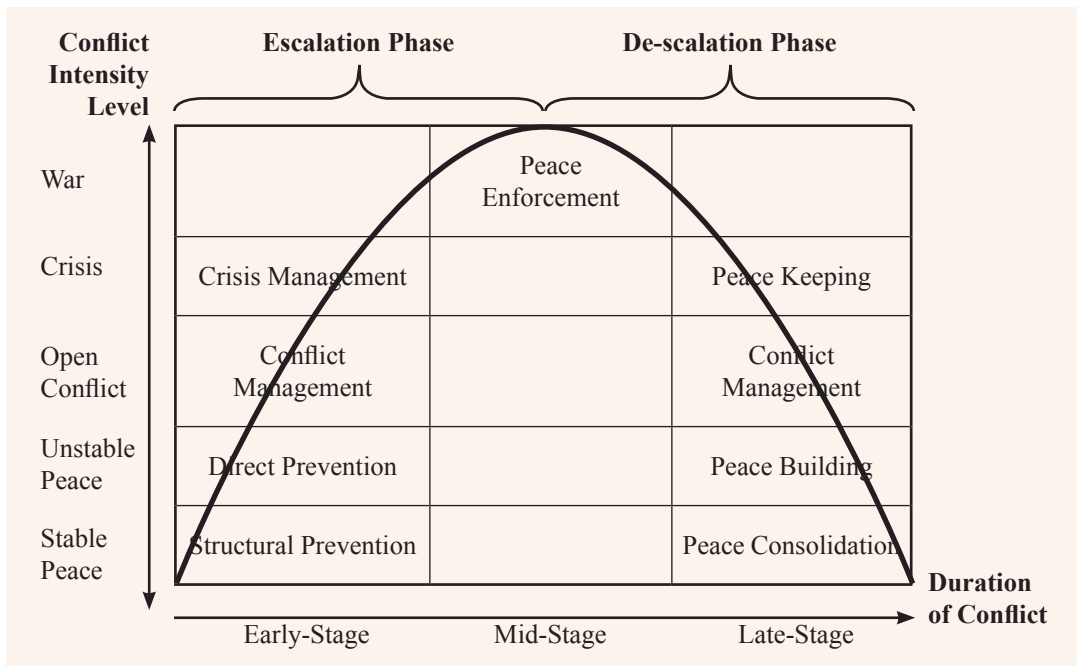
**Table 1: Stages of Conflict**

| 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. <sup>11</sup>  |
| Crisis            | Militarized options are preferred, sporadic acts of violence and the eventuality of war is imminent.   |
| War               | Intense, widespread violent conflict. While the five stages present an escalation of conflict, for the de-escalation of conflict the progression is reversed, till the situation arrives back at stable peace. <sup>12</sup> |

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

The conflict curve is as below:

**Figure 2: The Conflict Cycle**



(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 13)

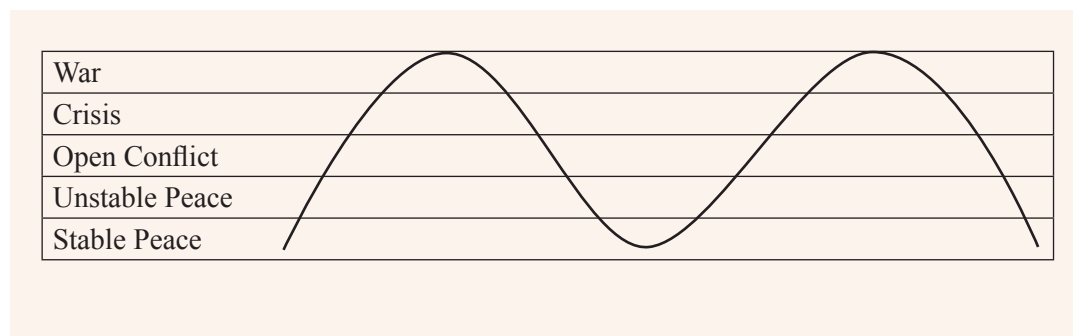
<sup>11</sup> Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p.11.

<sup>12</sup> Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, 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.

1. To begin with a conflict can re-occur over time, “and pass through the different stages over and over again.”<sup>13</sup> It thus takes on the form of a wave as below:

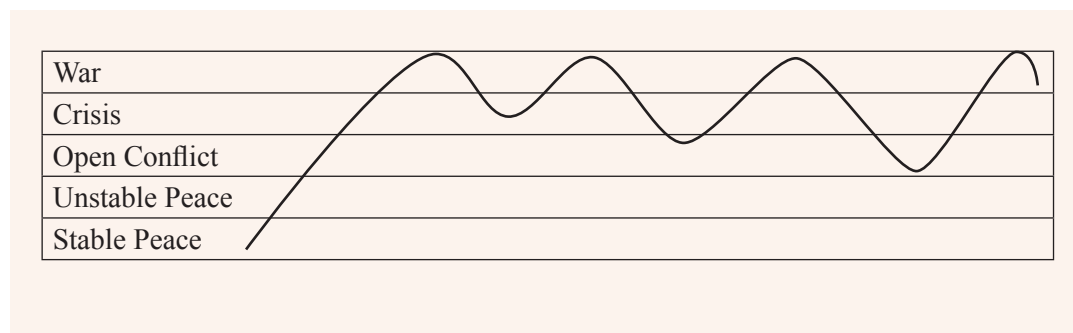
**Figure 3: Conflict Curve A**



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

2. Secondly, the above conflict wave does not occur predictably as indicated. In reality, they highlight, a conflict can re-escalate at any phase of the conflict curve.<sup>14</sup> 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**



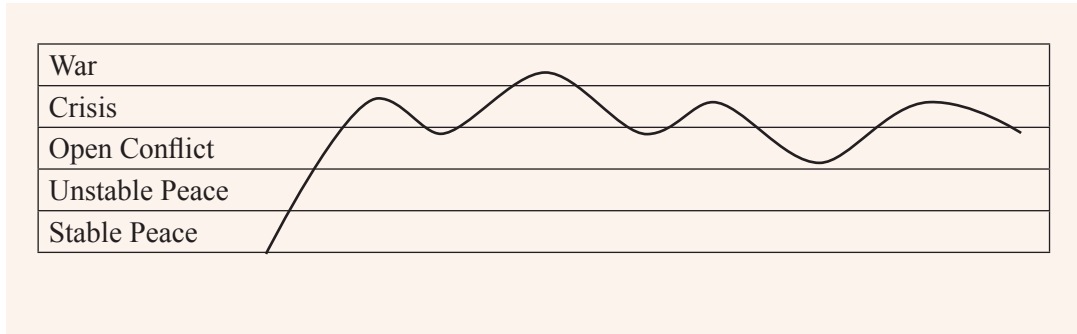
(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 15)

<sup>13</sup> Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 15-16.

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

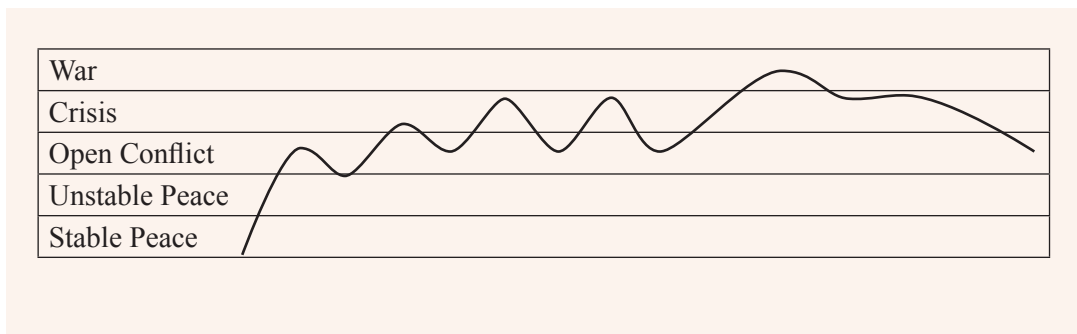
**Figure 5: Conflict curve C**



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

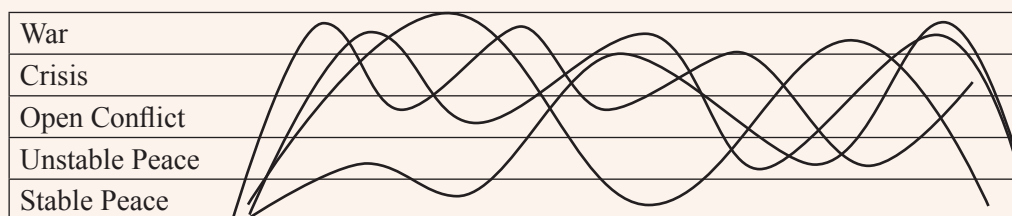
4. Swanstrom and Weissmann also point out that sometimes, conflicts will waver between unstable peace, open conflict, and crisis. Somewhat similar to the previous example, while the conflict may not fully escalate to war, it usually remains unresolved over a long period as shown below.

**Figure 6: Conflict Curve D**



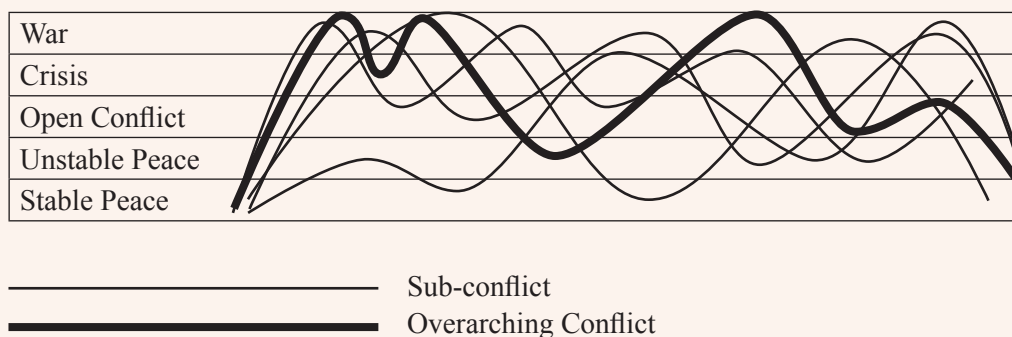
Finally, they also hold that conflicts can also occur concurrently, meaning that during a specific time and space multiple conflicts driven by diverse issues can be occurring side by side.<sup>15</sup> This is illustrated by the conflict curve below:

<sup>15</sup> 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.<sup>16</sup> 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. However, having said this, a conflict curve is useful in indicating trends. 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.

<sup>16</sup> Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 17.

The HIPSIR CMT conflict curve is therefore 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 by Marian Hassan 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.<sup>17</sup> 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 improvement 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). These levels and their respective numerical denotation are explained below.

**Table 2: Levels of Conflict under HIPSIR CMT**

| CONFLICT LEVEL                | DESCRIPTION  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Peace<br/>(0)</b>          | At this stage, there is no conflict whatsoever.  |
| <b>Latent<br/>(1)</b>         | 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. <sup>18</sup>  |
| <b>Confrontation<br/>(2)</b>  | 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. <sup>19</sup>  |
| <b>Crisis<br/>(3)</b>         | At this level, there is war or open conflict.  |
| <b>Outcome<br/>(-2)</b>       | Either one party in the conflict is defeated. Also, 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. |
| <b>Post Conflict<br/>(-1)</b> | 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.   |

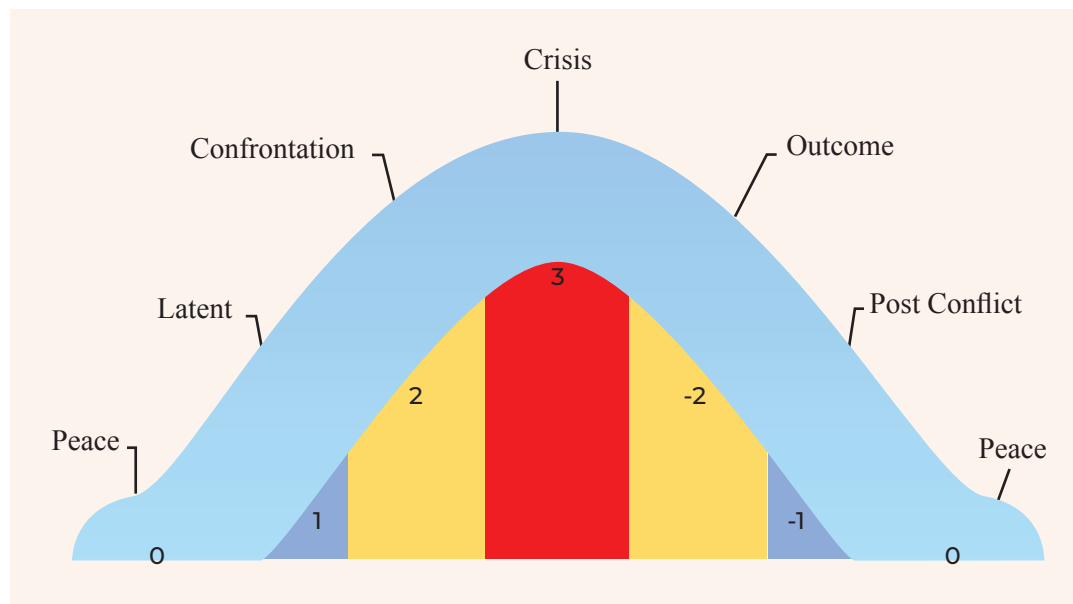
<sup>17</sup> Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 11.

<sup>18</sup> Marian Hassan, "Conflict Curve/Stages Of Conflict," The Peace and Collaborative Development Network (PCDN), June 27, 2010, <https://pcdnetwork.org/blogs/conflict-curvestages-of-conflict/>

<sup>19</sup> Marian Hassan, "Conflict Curve/Stages Of Conflict," The Peace and Collaborative Development Network (PCDN), June 27, 2010, <https://pcdnetwork.org/blogs/conflict-curvestages-of-conflict/>

Usually, 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. The HIPSIR CMT conflict curve is shown in the figure below.

**Figure 9: HIPSIR CMT conflict curve**



(Source: HIPSIR Research)

## Conceptualization of Conflict Monitoring Tool (CMT)

The development of the HIPSIR CMT was based on 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.”<sup>20</sup> The key indicators show that the tool is set to monitor phenomena that are consistently observed, signaling if the conflict will be escalating or deescalating. This can be explained by the fact that each indicator plays a certain role in the development of a conflict situation. Consequently, each actor reacts in a certain manner whenever a change in each of the indicators of measuring conflict level changes, which determines how the conflict situation unfolds. In response to such changes, peace practitioners are expected to intervene to deescalate the conflict. Theories of change are envisioned to be helpful and practical.

The HIPSIR CMT seeks to generate information by monitoring conflicts to disseminate it to peace practitioners within each specific conflict situation monitored. The consumers of the information are expected to help restore peace across the continent 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

<sup>20</sup> 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. DFID: Department for International Development, 2013.

provided to prevent an escalation of conflict.<sup>21</sup> In-depth analysis, consideration of stakeholders' views, and lessons drawn from previous and existing peacebuilding efforts shall drive the theory of change in the context of the HIPSIR CMT. From the understanding of the situation and context of conflict, an institution or country can develop a theory of change that addresses the drivers of conflict and seeks sustainable solutions to the problem.

According to Babbitt, Chigas, and Wilkinson. (2013)

A theory of change explains why we think certain actions will produce desired change in a given context. It is intended to make all of our implicit assumptions more explicit, in order to (1) clarify which drivers of violent conflict we are addressing; (2) state clearly what the intended outcome of programs will be; and (3) fully articulate how and why the program will address the drivers of conflict and achieve its intended outcomes.<sup>22</sup>

The theory of change is appropriate in understanding conflicts in Africa that 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. Moreover, the theory not only identifies the assumptions made, but it also addresses the possible risks that may undermine peace efforts. In this case, changing the highly dynamic conflict situation in Africa requires constant spatial and temporal analysis of indicators and their relationship for actors to intervene effectively. This is the only way that actors can make positive contributions to de-escalating conflicts across the continent.

The theory promotes learning within as well as between conflict cycles, which is one of the main objectives for monitoring conflict using the conflict curve. Each cause of conflict is well articulated using the theory of change before assumptions are made concerning any proposed peacebuilding strategies that are expected to promote peace. Over time, the assumptions shall be tested against all the evidence that shall be gathered using the CMT. This includes successes and failures of past peace interventions, which seeks to ensure that the logic for promoting peace is sound. If such interventions fail or perform dismally, the theory of change seeks to help actors make the necessary corrections on time. According to Babbitt, Chigas, and Wilkinson (2013), "new learning and lessons from monitoring and evaluation help refine assumptions and inform decisions on how an approach should be adapted to deliver planned results."<sup>23</sup> This forms the basis for monitoring conflict and providing information to peace practitioners across Africa. The HIPSIR tool, grounded in the theory of change, can be adjusted to accommodate other indicators whenever circumstances change.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> Babbitt, Eileen, Diana Chigas and Robert Wilkinson. (March 2013). Theories and indicators of change briefing paper concepts and primers for conflict management and mitigation. United States Agency for International Development.

<sup>23</sup> Corlazzoli, Vanessa. White, Jonathan, 2013

<sup>24</sup> Babbitt, Eileen, Diana Chigas and Robert Wilkinson. (March 2013). Theories and indicators of change briefing paper concepts and primers for conflict management and mitigation. United States Agency for International Development.

Monitoring conflict is important because it acts as the basis for bringing the opinions of all actors together to develop peacebuilding strategies that are more likely to succeed. The theory of change explains how partnership networks as well as partnership strategies can be managed. It supports consensus building through the engagement of all actors. In this case, it encourages various actors to understand how the contributions of each other can be tailored towards achieving sustainable peace. The HIPSIR CMT will achieve this by helping all stakeholders in peacebuilding projects to understand as well as support each other's contributions to the implementation of peacebuilding efforts. This is based on the premise that strengthening collaboration to achieve sustainable peace cannot be achieved without a proper understanding of the conflict situation and collaborative efforts. The HIPSIR CMT is therefore meant to help organizations and individuals in defining what contribution they should make in peacebuilding besides seeking support from other stakeholders on the implementation of peacebuilding strategies.<sup>25</sup>

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) therefore developed a conflict monitoring tool (CMT) also 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 from Africa and by Africa at all levels of the society. 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. In the first phase of the project (in 2019), the HIPSIR CMT ranked South Sudan at the highest risk of escalating conflict with a value of 2.849 out of the maximum of 3 at which a country is said to be in the crisis stage. DRC and Kenya come second and third with conflict levels of 1.834 and 1.677 respectively. The HIPSIR CMT shall continue to track how the situation unfolds and propose feasibly and grassroots centered ways of resolving the conflicts. The tracking of the changes is displayed through real-time conflict curves. Following its development, the HIPSIR CMT is one of the numerous existing tools. Some of the existing conflict monitoring tools and data sources are discussed below.

## Existing Tools for Conflict Monitoring

**Conflict Alert**<sup>26</sup> is a system of monitoring conflict that tracks and reports violent incidences, their causes, as well as their human costs in the Philippines. Its development in 2015 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.”<sup>27</sup> 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.

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<sup>25</sup> Corlazzoli, Vanessa. White, Jonathan, 2013=

<sup>26</sup> “Conflict Alert,” Conflict Alert, <http://conflictalert.info/about/>

<sup>27</sup> “Conflict Alert,” Conflict Alert, <http://conflictalert.info/about/>

**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 Democratic Republic of Congo to better understand trends, causes of insecurity and serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.”<sup>28</sup> Just like the Conflict Alert Tool, the KST reports violent incidences that armed groups and security forces perpetuate.<sup>29</sup> 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.<sup>30</sup>

**The Global Peace Operations Review** is a US-based tool that was created in 1966. It “covers more than one hundred multilateral active peace operations.”<sup>31</sup> It is based on the assumption that while peace operations are of great need, there is a need to adjust to the dynamics of conflicts. It also emphasizes the use of operations of peace enforcement that does not exclude deployment of military force when necessary.

**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.”<sup>32</sup> 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 the policy analysis where it makes recommendations to parliamentarians, diplomats, journalists, and other experts in the field of security.

Just like SIPRI, the **Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)** is majorly involved in conducting “research on the conditions for peaceful relations between states, groups, and people.”<sup>33</sup> 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 Human Security Report Project (HSRP)** is similar to SIPRI and PRIO in that it is a research center that was developed in Canada to “track global and regional trends in organized violence, especially because of terrorism and warfare.”<sup>34</sup> Through its researchers, HSRP prepares online publications documenting global trends of conflict and violence. Its data on security statistics are dated back to as early as 1946.

**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.<sup>35</sup> In other words, 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.”<sup>36</sup> It collects at least

<sup>28</sup> “Kivu Security Tracker,” Kivu Security Tracker, <https://kivusecurity.org/about/project>

<sup>29</sup> “Methodology,” Kivu Security Tracker, [https://kivusecurity.org/static/KST\\_Methodology\\_Nov2017.pdf](https://kivusecurity.org/static/KST_Methodology_Nov2017.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> “Methodology,” Kivu Security Tracker, [https://kivusecurity.org/static/KST\\_Methodology\\_Nov2017.pdf](https://kivusecurity.org/static/KST_Methodology_Nov2017.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> “About,” Global Peace Operations Review, <https://peaceoperationsreview.org/>

<sup>32</sup> “Home,” Sipri, <https://www.sipri.org/>

<sup>33</sup> “About,” PRIO, <https://www.prio.org/About/>

<sup>34</sup> “Human security report project,” [http://www.csbsju.edu/documents/peace studies/human security report project.docx](http://www.csbsju.edu/documents/peace%20studies/human%20security%20report%20project.docx)

<sup>35</sup> “About,” Institute of Economics and Peace, <http://economicsandpeace.org/about/>

<sup>36</sup> “About,” Institute of Economics and Peace, <http://economicsandpeace.org/about/>

5000 data sets concerning 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.

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.”<sup>37</sup> 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.

**The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)** is a Swedish based conflict monitoring tool and data source.<sup>38</sup> It has been providing event-based data on violence for over 40 years. It relies on information from news reports that it codes before entering into the system. It controls data quality by conducting a post-estimation validation exercise.

**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        |
| 2005? | Human Security Index Project                             | Canada      | Global        |
| 1990s | Global Peace Operations Review (under CIC)               | USA         | Global        |
| 2007  | Institute of Economics and Peace (Global Peace Index)    | Australia   | Global        |

*(Source: HIPSIR Research)*

The review of the aforementioned tools and data sources indicates that most of the existing tools are well-funded projects able to sustain consistent and prolonged monitoring of peace and conflict. They mainly originate from the West and they are also content or data-rich. Moreover, their main sources of information are media, security organizations, and international organizations. Finally, their strategies and focus are closely related, and they often share information across their networks.

<sup>37</sup> “About,” ACLED, <https://www.acleddata.com/about-acled/>

<sup>38</sup> “About,” UCDP, <https://ucdp.uu.se/>

HIPSIR CMT comes in as an additional tool that adds value to conflict monitoring, particularly in Africa. Additionally, HIPSIR 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.

## Historical Background to Conflict and Peace in DRC, Kenya, and South Sudan

Unresolved conflict is detrimental to the well-being and development of citizens and a country. Cyclic conflict in the DRC, Kenya, and South Sudan is a major concern for citizens, the states and ultimately affect the socio-political stability of the regions. 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 three countries by giving historical and the most recent background to the conflict and peace situation.

### Kenya

Today, the world and especially Africa grapples with intra-state conflict as the major type of conflict. 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.<sup>39</sup> Most conflicts in Kenya are catalyzed by environmental, political, economic, competition over natural resources, ethnic identity struggles, the proliferation of small arms, poverty, and marginalization.<sup>40</sup>

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 insecurity<sup>41</sup> perpetrated by identity-based communal militias. For example, Mount Elgon located in the western region of Kenya experienced conflict between the local communities over local land<sup>42</sup> 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.<sup>43</sup>

For decades, the relations between Pokot and Marakwet 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

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<sup>39</sup> Rohwerder, B. (2015)

<sup>40</sup> Elfversson, E. (2019); Rohwerder, B. (2015)

<sup>41</sup> TSA, 2014, p. 34; KNCHR, 2012, p. vii, Okumu, 2013, p. 1; Mbugua, 2013, p. 13

<sup>42</sup> Lynch, 2011

<sup>43</sup> Kirchner 2013, Martin 2012

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.<sup>44</sup> Following a series of peace dialogues, the two communities signed a peace pact in July 2019.

Apart from the West Pokot-Marakwet dispute, West Pokot is embroiled in another dispute with Turkana in Kainuk along a shared border between the two counties over livestock theft<sup>45</sup> and land encroachment.<sup>46</sup> Subsequent violence has led to the disruption of movement between the Lodwar and Kitale highway, the loss of lives, and the destruction of property.<sup>47</sup> 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.<sup>48</sup> 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 replenish livestock reserves. In most cases, cattle raiding conducted for financial benefits involve excessive violence exacerbated by the proliferation of arms.<sup>49</sup>

Since the colonial period, the peripheral (frontier) regions in Kenya have been left behind in terms of development, this has resulted in grievances founded on group-based exclusion and ethnic divisions. Even though devolution was aimed at addressing these structural factors to conflict it is also argued to exacerbate others. Devolution of power and resources has contributed to conflicts between or among clans,<sup>50</sup> widespread corruption, and heightened politicization of ethnicity.<sup>51</sup> 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.<sup>52</sup>

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is a violation of human rights, which is a recurring aspect in Kenya largely as a result of harmful traditional and cultural practices, poverty, a patriarchal society, and a breakdown of rule of law during electoral periods.<sup>53</sup> Sexual violence has been prevalent during elections in Kenya since the 1990s. The Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence (CIPEV) in 2007/08 documented 900 cases of electoral-related sexual violence against girls, women, boys, and men perpetrated by militia groups, security personnel, and civilians.<sup>54</sup> During the 2017 elections

<sup>44</sup> Xinhua (August, 2019). Calm returns to Kenya's troubled region after leaders ink peace pact. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-08/01/c\\_138276060.htm](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 July 2020)

<sup>45</sup> 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)

<sup>46</sup> 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)

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 8

<sup>48</sup> NCIC. (2018) Briefing Memo. [https://www.cohesion.or.ke/images/docs/downloads/NCIC\\_BriefingMemo\\_2018.pdf](https://www.cohesion.or.ke/images/docs/downloads/NCIC_BriefingMemo_2018.pdf) (Accessed 20 July 2020)

<sup>49</sup> Okumu, 2013, p. 9; TSA, 2014

<sup>50</sup> World Bank 2020

<sup>51</sup> Mkutu, Marani, & Ruteere, 2014

<sup>52</sup> Menkhaus, 2015; Elfversson, 2019

<sup>53</sup> Forensic observations and recommendations on sexual and gender based violence in Kenya

<sup>54</sup> Final report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence (2008), pp. 237-268

at least 201 cases were documented in 11 of the 47 counties by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights monitors.<sup>55</sup> This election-related sexual violence is often used as a “weapon” to “punish, terrorize or dehumanize communities and individuals, and to influence voting conduct and the outcomes of elections, including by displacing people so that they do not vote.”<sup>56</sup> SGBV during the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly spiked since the end of March 2020.<sup>57</sup>

Elections-related violence in Kenya can be traced to the onset/inception of multi-party politics in the country in 1992 to date with the 2007/08 election described as the “severest bloodshed”<sup>58</sup> 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.<sup>59</sup> Electoral violence in Kenya often manifests itself through political assassinations, threatened or attempted murder, physical harm, hate speech and intimidation, vandalism, and voter bribery.<sup>60</sup> Risks of election violence in Kenya has contributed to heightened tensions and an atmosphere of anxiety around political campaigns and the voting period.<sup>61</sup> 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,<sup>62</sup> claims of election rigging, perceptions of Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) bias,<sup>63</sup> and highly centralized ethnopolitics.<sup>64</sup>

Following relatively peaceful elections in 2013, in August 2017 the presidential election was declared null and void by the Supreme Court. This led to a re-run of the election in October 2017, which was boycotted by the opposition. In this election, President Uhuru Kenyatta was declared the winner with Raila Odinga disputing the outcome. Following the nullification of the August presidential election by the Supreme Court, the judiciary faced threats and intimidation by Kenyatta and other senior government officials.<sup>65</sup> In November 2017, President Kenyatta was inaugurated for a second term in office, while Raila Odinga organized a parallel inauguration ceremony for himself on 30th January 2018, where he took an oath as the “People’s President” in an unofficial swearing-in ceremony. The struggle for power and legitimacy between the two protagonists plunged the country into a period of uncertainty and a series of government-induced repression. For instance, private media stations that had covered Raila’s inauguration ceremony were shut down for two weeks and some journalists and bloggers were threatened, arrested, or detained.<sup>66</sup> Tom Kajwang, the lawyer who administered the oath was prosecuted (among other opposition politicians) and Miguna Miguna (a then close ally of Raila) was arrested and deported. In the turbulent aftermath, excessive use of force by security agents, especially the police against protesters in opposition strongholds were documented.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> KNCHR. (2018), pp. 42-50

<sup>56</sup> OHCHR. (2019)

<sup>57</sup> Human Rights Watch. (April, 2020).

<sup>58</sup> Ombeck, R., Okoth, P., Matanga, F. (2019), p. 80

<sup>59</sup> Dialogue Africa Foundation (2009), pp. 53, 56

<sup>60</sup> Elder, C., Stigant, S., Claes, J. (2014)

<sup>61</sup> Taylor, C. (2018), pp. 35 - 47

<sup>62</sup> Seong Yeon Cho, Erin Connors, Faizaa Fatima and Utku Yalim (2015)

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 18

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 18

<sup>65</sup> Human Rights Watch. (2018)

<sup>66</sup> Human Rights Watch. (2018)

<sup>67</sup> Amnesty International. (2017)

Incidences of unlawful killings and beatings by police during protests were reported during election protests in late 2017 and early 2018 where police and other security agencies were responsible for the loss of lives of more than 100 opposition supporters in Nairobi and Western Kenya.<sup>68</sup> Within one month (1st September 2017 and 25th October 2017), the KNCHR documented 25 deaths and over 111 cases of police instigated injuries. It was reported that between August 2017 and March 2018 police officers and other government agencies targeted at least 15 human rights activists and victims of police brutality who faced arrest threats upon exposure of human rights violations during the election period.<sup>69</sup> Even though excessive use of police force is prevalent throughout the election period, incidences of police brutality and abuses by security agents are widespread across the country. For example, to preserve the Mau water catchment areas in Embobut Forest the Kenya Forest Service officers were reported to have used excessive force against the Sengwer community.<sup>70</sup>

Following a meeting at the president's office in Harambee House in Nairobi, President Kenyatta and Odinga entered into a political deal manifested in them shaking hands and agreeing to a truce in March 2018 to calm/ease political tensions that were building up. In the deal, President Kenyatta's deputy William Ruto was conspicuously left out, an aspect that sets an interesting political dynamic in Kenya's political sphere where alliances based on ethnic identities are the norm.<sup>71</sup> The aftermath of the Kenyatta-Odinga agreement was the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) aimed at improving Kenya's democracy, building bipartisanship, and unity.<sup>72</sup> The BBI task force released a report in November 2019 after holding public participation fora across the 47 counties to collect views of more than 7000 citizens based on nine core agenda points. The report was disseminated to the public for further discussion which the task force was to take into consideration and present the final report. The BBI report was officially launched on 26th October 2020, with a call for Kenyans to read the document for themselves to make an informed decision about it. The BBI report sought to address nine identified areas affecting Kenyans. These are corruption, lack of ethos (negative politics), divisive politics, divisive elections, safety and security, responsibility and rights, inclusivity, shared prosperity, and ethnic antagonism and competition. The report left the country embroiled in a debate concerning proposals made in it. Some of the most contentious proposals of the report under debate were constitutional changes particularly on the creation of a parliamentary system of governance with a prime minister and two deputy prime ministers. This is viewed as an answer to the winner-take-all presidential election outcome and the resulting powerful executive. However, the president will still appoint his prime minister and deputy prime ministers and could fire them at will, hence still perpetuating the practice of the winner takes all. The BBI has also raised significant concerns about the cost of implementing such expenses that will be incurred to implement the changes to the executive.

Since 2018, the handshake agreement continues to hold as political realignments abound with a focus on the next election in 2022. As the bond between President Kenyatta and

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 23

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 23

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 23

<sup>71</sup> Hattem, J. (April, 2019)

<sup>72</sup> BBI Task Force. (2019)

Odinga grows stronger that of Kenyatta and his deputy drifts apart. The Deputy President is largely seen as being partly opposed to the BBI with the relationship between the two marked with accusations and counter-accusations.<sup>73</sup> On his part, President Kenyatta largely accuses his deputy of focusing on the 2022 election at the expense of concentrating on building their legacy of the big four agenda (1. Enhancing manufacturing, 2. Food security and nutrition, 3. Universal health care, and 4. Affordable housing) and concomitant projects. On the other hand, the deputy president accuses the president of curtailing his political ambitions to succeed him. President Kenyatta has since built new alliances around his deputy's political opponents: the Orange Democratic Movement, KANU, Chama cha Mashinani, Wiper Democratic Movement, and Amani National Coalition.<sup>74</sup> These political shifts have heightened the political uncertainty reigning in the country with the situation made more complex by the economic and social uncertainty following the Covid-19 pandemic, locust invasion,<sup>75</sup> and flooding in some parts of the country.

Since the onset of the COVID - 19 pandemic in Kenya in March 2020, the education sector has been affected due to the closure of schools and institutions of higher learning. The closure led to the commencement of e-learning modules, that is lessons through frequency radio and television to promote continuous learning, however, this has not trickled down to all the regions in the country, particularly to those living in marginalized areas where they cannot afford internet services or other such mediums of communication. The pandemic has also affected labor and social security since numerous employees in formal and informal employment have lost their jobs and livelihood. Reduced earnings and job cuts have led to some Kenyans, especially those who rely on casual work, finding it difficult to cater to their basic needs – including rent. To contain the virus, the government instituted a curfew and lockdown measures with the police responsible for enforcement.<sup>76</sup>

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) reported that police officers were responsible for 117 varied cases of inhuman and degrading treatment and torture and 10 deaths between March 2020 and June 2020.<sup>77</sup> Similar to many countries globally, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a socio-economic impact on Kenya which further complicates efforts to address political and developmental challenges.

According to the HIPSIR CMT 2019 study,<sup>78</sup> inequitable distribution of resources and high levels of graft with a weighted mean of 2.14, to a large extent contributes to conflicts and high poverty levels in Kenya. There is a marked deterioration of government functions (weighted mean of 1.99) and weakened government functions (weighted mean of 2.00) as illustrated by increased reports of criminal activity and attacks, rampant police brutality, and conflict-related sexual violence. Even though the study indicated that Kenya has a high risk of conflict based on pre-conflict findings, the country was ranked as the most peaceful compared to South Sudan and the DRC.

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<sup>73</sup> The Africa Report, June 2020.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 30

<sup>75</sup> S., Mbugua "Locusts plague destroys livelihoods in Kenya but 'biggest threat yet to come'", Climate Change News, February 14, 2020, Accessed November 18, 2020, url: <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2020/02/14/locusts-plague-destroys-livelihoods-kenya-biggest-threat-yet-come/>

<sup>76</sup> Kevin Okoth Ouko, Robert Ouko Gwada Gertrude Alworah and Zephaniah Ongaga Mayaka, "Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on Food Security and Household Livelihoods in Kenya," Review of Agricultural and Applied Economics 23, 2(2020):72-80.

<sup>77</sup> KNCHR (June 2020). Pain and Pandemic: Unmasking the State of Human Rights in Kenya in Containment of the COVID -19 Pandemic.

<sup>78</sup> Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations. 2019, pp. 43-44

## 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.<sup>79</sup> Before cessation, South Sudan was ignored, and development indicators, be they of health, infant mortality, maternal mortality, drinking water, sanitation, or food security, were among the worst in the world.<sup>80</sup> Hence, South Sudan's clamor for change could not be suppressed or ignored. With different rebel groups engaged in guerrilla fights with the government based in Khartoum, South Sudan demanded autonomy and self-determination. This justified rebellion as 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.<sup>82</sup>

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 with reforms of going to "the referendum on unity versus separation."<sup>83</sup> 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. Through struggle and persistence in the 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.<sup>84</sup> Basic changes were embodied in the terms of separation. Fundamental interests like border demarcation, oil, and the tariffs for use in the Sudanese pipeline, transitional financial arrangements, citizenship, currency, and other issues had to be addressed.<sup>85</sup> Additionally, the international community offered assistance and coordinated various programs of the CPA to help in building the state of South Sudan.

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.<sup>86</sup> There have been various peace

<sup>79</sup> F.H., Johnson, *South Sudan: The Untold Story From Independence to Civil War*, p. xiii

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>82</sup> M., LeRiche, & M., Arnold, *South Sudan, From Revolution to Independence*, p. 2

<sup>83</sup> F.H., Johnson, *South Sudan: The Untold Story From Independence to Civil War*, p. 13.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>86</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, Accessed June 7, 2019, url: <https://www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/civil-war-south-sudan>.

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 and a revitalized peace deal signed in September 2018 seemed promising but did not bring peace to the country. Finally, 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.

Questions have been raised on which conflict resolution approach would be best applied to change the South Sudan situation. Strategies so far applied by the UN and Africa Union military interventions present in South Sudan have influenced the methods of intervention of various regional countries. From the onset of the South Sudan civil war in December 2013, IGAD chaired by Ethiopia took up the role of mediation to help strike a peace deal between the two main belligerent parties. These talks have however proved to be difficult because IGAD member states Sudan and Uganda were backing different sides in the war, Machar and President Salva Kiir, respectively.<sup>87</sup> For instance, Ugandan forces were reported to be on the ground in Juba helping Salva Kiir's government fight Riek Machar. Hence, Kiir took a hardline position while negotiating since he was assured of protection by the Ugandan government.

Magnus Taylor notes that South Sudan's 2011 independence directed its neighbors' rivalry toward competition for influence over the new state.<sup>88</sup> Sudan for a long time had been exporting oil that came from the fields in South Sudan. Thus, they still wanted to control the new regime and continue benefitting from the oil. Uganda on the other hand had previously had a conflict with Sudan on the border issue before South Sudan's independence.

During the 1990s, Uganda was suspicious of Islamist Sudan's apparent desire to expand Arab and Islamic influence southwards.<sup>89</sup> There were also suspicions that the Sudan government financed the Ugandan rebel group, the Lord's Resistance Movement (LRA).<sup>90</sup> The Ugandan government in turn decided to finance and support the Southern Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM). However, the Ugandan government in recent years has shifted from security interests to economic interests. Hence, the intervention by the regional bloc changed the dynamics of the conflict and the negotiation process leading to a prolonged civil war.

The United Nations on the other hand has defended its operations in South Sudan. In a statement by the U.N. Secretary General's Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide Adama Dieng, the UN emphasized its main responsibility is to protect civilians and assist in the process of ending the war. He urged the South Sudan government to cooperate with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to allow the men and women in the blue helmets to discharge U.N. Security Council resolution 2327 (2016) that calls on the

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<sup>87</sup> Crisis Group, *Salvaging South Sudan Fragile Peace*, Accessed June 9, 2019, url: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/south-sudan/270-salvaging-south-sudans-fragile-peace-deal>.

<sup>88</sup> M., Taylor, *From Conflict to Cooperation*, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda, June 20, 2016, Accessed June 9, 2019, url: <https://www.crisis-group.org/africa/horn-africa/south-sudan/conflict-cooperation-sudan-south-sudan-and-uganda>.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> J., Norris, *Opinion: Sudan and the Lord's Resistance Army*, April 18, 2010, Accessed December 17, 2020, url: <https://www.pri.org/stories/2010-04-18/opinion-sudan-and-lord-s-resistance-army>

warring parties to return to the peace process and empowers UNMISS to use the necessary tools to protect civilians.<sup>91</sup> Nonetheless, this cannot rule out the fact that regional self-interests have led to the methods of intervention that in turn, have influenced the prolonged conflict. As such, the fatality rate has increased over the years and many people have been displaced due to the civil war. For instance, the UNSC September 2020 report on South Sudan notes that inter-communal conflict increased throughout the country, especially in greater Jonglei, Lakes, Unity, Warrap, and Western Bahr el-Ghazal.<sup>92</sup> Thus, it is important to look at the statistical enumeration that rates the level of conflict.

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.<sup>93</sup> 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.<sup>94</sup>

Although there is notable progress in the country's political stability, there have been setbacks to the peace process. There is increased fragmentation among the opposition parties such as within 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 president of failing to consult in key decision-making issues.<sup>95</sup> The internal discord within SPLM/A-IO caused by internal leadership tensions and the perception of marginalization along ethnic identity continues to instigate instability.<sup>96</sup>

South Sudan faces the threat of COVID-19 and escalating violence that jeopardizes the country's ceasefire reign.<sup>97</sup> The pandemic has delayed the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement as the Joint Transitional Security Committee issued a directive on 25 March 2020 on the suspension of activities in training centers. These centers are designated to accommodate personnel that transition from cantonment sites or used for DDR purposes.<sup>98</sup> The resultant restriction on freedom of movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to high risks of gender-based violence.<sup>99</sup> On the other hand, civilian deaths, abduction of women and children, destruction of property, looting, and displacement of more than 60,000 people have been reported in intercommunal clashes, including cattle raiding and revenge attacks taking place in Jonglei, Unity, Lakes, Warrap and the West Equatoria States.<sup>100</sup> An increase in inter-communal conflict has been attributed to the governance vacuum at the state and sub-state levels. Despite the existence of a ceasefire,

<sup>91</sup> UN Official, Peacekeepers in South Sudan not Intervention Force, December 14, 2017, Accessed June 9, 2019, url: <https://www.voanews.com/a/south-sudan-unmiss-mandate/4163740.html>.

<sup>92</sup> UNSC, September 2020, p. 5

<sup>93</sup> UNSC, 15 June 2020

<sup>94</sup> UNSC, June 2020b

<sup>95</sup> UNSC, 15 June 2020, p. 3

<sup>96</sup> UNSC, 15 June 2020

<sup>97</sup> UNSC, June 2020b

<sup>98</sup> UNSC, 15 June 2020

<sup>99</sup> UNSC, 15 June 2020

<sup>100</sup> UNSC, June 2020b

Government and SPLM/A-IO have been involved in a series of clashes with the South Sudan Opposition Movements Alliance (SSOMA) in late April and Mid-May 2020.<sup>101</sup>

As of November 2020, the country continues to struggle with stabilizing peace in the country brought about by the Revitalized Agreement signed in 2018. Violence has been reported in Jonglei,<sup>102</sup> while a recent UNMISS report states that over 1000 people in Warrap state have died within six months.<sup>103</sup> Politically, the government struggles to fully implement the conditions of the Revitalized Agreement including unifying the country's warring forces under one army.<sup>104</sup> It is reported that many of the soldiers deserted because of a lack of food.<sup>105</sup> Beyond this, a United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR) report published in October 2020, revealed that "food insecurity in Western Bahr el Ghazal, Jonglei, and the Central Equatoria States is linked directly to the conflict and therefore almost entirely human-induced."<sup>106</sup> According to the UNHCR report, both the government and the opposition have "deliberately used the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare in these states, sometimes as an instrument to punish non-aligning communities, as in the case of Jonglei."<sup>107</sup> These serious claims only further exacerbate the already precarious security state of the country.

The HIPSIR CMT 2019 study ranked South Sudan (2.84) at the highest risk of conflict compared to the DRC (1.83) and Kenya (1.68). Conflicts in South Sudan were largely attributed to the inequitable distribution of resources and corruption (weighted mean of 2.53) that result in high levels of poverty (weighted mean of 2.86) recorded in the country. Poor governance (weighted mean of 2.29), weakened government functions (weighted mean of 2.39), and the acquisition of small arms and light weapons by non-state actors (weighted mean of 2.27) were observed as dominant features to conflict escalation in South Sudan. Apart from the break-down of government functions (weighted mean of 2.23), displacements of citizens (weighted mean of 2.52) and the presence of peacekeeping personnel (i.e. UNMISS) in the country (weighted mean of 2.21) were also pointed out as key indicators to the conflict crisis in South Sudan. The transition from crisis to stability and the peace process is hindered by the intensity of violence (weighted mean of 1.25), failure of combatants to comply with a ceasefire (weighted mean of 1.61), limited commitment to the implementation of peace agreements (weighted mean of 1.42), and the failure to sufficiently address root causes to the conflict hence conflict de-escalation is least in South Sudan.

## Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Violent conflicts within the DRC have been recorded from the 19th century when King Leopold II acquired the vast territory along the Congo basin as his personal property and

<sup>101</sup> UNSC, 15 June 2020

<sup>102</sup> "UN to deploy troops to Jonglei to contain ethnic violence – Shearer," Sudan's Post, November 17, 2020, <https://www.sudanspost.com/un-to-deploy-troops-to-jonglei-to-contain-ethnic-violence-shearer/>

<sup>103</sup> "Over 1000 people have died in Warrap state in the past 6 months," Nyamilpedia, November 17, 2020, Accessed November 18, 2020, url: <https://www.nyamilpedia.com/2020/11/17/over-1000-people-have-died-in-warrap-state-in-the-past-six-months/>

<sup>104</sup> "Efforts to unify soldiers in South Sudan 'stuck': UN envoy," Al Jazeera, September 29, 2020, Accessed November 18, 2020 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/29/efforts-to-unify-soldiers-in-s-sudan-stuck-un-envoy>

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> "Starvation used as weapon of war in South Sudan conflict, UN rights body find" UN News, October 6, 2020, Accessed November 18, 2020, url: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/10/1074742>

<sup>107</sup> "Starvation used as weapon of war in South Sudan conflict, UN rights body find" UN News, October 6, 2020, Accessed November 18, 2020, url: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/10/1074742>

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.<sup>108</sup> Belgian colonization continued the exploitation of the people and the land. Eventually, a Congolese uprising led to independence in 1960. However, the country immediately fell into a crisis and conflict over competition for political leadership. As a result, there was armed violence, coups, and cessation attempts leading to numerous deaths. The crisis ended in 1965 with a coup d'état led by Joseph-Desire Mobutu who later became president and created a highly centralized government.

Mobutu's reign has been described as a 'kleptocracy'<sup>109</sup> characterized by a patronage system of buying loyalty with bribes 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 economic situation was severely affected. With the end of the cold war the West, especially the United States, no longer supported him, and they called for democratic reforms within the country, as did the citizens who had become disillusioned with his rule. 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 saw reports of atrocities meted out on the civilian population. This conflict was known as the First Congo War. However, by 1998 when Kabila asked the Rwandans and Ugandans to leave the country, there was a further conflict that triggered the second Congo war from 1998-2003. This conflict also referred to as 'Africa's world war', 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 Sun City Agreement, the ensuing July 2002 Pretoria Accord 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."<sup>110</sup>

Although the Second Congo War ended in 2003, it had set up the stage for subsequent violent conflicts in the country which have continued to date, especially in the Eastern parts of the country. There has been a multiplication of rebel groups over the years, culminating into five main conflicts: the 2012-2013 M23 attacks backed by Rwanda; the Kivu Conflict between the DRC army (FARDC) and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Ituri ethnic conflict between the Lendu and Hema ethnic groups who have had historical differences over many years. In reality, the second Congo war brought in arms and increased grievances between the two communities. The fourth was the Kasai conflict between the army and customary chiefs in Kasai-Central

<sup>108</sup> Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent, 1876-1912*, New York, Avon Books, 1991, p. 660-661

<sup>109</sup> Daron Acemoglu, Thierry Verdier and James A. Robinson, "Kleptocracy and Divide and rule: A mode of personal rule," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 2, 2-3(2004):162-192.

<sup>110</sup> "History of the conflict," Eastern Congo Initiative. <http://www.easterncongo.org/about-drc/history-of-the-conflict>

Province in 2016-2017<sup>111</sup> while the fifth is characterized by 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.<sup>112</sup> In conclusion, as a report by UNECA (2015) 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 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”.<sup>113</sup>

The DRC held its presidential elections on 30th December 2018 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.<sup>114</sup> Even so, the DRC remains insecure as a result of the widespread presence of numerous local and foreign armed groups.

The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) led by Seka Musa is active and has regrouped and enhanced its capacity in the Beni-Butembo region in North Kivu. In 2019, the group carried out attacks on civilians and security forces, recruited and used children in combat and attacks, and engaged in sexual violence and forced marriages. Former ADF abductees and ex-combatants indicate that the armed group (ADF) has varied names associated with it such as ADF-NALU (Allied Democratic Forces – National Army for the Liberation of Uganda), NALU (National Army for the Liberation of Uganda), and Madina at Tawhid Wai Muwahedeen (MTM) with the group’s largest recruitment network stationed in Uganda.<sup>115</sup> The ADF is reported to have carried out nearly 30 attacks within three months (between 17th March 2020 and 16th June 2020), in which at least 89 civilians lost their lives.<sup>116</sup>

The Conseil National pour le Renouveau et la Démocratie (CNRD) is a foreign armed group active in North and South Kivu, however, there exist tensions over control of territory with other armed groups, namely, the Nduma défense du Congo Rénové (NDC-R) and Nyatura armed groups. Operating in North Kivu, NDC-R bases its administration on imposed taxation and forced labor, and absorption of combatants from other armed groups.

Résistance pour un État de Droit (RED) - Tabara is a Burundian armed group operational in South Kivu and has progressively moved from the DRC into Burundi. The group consists of Burundian citizens, including former FDN (armed forces of Burundi) defectors who joined the group after a failed coup d’état in Burundi in mid-May 2015. The group

<sup>111</sup> “Conflict in the Kasai, DRC,” UNICEF West and Central Africa. <https://www.unicef.org/wca/conflict-kasai-drc>

<sup>112</sup> “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.unjvro.analyse\\_hauts\\_plateaux\\_en.pdf](https://monusco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/20200806.unjvro.analyse_hauts_plateaux_en.pdf)

<sup>113</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo* (Addis Ababa, United Nations, 2015), 9.

<sup>114</sup> UNSC, December 2019, p. 20

<sup>115</sup> UNSC, December 2019.

<sup>116</sup> UNSC, June 2020.

is reported to be receiving financial support from contacts in Burundi and undisclosed countries in Europe. Apart from the RED-Tabara armed group, there are two other Burundian armed groups active in the DRC: Forces Nationales de Libération-Nzabampema (FNL-Nzabampema), and renegade soldiers of the failed coup d'état of 2015 in Burundi.<sup>117</sup> Despite the denial of foreign military occupation by the Government of Burundi, the FDN is reported to have carried out incursions into Congolese territory against Burundian armed groups.<sup>118</sup> Burundi is among DRC's neighboring countries and alongside Rwanda, Zambia, South Sudan, Angola has been condemned for conducting foreign military incursions in the DRC.<sup>119</sup>

An upsurge in violence has been experienced since September 2019 between communities backed by armed groups in Minembwe, Uvira Territory causing a deteriorating security and humanitarian situation.<sup>120</sup> Intercommunal conflicts between the Twa and Bantu militias in Nyuzu territory have led to the deaths of over 100 civilians since January 2020.<sup>121</sup> Other armed groups in DRC include Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda, the Alliance des Patriotes pour un Congo libre et Souverain (APCLS), Mai-Mai armed group coalition, Ngomino, and Twigwanaho armed groups. Armed groups in DRC continue to thrive through illegal production and trade of natural mineral resources, loopholes in monitoring the exploitation of natural resources, and the widespread proliferation of weapons and ammunition.<sup>122</sup>

The fight against corruption is key in President Tshisekedi's agenda such that he called upon all government ministers to declare their assets to the constitutional court.<sup>123</sup> 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.<sup>124</sup> This included his supporters holding protests over his allegedly politically motivated arrest and sentencing.<sup>125</sup>

Although the opposition in DRC has participated in the country's political process without interference from the government's security services, some members of the governing coalition are already involved in the politics of the next general elections.<sup>126</sup> Currently, there are concerns about increasing domestic violence due to confinement measures related to Covid-19.<sup>127</sup> Also, the human rights situation in the DRC remains of concern. For instance, a United Nations Security Council report on the DRC noted that "the security situation in the highlands worsened considerably and was characterized by

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<sup>117</sup> UNSC, June 2019, p. 17

<sup>118</sup> UNSC, June 2019, p. 17

<sup>119</sup> Mulumba, 2020

<sup>120</sup> UNSC, December 2019.

<sup>121</sup> UNSC, June 2020., p.4

<sup>122</sup> UNSC, December 2019.

<sup>123</sup> UNSC, November 2019.

<sup>124</sup> UNSC, June 2020., p. 2

<sup>125</sup> 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/>

<sup>126</sup> UNSC, November 2019, p. 2

<sup>127</sup> UNSC, June 2020.

tit-for-tat militia attacks against civilians.”<sup>128</sup> These incidences included deaths and injuries to civilians.

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 deflate 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.<sup>129</sup>

After 60 years of independence, Congolese remain uncertain on political and democratic stability.<sup>130</sup> 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. However, the implementation of the demobilization process has been delayed mainly due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, during the June to September 2020 period, in as much as most of the country has enjoyed relative reprieve from armed conflict, security in the Eastern region of the country remains worrying<sup>131</sup> especially because of the proliferation of armed groups who have continued to compete over territory and natural resources.<sup>132</sup> For example, the United Nations Security Council 2020 DRC country report for September 2020, notes that in North Kivu “The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) documented at least 107 incidents attributable to armed groups, in which 67 civilians were killed (34 men, 23 women, and 10 children) and 73 were injured (40 men, 20 women, and 13 children) across the province.”<sup>133</sup> Thus indicating the extent of damage both to lives, property, and livelihoods of the citizens. In December 2020, Mr. Tshisekedi announced a departure from his coalition with that of the former president Joseph Kabila. The move aimed at, “ending the crisis caused by nearly two years of tension with his coalition partner, the Common Front for Congo (FCC) of former president Joseph Kabila.”<sup>134</sup> These political developments risk increasing tensions in the country and constitute a significant security threat to a country that is yet to successfully resolve conflict, especially in the Eastern region.

According to the HIPSIR CMT study (2019), similar to South Sudan, the conflict in the DRC was 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

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<sup>128</sup> UNSC, September 2020

<sup>129</sup> UNSC, June 2020.

<sup>130</sup> Mulumba, 2020

<sup>131</sup> UNSC, September 2020, p. 16

<sup>132</sup> UNSC, Sept 2020, p. 3

<sup>133</sup> UNSC, Sept 2020, p. 3

<sup>134</sup> R., Gras, and S.B., Tshiamala, “DRC: Félix Tshisekedi terminates coalition with Joseph Kabila,” The Africa Report, 7 December 2020, Accessed December 10, 2020, url: <https://www.theafricareport.com/53665/drc-felix-tshisekedi-terminates-coalition-with-joseph-kabila/>

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<sup>135</sup>), with weighted means of 1.95 and 1.91 respectively. On the aspect of conflict de-escalation after the crisis, the study ranked DRC highest compared to South Sudan, however, there were several hindrances to stability and the peace process in the country mainly being a failure to implement and monitor peace agreements (weighted mean = 1.82) and limited focus on root causes of violent conflict (weighted mean of 1.81).

## Underlying Drivers of Conflict in the DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya

Drivers of conflict in the DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya are complex. Some are specific to the region while others are unique to specific countries. The Horn of Africa is considered a conflict-prone zone. Roy Love notes that despite the changes of the regime and international efforts to broker peace agreements, the countries of the region experience consistently high levels of conflict, within and across the borders.<sup>136</sup> Having fought the war of liberation and attaining independence, South Sudan slipped into violence in 2013 - two years after celebrating freedom of self-governance. Even though there was a change of regime and secession with efforts to create peace, violence still erupted in the new nation. Since the mid-1990s the DRC has been engulfed in a series of conflicts, with two major wars between 1996 and 2003.<sup>137</sup> Despite national, regional, and international efforts to end hostilities in the country, violent conflict continues to reign in the Eastern provinces of the country.

### *Economic Factors*

Economic factors have also played a role in fueling conflicts in DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya. Factors related to bad economic policies and the resulting weak development record<sup>138</sup> have prevented these governments from harnessing the huge economic potential that they possess. Economic deprivation has created a conducive environment for the disenfranchised to mobilize militarily. Using the utility theory, Collier and Hoeffler argue that rebels will conduct a civil war if the perceived benefits of conflict outweigh the cost of rebellion.<sup>139</sup> The South Sudan war has been attributed to competition for power and natural resources. With the firing of Riek Machar and his allies based on corruption allegations from the government, the former vice president formed a rebel group. As Collier and Hoeffler point out, "their objective was to capture the state" and control the natural resources which is the economic base of the country.<sup>140</sup> Being a nation with various cultural disparities, the exclusion of some individuals from some communities seemed to appear as

<sup>135</sup> United Nations. 2020. MONUSCO fact sheet

<sup>136</sup> R., Love, Economic Drivers of Conflict and Regional Cooperation in the Horn of Africa: A Regional Perspective and Overview, 2, Accessed June 8, 2019, url: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Africa/bp1209horn.pdf>.

<sup>137</sup> Jakob Johann Stakowski. 2011. Conflict Minerals and Prevention Policies The case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Pp. 1- - <https://skemman.is/bitstream/1946/8656/3/Jakob%20Stakowski%20-%20BS%20Thesis.pdf>

<sup>138</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Addis Ababa, United Nations, 2015), 40.

<sup>139</sup> P., Collier, and A., Hoeffler. "On Economic Causes of Civil War." Oxford Economic Papers 50, no. 4 (1998): 563, Accessed June 7, 2019, url: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3488674>.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p. 564.

an injustice to the public. The fear of marginalization and unfair distribution of resources by a government that was dominated by one ethnic group, the Dinka led to an eruption of violence.

A study by Kanyama points out that vertical inequality in national income distribution is a significant driver of conflict and political instability in the DRC whereas horizontal inequalities such as group inequality are a strong source of grievances that often triggers conflict and generates violence.<sup>141</sup> Despite its natural resource endowment, there is an uneven distribution of resource wealth amongst provinces within the DRC leading to economic inequality that drives the country's fragility and instability. The symbiotic relationship between economic exclusion, real or perceived marginalization, and poverty has led to the local populations' push to join armed groups involved in the illegal exploitation of natural resources or criminal activities or resort to violence.<sup>142</sup> This is supported by the 2019 HIPSIR CMT study, which indicated that conflict in the DRC is largely attributed to disagreements on the sharing of natural resources (at a weighted mean of 2.05) and the resultant economic hardships (weighted mean of 1.96).<sup>143</sup> Apart from high poverty levels, political and economic marginalization, poor governance, youth unemployment, and the weakness of state institutions are among the main channels of conflict in the DRC.<sup>144</sup>

A disparity in economic diversity, inequitable distribution of natural resources, and unbalanced regional development remain prevalent in Kenya despite efforts by the government to address these disparities and imbalances. By and large, real or perceived economic exclusion and marginalization have been linked to suspicion, reduced trust in the government and fellow citizens, ethnic tensions, and conflict over allocation and sharing of natural resources and power.<sup>145</sup> The HIPSIR CMT (2019) attributed conflicts in Kenya to poor distribution of resources and high levels of corruption (weighted mean of 2.04).<sup>146</sup>

### ***Presence of Armed Groups***

A range of hybrid actors such as armed groups, organized criminal groups, illicit trafficking networks, armed opposition groups, and national armies perpetuate armed violence in since 2013 had a myriad of actors, mainly the SPLA and the SPLA-IO (which is now technically part of the South Sudan government), active political militia, and approximately 40 active communal militias. Even though these militias are localized, they often serve as a reserve to replenish troops of either the SPLA or SPLA-IO hence violence remains a significant tool for all the agents.<sup>147</sup>

The presence of armed groups in these countries has been fueling conflicts in the region. In DRC for instance, groups like the Mai Mai and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) continue to perpetuate violence in the country. The Mai Mai militias operate as a self-

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<sup>141</sup> Kanyama Kalonda 2017. pp. 9 -10

<sup>142</sup> RECSA. 2017. pp. 9-10

<sup>143</sup> Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations. 2019, pp. 43-44

<sup>144</sup> UNDP. 2014.

<sup>145</sup> Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2012. Pp. 33- 35.

<sup>146</sup> Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations. 2019, pp. 43-44

<sup>147</sup> Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset. 2016.

defense network and criminal racket. In addition, the DRC harbors “foreign-origin groups seeking haven and illicit revenues.”<sup>148</sup> For example, one of the most recent threats came from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which is a Ugandan rebel group that is “based along the Rwenzori Mountains of eastern Congo. The group size currently numbers approximately 500 combatants and most of its members are Islamists who want to establish Shari'a law in Uganda.”<sup>149</sup>

The presence of militia undermines the government’s monopoly in the use of force to illegally tax, exploit and intimidate citizens. Militias and organized criminal groups have grown in Kenya since independence. Their development has been due to political, economic, and political factors such as negative ethnicity and the nature of political competition, a culture of political violence and impunity, poverty, unemployment, inequality and underdevelopment, and resource scarcity. The main militias that operate in the country include, but are not limited to Chinkororo, Amachuma, Sungusungu, Al Shabaab, Angola Msumbiji, Banyamulenge, Baghdad Boys, Charo Shutu, Coast Housing Land Network, Congo by Force, Dallas Muslim Youth, Forty Brothers, Forty-Two Brothers, Jeshi la Embakasi, Jeshi la Mzee, and Jeshi la King’ole. Others are Japo Group, Kamjesh, Kamkunji Youth Group, Kaya Bombo Youth, Kosovo Boys, Kuzacha, Makande Army, Mombasa Republican Council, Mungiki Movement, Mungiki Organisation, Mungiki Sect, Republican Revolutionary Council, Sabaot Land Defence Force, Sakina Youth, Siafu and Taliban.<sup>150</sup> A study by The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)<sup>151</sup> closely links pro-government militias (PGM) to election-related violence experienced in Kenya in 1997, 2002, 2007, and 2013. By using illicit violence the PGM assists the regime and state elites to achieve their political agendas. The study concludes that the use of PGM is likely to increase in Africa due to highly competitive power struggles and competition in the continent.

### **Poor Governance and Systemic Institutional Failure**

The state’s failure in delivering services, securing law and order, and defending the country’s interests at the regional and global levels has contributed to protracted conflict. Bad governance and high levels of insecurity from conflicts tend to lead to state fragility. Fragile states are vulnerable, and as a recovery strategy, it is important to focus on state institutions in the development process, as well as external interventions and priorities based on deeply rooted knowledge of the local, political and economic context.<sup>152</sup> South Sudan at the onset of her independence had no proper state institutions where issues of corruption, abuse of power/office, inequitable distribution of resources, and other grievances could be addressed. Lack of economic resources and qualified personnel were the major reasons that led to the lack of these institutions. Hence, people resorted to violence as a justification to address their grievances.

<sup>148</sup> Congressional Research Service, Democratic Republic of Congo: Background and U.S. Relations(2019), p. 8

<sup>149</sup> “History of the conflict”, Eastern Congo Initiative. <http://www.easterncongo.org/about-drc/history-of-the-conflict>

<sup>150</sup> J. Mbaku, „Multiparty Democracy and Political Change: Constraints to Democratization in Africa. USA: Africa World Press, 2006

<sup>151</sup> ACLED. 2017.

<sup>152</sup> M., Neube, and B., Jones, Drivers and Dynamics of Fragility in Africa. African Development Bank, Africa Economic Brief, 4(5), 2013, Accessed June 8, 2019. url: [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Economic\\_Brief\\_-\\_Drivers\\_and\\_Dynamics\\_of\\_Fragility\\_in\\_Africa.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Economic_Brief_-_Drivers_and_Dynamics_of_Fragility_in_Africa.pdf).

A study by Thian hee, Habibullah, Law, and Azman-Saini<sup>153</sup> concluded that political instability and the presence of violence are the key governance indicators of armed conflict or its potential. Poor governance has been closely linked to deterioration in the welfare of the people and development failure<sup>154</sup> as is the case in South Sudan where the citizens are restrained from participating in economic and political processes and there are limited opportunities to economically improve their lives. Therefore, they are easily provoked to violence. The situation is similar to that of the DRC where decades of bad governance and lack of democracy led to episodes of violent conflict.<sup>155</sup> Research conducted by Shekhawat<sup>156</sup> indicated the vicious and symbiotic relationship between poor governance and conflict in DRC, where poor governance leads to inequitable distribution of resources, corruption, neglect of human rights, and a discontented public. These practices trigger conflict, which in turn fuel poor governance. Adano and Daudi<sup>157</sup> observed that the existence of conflicts, poor law enforcement in protecting natural resources, and upholding human rights is an indication of a lack of good governance structures, a case prevalent in many countries in the region. Endemic corruption in Kenya represents a failure in governance and a characteristic of bad governance since graft levels in the country exist among individuals to structures and institutions. Corruption is extensively caused by limited public accountability and unethical leadership with deleterious effects on development, poverty alleviation, reduced social cohesion as well as contributes to political violence and insecurity.<sup>158</sup>

### ***Politicized Ethnic Identities***

Roy observes that the incongruence between the legacies of colonial boundaries, ecological zones, and cultural affinities peculiar to the region often means that disputes in any one country have political and economic significance beyond their local sphere.<sup>159</sup> Various theories explain conflict drivers. Huntington explains the emergence of conflicts after the cold war as a clash between cultures. He notes in his book, *The Clash of Civilization* that in the new world, the most pervasive, important, and dangerous conflicts will not be between social classes, rich and poor, or other economically defined groups, but between people belonging to different cultural entities.<sup>160</sup>

To support his argument, he gives examples of the bloody ethnic and tribal clashes that occurred in Rwanda, the DRC, Burundi, and Uganda. Another example is the Yugoslavia conflicts where Russia and Saudi Arabia provided diplomatic support to the Serbs, while Turkey, Iran, and Libya provided arms and funds to the Bosnians, not for reasons of ideology or power politics or economic interest but because of cultural kingship.<sup>161</sup> Hence, this theory holds that in the new world order, people isolate ideology and unite based on culture to work jointly in achieving their interests.

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<sup>153</sup> Thian hee, Yiew & Habibullah, M.S. & Law, Siong & Azman-Saini, W.N.W.. 2016, pp. 3741-3755.

<sup>154</sup> United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF). 2004. P. 34

<sup>155</sup> Thian Hee, Yiew & Habibullah, M.S. & Law, Siong & Azman-Saini, W.N.W.. 2016, p. 3744

<sup>156</sup> Shekhawat Seema. 2009.

<sup>157</sup> Adano, W.R. and Daudi, F. 2012.

<sup>158</sup> Hope, Kempe. 2014. p. 52

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>160</sup> S., Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Accessed June 8, 2019, url: <https://www.stetson.edu/artsci/political-science/media/clash.pdf>.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

Negative ethnicity and ethnic animosity are widely discussed as a major driver of violent conflict in Kenya. The resulting ethnic violence is often a result of injustices and inequality in the sharing of resources among different identities and perceived discrimination. The existing differences are between ethnic groups often politicized by politicians before, during, and after elections resulting in animosity among groups.<sup>162</sup> Conflicts between ethnic groups or regional factions are prevalent in Kenya during elections<sup>163</sup> with the deep-seated cleavages, inter and intra-ethnic suspicion, and hatred portrayed during the 2007-2008 post-election violence.<sup>164</sup> The Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence (CIPEV)<sup>165</sup> reported the “underlying climate of tension and hate” among various ethnic groups as one of the root causes of post-election violence in Kenya. The violence resulted in over 1100 loss of lives of children, men, and women, the internal displacement of about 650,000 Kenyans, and a deeply divided country.<sup>167</sup>

Similar to Kenya, conflicts in the DRC revolve around competing opinions of ethnic identity and existing ethnic cleavages, which manifest in political, economic, social, and cultural inequalities and disharmony.<sup>168</sup> A report by the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) established at least 701 loss of lives and 168 injuries during inter-ethnic tensions between the Hema and Lendu communities in the Djugu and Mahagi territories from December 2017 to September 2019.<sup>169</sup> Since mid-2016 there has been inter-ethnic violence between the Bantu and Twa ethnic groups in North and South Kivu and Kasai and Tanganyika provinces. The violence has led to increased insecurity in the region, deteriorating trust between communities, and the disruption of food security. The conflict between the Twa and Bantu ethnic groups portrays how marginalization grievances of a minority group (Twa) based on systemic discrimination and exclusion in local decision making and allocation of national resources can escalate to large-scale violence.<sup>170</sup>

Despite South Sudan’s rich national heritage based on its multi-ethnic nature of over 60 ethnic groups, the country has experienced localized inter-ethnic animosities over the state control of power, access to natural resources, grazing land, or cattle raiding. The main inter-ethnic rivalries over the domination of political and economic space are between the Dinka and Nuer and to a lesser extent, the Murle. On the other hand, ethnic antagonism based on the contestation of state politics and political power in South Sudan is heightened in the intra-ethnic rivalry between the Dinka Bahr el Ghazal and Dinka Bor.<sup>171</sup> In these instances, local leaders regroup their intra-ethnic groups to advance their cause of competing for political power.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Adeagbo, Oluwafemi. 2011. p. 175

<sup>163</sup> Dieter Neubert. 2019.

<sup>164</sup> Kenya Human Rights Commission. 2018.

<sup>165</sup> Republic of Kenya Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Post Election Violence (CIPEV). 2008. p. 25

<sup>166</sup> Republic of Kenya Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Post Election Violence (CIPEV). 2008. p. 25

<sup>167</sup> Adeagbo, Oluwafemi. 2011. pp. 174-179; Konrad Adenauer Foundation. pp. 53 -56.

<sup>168</sup> Lukong Stella Shulika and Nwabuo Okeke-Uzodike. pp. 25-26

<sup>169</sup> DRC: inter-ethnic violence in Ituri may constitute “crimes against humanity” – UN report. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25460> August 17 2020

<sup>170</sup> International Rescue Committee. pp. 2-3

<sup>171</sup> Lukong Stella Shulika and Nwabuo Okeke-Uzodike. p. 27

<sup>172</sup> Cheeseman, Nic 2015, p. 35

## Elections and conflicts

David Carment argues that violent conflicts involve a crisis of legitimacy in which both state and society become arenas for open conflict and reformed-minded leaders lose ground to ethnic nationalists through the electoral process.<sup>173</sup> In Kenya for example, the unity between different regions of the country has failed especially during election time due to self-serving bases of power controlled by the elites. Kenya has witnessed a series of election-related violence with increasing magnitude in 1992, 1997, 2007, and 2017 often caused by a real or perceived manipulation of elections. The violence leads to the loss of lives and destruction of property as supporters of rival parties clash, characterized by youth directing and coordinating the attacks.<sup>174</sup>

Following an almost 17-year reign of President Joseph Kabila in the DRC and controversial elections results in 2006 and 2011, there were internal and external pressures to end the legitimacy crisis. Despite reports of widespread irregularities, voter suppression, and violence,<sup>175</sup> the country held its fairly peaceful elections in December 2018 with the results of the elections announced amidst tensions and allegations of tampering by some candidates. The country, therefore, holds prospects for democratic stability, improvement in security, and development infrastructures.<sup>176</sup> In the time of political and social upheaval, when insecurity prevails, corrupt ethnic leaders/elites have taken advantage of the uncertainty to consolidate their power and promise benefits for their ethnic or political groups.<sup>177</sup>

In South Sudan, the elites fuel ethnic violence through social and political manipulation. In his address to the nation on Independence Day, 9th July 2011, President Salva Kiir was criticized for not acknowledging or recognizing the presence of his Vice President.<sup>178</sup> People thus, questioned if the president was already planning to work independently and segregate other ethnic communities. Issues of ethnic identity were already a concern when the country celebrated its independence. There were fears that the exclusion of other ethnic groups would lead to violence. An African Argument Insider Newsletter reports that when violence erupted in Juba in December 2013, people were identified by their names. One was asked their name in Dinka and if he/she could not respond, he/she was shot on the spot. Thus, ethnic identity determined whether you are a victim or an aggressor.<sup>179</sup> The ethnic leaders united the communities together based on ethnic identity to organize and mobilize militarily. The Dinka formed the government military while the Nuer formed the anti-government military. As such, the South Sudan conflict is seen as both ethnically and politically driven.

<sup>173</sup> D., Carment, "Exploiting Ethnicity: Political Elites and Domestic Conflict," *Harvard International Review* 28, no. 4 (2007): 62, Accessed June 8, 2019, url: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42763144>.

<sup>174</sup> Adeagbo, Oluwafemi. (2011). p. 175

<sup>175</sup> Human Rights Watch. 2019.

<sup>176</sup> Naila Salihu.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>178</sup> Johnson, F.H., *South Sudan: The Untold Story From Independence to Civil War*, p. 166.

<sup>179</sup> African arguments, *Choosing to be a Dinka: Selecting Ethnicity Remains Elite's Privilege*, AA Insiders Newsletter, February 28, 2018, Accessed June 8, 2019, url: <https://africanarguments.org/2014/02/28/choosing-to-be-a-dinka-selecting-ethnicity-remains-an-elite-privilege/>.

## *Geopolitical Interests*

Geopolitical interests at the regional and global levels fuel conflicts in the region leaving governments and the people at the mercy of external influences that they cannot always control. A good example is the role of Burundi, Uganda, and Rwanda in the South Sudan conflict. The interconnectedness between the various conflict drivers renders the resolution of the conflict in the region challenging since the origin of the civil war is multidimensional. The emergence and intensity of violent conflicts in the DRC have their roots in regional and global dimensions, specifically: (i) the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and its aftermath that led to an influx of refugees in Eastern DRC, which exacerbated existing ethnic antagonism and led to an imbalance in ethnic group balance in the Great Lakes region; (ii) the involvement of neighboring countries in DRC war by Angola, Uganda, Rwanda to protect their national interests which included dealing with rebel groups from their respective countries that posed threats to their national security<sup>180</sup>; (iii) the DRC was viewed as an open frontier to control and exploit its natural resources; (iv) the agitation for nationality and identity by DRC's eastern neighbors; and (v) the dominance of Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) in the natural resource sector among other factors.

Geopolitical interests have largely contributed to the crisis in South Sudan, notably the deep mistrust between Uganda and Sudan; security concerns and strategic national interests by Ethiopia; and Eritrea's interests to improve its own political and economic vulnerability; Kenya's interest to dissuade the mounting tensions along its common border with South Sudan as well as preserve its economic and financial interests in South Sudan; and Egypt's interest in the Nile waters.<sup>181</sup>

Kenya intervened in Somalia to combat the reign of Al-Shabaab and as a preventative measure to wanton attacks by the militants in several locations in the country. Kenya's intervention in Somalia is also viewed as an opportunity to advance its own political, economic, and security interests in Somalia. There is an ongoing maritime border dispute between Kenya and Somalia which is before the International Court of Justice. The disputed border has lucrative oil and gas reserves. Kenya continues to maintain its military presence in Somalia as part of the Africa Union's support for Somalia's fragile governance system.<sup>182</sup>

Overall, it can be concluded that the drivers of conflicts in DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya are complex because the various actors raise a multiplicity of grievances to justify their involvement in violence. It is therefore important to understand the web of different actors involved in the conflicts within each country to adequately analyze the existing conflicts in each country under the study.

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<sup>180</sup> H., Venugopalan, Understanding the Conflict in Congo, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), May 2016, Issue No. 139, 4-7, [https://orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ORF\\_IssueBrief\\_139\\_Venugopalan\\_Final.pdf](https://orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ORF_IssueBrief_139_Venugopalan_Final.pdf).

<sup>181</sup> Mesfin, Berouk. 2015.

<sup>182</sup> "Insights on the Peace and Security Council: Session on Kenya-Somalia maritime boundary dispute," The Elephant, September 4, 2019, <https://www.theelephant.info/documents/insights-on-the-peace-and-security-council-session-on-kenya-somalia-maritime-boundary-dispute/>

## Categories of Key Actors of the Conflicts in DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya

The key actors of the conflicts in DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya can be broadly grouped into primary, secondary, and third party players. The primary parties are the direct actors in a conflict situation. They are those who are directly involved in the conflict. In most cases, they have the decision-making power to determine whether the conflict will be constructive or destructive. Their goals are incompatible. For example, in the South Sudan conflict, Tethloach Ruey mentions four parties that were key actors of the conflict. These are the SPLM-In-Government (SPLM-IG), led by Salva Kiir, the SPLM-In-Opposition, led by Taban Deng (SPLM-IO-Taban), the SPLM-In-Opposition, led by Riek Machar (SPLM-IO-Riek) and the SPLM-Former Detainees (SPLM-FD), led by Pagan Amum.<sup>183</sup> The Salva Kiir, Taban Deng, and Pa'gan Amum led groups' main interests are to ensure that Kiir's government remains in power, by all means, making sure that its threats are completely wiped out. The Riek Machar led group on the other hand is aimed at overthrowing the government and capturing power. The South Sudan civil war outcome solely depends on their actions and decisions since they have a direct stake in the outcome of the conflict. In the DRC, some of the primary actors include the state, Congolese armed forces, political actors, individuals in government, and armed groups, and MONUSCO.

The secondary parties are never directly involved in the conflict but are either allies or sympathizers. In the South Sudan conflict, China, Ethiopia, Kenya, Egypt, Uganda, and Sudan have shown interest in the conflict. A 2019 Sentry Report highlights that "while many international companies benefit from South Sudan's violent kleptocratic system, some have provided direct support to actors perpetrating violence."<sup>184</sup> Secondary actors in DRC include the United States, which is the largest foreign aid donor to DRC and the largest financial contributor to MONUSCO; Burundi, Uganda, and Rwanda that support militia groups in the Eastern Congo;<sup>185</sup> mining companies; and trade partners like China, which is DRC's biggest trade partner and the largest consumer of Congolese copper and cobalt.<sup>186</sup>

The third parties are those that have taken the responsibility to engage in mediation, arbitration, dialogue, and other intermediary roles. While from the onset of the conflict, the majority of the third parties may just act as observers, the magnitude of the conflict and its consequences may pull them to be involved. For example, the neighboring countries that host refugees from South Sudan have been more involved in trying to ensure there is the restoration of peace in the young nation. Tethloach Ruey mentions that third parties in the South Sudan civil war include the African Union (AU), IGAD, the Troika nations (United Kingdom, United States, and Norway), and the UN.<sup>187</sup> From the onset of the war, these actors have actively been involved in mediation with efforts to unite Machar and Kiir. The

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<sup>183</sup> R., Tethloach, *The South Sudanese Conflict Analysis. Conflict Profile, Causes, Actors and Dynamics*, Munich, GRIN Verlag, 2017, Accessed June 7, 2019, url: <https://www.grin.com/document/411993>

<sup>184</sup> The Sentry, "The Taking of South Sudan: The Tycoons, Brokers, and Multinational Corporations Complicit in Hijacking the World's Newest State," September 2019, 2, <https://cdn.thesentry.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/TakingOfSouthSudan-Sept2019-TheSentry.pdf>.

<sup>185</sup> KST, "After the elections, a shifting military landscape in the Kivus," Kivu Security Tracker, February 14, 2019, <https://blog.kivusecurity.org/after-the-elections-a-shifting-military-landscape-in-the-kivus/>

<sup>186</sup> Congressional Research Service. *Democratic Republic of Congo: Background and U.S. Relations* (2019), 12.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid

IGAD and AU have however been challenged by the Machar-led group for supporting Kiir and even in detaining Machar.<sup>188</sup> All in all, we can conclude that the local and regional interventions have had some impact on the South Sudan conflict. In Kenya, examples of third-party actors include humanitarian organizations, civil society and religious groups, and the African Union. In conclusion, the complicity of actors in conflict within the region, cannot be overemphasized. The actors to the conflict whether primary, secondary, or third parties mark an existing conflict indelibly. Consequently, understanding who the actors in a conflict are as well as their perceived grievances is integral to accurately analyze a conflict situation to seek lasting solutions to the conflict.

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid

# METHODOLOGY

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# INTRODUCTION

## 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.<sup>189</sup> The 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, Kenya, and South Sudan. Examples of professions represented by respondents included 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 three countries. The research only included participants over the age of 18 years who gave their informed consent to participate in the study.

## Sampling Procedure

Convenience and purposive methods of non-probability sampling were used. First, the countries were selected purposively to represent various conflict situations in the continent. 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.

## Data Collection Tool

A questionnaire was designed while guided by the objectives of the study as well as the findings of the literature review. The questionnaire included both open-ended and closed-ended questions designed around 64 indicators for measuring conflict levels. To test the validity and reliability of the tools, the study included a wider consultation with experts in the field, as well as a test run of the questions with individuals in different countries. There was also a roundtable discussion on the reliability of the tool with experts in peacebuilding. From the above consultations, 34 indicators were validated as appropriate for measuring different stages of conflict in a country (see a copy of the questionnaire in Appendix A). A draft questionnaire was developed and translated from English to French, and later subjected to a pilot test. After making the necessary adjustments to address the issues that emerged during the pilot test, the tool was approved for official dissemination.

<sup>189</sup> University of Southern California, “Research guides,” <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/researchdesigns>

## Data Collection Procedure

A total of 615 questionnaires were filled in across the three countries. Some of the questionnaires were administered as hard copies, especially in South Sudan and DRC, while in Kenya a majority of the questionnaires were administered online through SurveyMonkey an online data collection software. In Kenya, data was collected from 323 respondents, 308 of the respondents were from Survey Monkey, and 15 were hard copies. The SurveyMonkey questionnaires were especially helpful taking into account that the country was under a partial lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

For South Sudan data was collected from 140 respondents, 133 hard copies, and seven from SurveyMonkey. Internet connectivity in South Sudan is not established countrywide therefore, most of the questionnaires administered were hard copies. Furthermore, due to COVID-19 containment measures as well as South Sudan's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), traveling was restricted. This situation also limited the collection of data as many offices were opening later in the day and closing just after 1.00 pm local time. Schools and universities were also closed, and these would have been relevant locations for data collection. Therefore, while some questionnaires reached respondents in Torit in Eastern Equatorial, Bor in Jonglei state, Kajo Keji, and Yei in Central Equatoria. Most respondents from other parts of South Sudan were located within Juba in their communities or workshops, and conferences.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, 152 questionnaires were submitted, 144 hard copies, and eight from SurveyMonkey. The research was conducted in the Eastern region of the DRC with 98% of the respondents coming from North Kivu. Similar to Kenya and South Sudan the data collection procedure was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic which restricted travel for the research assistant. Also, limited financial resources restricted the amount of travel that could be done to reach respondents. Lastly, insecurity in the region also limited the data collection process. Beyond this, similar to South Sudan internet connectivity is limited in the region, therefore most of the questionnaires administered were hard copies.



# DATA ANALYSIS

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## DATA ANALYSIS

### Application of Conflict Monitoring Tool and Data Analysis

Below is a summary of the data analysis procedure and report for the three countries. Data analysis for Kenya was undertaken as per regions within the country, while the data analysis for South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo was analyzed as a country. For DRC data collection only took place in the Eastern part of the country.

Data analysis was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods. Content analysis was applied for questions 13 and 15 of the questionnaire which were open-ended questions. Statistical descriptive analysis was applied to questions 1 – 6 and 14. Questions 1 – 3 were mainly used to get an indication of the profession (to identify the source of information given) and location (to identify the location of conflict). On the other hand questions, 3 – 6 and 14 gave additional information on the current conflict in the region, thus giving background information on the level of conflict index calculated. Finally, questions, 7 – 12 were used to identify and calculate the level of conflict using a formula developed by the Centre for Research, Teaching, and Publication (CRTP) to specifically calculate the level of conflict.

Below is the specific procedure for analyzing the level of conflict.

#### *Step 1: Identification of Indicators of Conflict*

Thirty-four (34) 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 five levels of conflict are listed in Appendix B.

#### *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 choices 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 an enabling environment that allows economic activities to proceed without interruption  
(The consistent observation of this indicator means that the country is experiencing peace.)

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

[L1I1]: There are complaints of economic hardships (drastic increase in inflation, high cost of living)  
(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 an enabling environment envisioned in L0I1 will be accompanied by consistently observed complaints of economic hardships 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: HIPSIR Research)

Table 5 below presents a summary of country-weighted means per each of the 34 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: Country-weighted means per each of the 34 indicators**

| Conflict Level | Indicator  | South Sudan | DRC        |
|----------------|--|-------------|------------|
|                | There is an enabling environment that allows economic activities to proceed without interruption.              | 1.5         | 1.8        |
|                | There is peaceful co-existence between different ethnic communities  | 1.5         | 1.1        |
|                | The government at different levels are providing adequate public services                                      | 1.6         | 1.9        |
| <b>Level 0</b> | There are good relations between the government and the international community                                | 1.6         | 1.6        |
|                | There is a perceived equitable distribution of resources   | 1.9         | 2.4        |
|                | There is perceived low levels of corruption  | 1.9         | 2.3        |
|                | There is the enjoyment of human rights (bill of rights)  | 1.7         | 2.0        |
|                | <b>Levels Totals</b>   | <b>1.7</b>  | <b>1.9</b> |
|                | There are complaints of economic hardships, e.g. high cost of living   | 2.6         | 2.5        |
|                | Unresolved historical grievances   | 2.5         | 2.1        |
| <b>Level 1</b> | Perceived social exclusion by some communities/groups  | 2.6         | 1.9        |
|                | There are reports of hate-speech or inflammatory remarks by leaders and youth groups                           | 2.5         | 1.3        |
|                | There is a rise in the level of criminal activities/gang groups  | 2.5         | 2.4        |
|                | Discontent over lack of social services by the government  | 2.5         | 2.1        |
|                | <b>Levels Totals</b>   | <b>2.5</b>  | <b>2.1</b> |
|                | There are violent demonstrations /riots  | 0.9         | 2.3        |
|                | There is the acquisition of small arms and light weapons by non-state actors                                   | 1.3         | 2.4        |
|                | The protagonists have a preference for an armed violent confrontation over the peaceful resolution of conflict | 1.5         | 1.3        |
| <b>Level 2</b> | Existence of inter-ethnic /clan mobilization or groupings for violence   | 1.5         | 1.6        |

|                 |   |            |            |
|-----------------|---|------------|------------|
|                 | There is an increase in negative propaganda to promote violence   | 1.5        | 1.6        |
|                 | There is increased reports of human rights violation e.g. theft, armed robbery, police brutality, gender, and sexual-based violence, etc. | 1.6        | 2.5        |
|                 | There is a disruption of economic activities e.g. looting and theft of property   | 1.6        | 2.2        |
|                 | <b>Levels Totals</b>  | <b>1.4</b> | <b>2.0</b> |
|                 | There is open conflict between different groups and damage to properties  | 1.5        | 2.2        |
|                 | There is a media information blackout   | 1.6        | 1.6        |
| <b>Level 3</b>  | Government is unable to provide security to its citizens as a result of conflict  | 1.6        | 2.3        |
|                 | There is the displacement of citizens which could lead to a humanitarian crisis as a result of conflict                                   | 1.6        | 1.6        |
|                 | There is the presence of government security forces to intervene against violent conflict   | 1.6        | 1.0        |
|                 | There is the presence of UN-peace keepers to intervene against violent conflict   | 1.5        | 0.9        |
|                 | The imposition of international sanctions against the government  | 1.5        | 1.3        |
|                 | <b>Levels Totals</b>  | <b>1.6</b> | <b>1.6</b> |
|                 | There is a reduction in the intensity of warfare  | 1.6        | 1.5        |
|                 | There is ceasefire  | 1.5        | 1.7        |
|                 | Some combatants have surrendered their arms   | 1.5        | 0.9        |
| <b>Level -2</b> | Some combatants are moving to cantonment areas  | 1.5        | 1.6        |
|                 | Key actors in conflict are involved in peace processes  | 1.4        | 1.9        |
|                 | Peace agreements have been signed by the protagonists   | 1.4        | 1.6        |
|                 | Peacebuilding activities have been initiated  | 1.4        | 0.9        |
|                 | <b>Levels Totals</b>  | <b>1.5</b> | <b>1.4</b> |
|                 | Refugees and IDPs are returning home  | 1.6        | 0.9        |
|                 | Regular economic activities are resuming  | 1.7        | 0.9        |
| <b>Level -1</b> | There is an improved security situation as a result of the presence of government security agencies to protect civilians                  | 1.7        | 1.5        |
|                 | A government justice process has been initiated to address conflict crimes  | 1.8        | 1.8        |
|                 | There is an absence of violence or fear of violence   | 1.8        | 2.1        |
|                 | The causes of conflict are currently being addressed  | 1.9        | 1.9        |
|                 | <b>Levels Totals</b>  | <b>1.6</b> | <b>1.5</b> |

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

**Table 6: Region-weighted means for Kenya per each of the 34 indicators**

| Conflict Level | Indicator   | Central    | Coast      | Eastern    | Nairobi    | North Eastern | Rift Valley | Western    |
|----------------|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|-------------|------------|
|                | There is an enabling environment that allows economic activities to proceed without interruption.   | 0.0        | 1.2        | 1.1        | 0.9        | 1.2           | 1.3         | 1.1        |
|                | There is peaceful co-existence between different ethnic communities   | 0.3        | 0.9        | 1.1        | 0.9        | 0.9           | 1.2         | 0.9        |
|                | The government at different levels are providing adequate public services   | 1.6        | 1.5        | 1.5        | 1.3        | 1.5           | 1.5         | 1.3        |
| <b>Level 0</b> | There are good relations between the government and the international community   | 1.5        | 1.2        | 1.1        | 0.8        | 1.3           | 1.0         | 0.9        |
|                | There is perceived equitable distribution of resources  | 1.8        | 1.8        | 1.9        | 1.7        | 2.5           | 1.7         | 1.7        |
|                | There is perceived low levels of corruption   | 2.8        | 2.1        | 2.1        | 2.5        | 2.6           | 1.9         | 1.9        |
|                | There is enjoyment of human rights (bill of rights)   | 2          | 1.5        | 1.6        | 1.4        | 2.2           | 1.4         | 1.5        |
|                | <b>Levels Totals</b>  | <b>1.4</b> | <b>1.5</b> | <b>1.5</b> | <b>1.4</b> | <b>1.7</b>    | <b>1.4</b>  | <b>1.3</b> |
|                | There are complaints of economic hardships, e.g. high cost of living  | 3          | 2.4        | 2.6        | 2.8        | 2.1           | 2.1         | 2.4        |
|                | Unresolved historical grievances  | 2.3        | 2.0        | 2.5        | 2.4        | 2.0           | 2.1         | 2.1        |
| <b>Level 1</b> | Perceived social exclusion by some communities/groups   | 2          | 1.9        | 2.4        | 2.4        | 2.0           | 2.2         | 1.6        |
|                | There are reports of hate-speech or inflammatory remarks by leaders and youth groups  | 2.3        | 1.9        | 2.3        | 2.4        | 2.0           | 1.9         | 1.7        |
|                | There is a rise in the level of criminal activities/gang groups   | 2          | 2.2        | 1.9        | 2.2        | 1.7           | 1.8         | 1.7        |
|                | Discontent over lack of social services by the government   | 2.5        | 2.1        | 2.1        | 2.3        | 2.1           | 2.0         | 1.7        |
|                | <b>Levels Totals</b>  | <b>2.4</b> | <b>2.1</b> | <b>2.3</b> | <b>2.4</b> | <b>2.0</b>    | <b>2.0</b>  | <b>1.8</b> |
|                | There are violent demonstrations / riots  | 1.0        | 1.4        | 1.6        | 1.8        | 1.2           | 1.5         | 1.7        |
|                | There is acquisition of small arms and light weapons by non-state actors  | 0.7        | 1.5        | 1.7        | 1.2        | 1.2           | 1.3         | 0.9        |
|                | The protagonist have preference to armed violent confrontation over peaceful resolution to conflict                                       | 0.7        | 1.5        | 1.4        | 1.1        | 0.9           | 1.6         | 1.3        |
| <b>Level 2</b> | Existence of inter-ethnic /clan mobilization or groupings for violence  | 1.3        | 1.4        | 1.9        | 1.77       | 1.59          | 2.1         | 1.5        |
|                | There is an increase in negative propaganda to promote violence   | 1.7        | 1.6        | 1.7        | 1.9        | 1.6           | 1.9         | 1.7        |
|                | There is increased reports of human rights violation e.g. theft, armed robbery, police brutality, gender, and sexual-based violence, etc. | 2.7        | 2.1        | 2.1        | 2.4        | 1.8           | 2.0         | 1.9        |

|                 |  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
|-----------------|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                 | There is a disruption of economic activities e.g. looting and theft of property  | 1.3        | 1.8        | 2.0        | 2.0        | 1.8        | 1.8        | 1.6        |
|                 | <b>Levels Totals</b>   | <b>1.3</b> | <b>1.6</b> | <b>1.8</b> | <b>1.7</b> | <b>1.4</b> | <b>1.7</b> | <b>1.5</b> |
|                 | There is open conflict between different groups and damage of properties   | 0.0        | 1.5        | 1.6        | 1.2        | 1.8        | 1.7        | 1.2        |
|                 | There is media information blackout  | 0.6        | 1.2        | 1.0        | 1.0        | 1.5        | 1.1        | 1.1        |
| <b>Level 3</b>  | Government is unable to provide security to its citizens as a result of conflict   | 0.3        | 1.6        | 1.4        | 1.5        | 1.4        | 1.8        | 1.4        |
|                 | There is the displacement of citizens which could lead to a humanitarian crisis as a result of conflict                  | 0.7        | 1.4        | 1.6        | 1.4        | 1.4        | 1.9        | 1.5        |
|                 | There is presence of government security forces to intervene against violent conflict                                    | 1.0        | 1.7        | 1.9        | 1.7        | 1.7        | 2.0        | 1.7        |
|                 | There is presence of UN-peace keepers to intervene against violent conflict  | 0.7        | 0.9        | 0.8        | 0.6        | 0.5        | 0.6        | 0.6        |
|                 | Imposition of international sanctions against the government   | 0.01       | 0.7        | 0.6        | 0.6        | 0.2        | 0.5        | 0.4        |
|                 | <b>Levels Totals</b>   | <b>0.5</b> | <b>1.3</b> | <b>1.3</b> | <b>1.1</b> | <b>1.2</b> | <b>1.4</b> | <b>1.1</b> |
|                 | There is a reduction in the intensity of warfare   | 2.5        | 1.3        | 1.4        | 1.6        | 1.4        | 1.2        | 1.1        |
|                 | There is ceasefire   | 2.3        | 1.2        | 1.6        | 1.8        | 1.3        | 1.5        | 1.5        |
|                 | Some combatants have surrendered their arms  | 3          | 1.5        | 1.9        | 2.1        | 2.0        | 1.7        | 1.9        |
| <b>Level -2</b> | Some combatants are moving to cantonment areas   | 3          | 1.5        | 2.2        | 2.5        | 2.2        | 2.0        | 2.2        |
|                 | Key actors in conflict are involved in peace processes   | 3          | 1.3        | 1.4        | 1.7        | 1.8        | 1.0        | 1.5        |
|                 | Peace agreements have been signed by protagonist   | 3          | 1.5        | 1.5        | 1.8        | 1.8        | 1.5        | 2.1        |
|                 | Peacebuilding activities have been initiated   | 1.5        | 1.1        | 0.7        | 1.1        | 1.7        | 0.9        | 1.39       |
|                 | <b>Levels Totals</b>   | <b>2.6</b> | <b>1.3</b> | <b>1.5</b> | <b>1.8</b> | <b>1.7</b> | <b>1.4</b> | <b>1.6</b> |
|                 | Refugees and IDPs are returning back home  | 2.3        | 1.7        | 1.9        | 1.6        | 1.8        | 1.5        | 1.3        |
|                 | Regular economic activities are resuming   | 2          | 1.1        | 0.9        | 1.1        | 1.4        | 0.8        | 0.8        |
| <b>Level -1</b> | There is an improved security situation as a result of the presence of government security agencies to protect civilians | 2.3        | 1.0        | 1.0        | 1.3        | 1.2        | 1.1        | 1.1        |
|                 | A government justice process has been initiated to address conflict crimes   | 2.7        | 1.4        | 1.4        | 1.6        | 2          | 1.4        | 1.7        |

|  |  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
|--|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  | There is an absence of violence or fear of violence  | 1.7        | 1.4        | 1.3        | 1.8        | 1.5        | 1.3        | 1.1        |
|  | The causes of conflict are currently being addressed | 2.5        | 1.4        | 1.3        | 1.6        | 1.5        | 1.2        | 1.6        |
|  | <b>Levels Totals</b>                                 | <b>2.2</b> | <b>1.3</b> | <b>1.3</b> | <b>1.5</b> | <b>1.6</b> | <b>1.2</b> | <b>1.3</b> |

(Source: HIPSIR 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 10: Formula for Calculating the Conflict Level**

$$C1 = \frac{\sum cij[(fij)Wij]}{\sum(cijfij)}$$

Where

- C1 = the conflict level
- cij = the constant of the i<sup>th</sup> row in the j<sup>th</sup> column
- fij = the frequency for the ith row under the jth column
- wij = the weighting for the ith row under the jth 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)

The findings of the HIPSIR CMT (2020) are in the following section.

## Data Analysis Reports

### Kenya

As a departure from the CMT-2019 data analysis, in 2020, the CMT data analysis involved regional analysis for Kenya, to establish a nuanced understanding of conflict dynamics as per the existing regions in Kenya. From the CMT-2019, it was understood that conflict drivers in Kenya are different across regions hence the necessity to disaggregate the data in the CMT-2020. For the CMT-2020 seven regions were designated in Kenya as follows:

#### Central Region

The Central region of the country includes five counties which are Kirinyaga, Kiambu, Muranga, Nyandarua, and Nyeri counties. With a total population of 5,482, 239 between the five counties, the region also has one of the most populous counties (Kiambu country). The county is also one of the richest counties in the country contributing 5.5% to the Gross Domestic Product as per the 2019 Gross County Product report.<sup>190</sup> According to the National Crime Research Centre (NCRC) statistics, some of the most chronic crimes and security risks in the region are muggings and theft of stock (including cattle rustling).<sup>191</sup>

4 respondents - It should be noted that the respondents from this region were significantly low in number and this limits the analysis of the conflict situation in the region.

Counties included in the region: Nyeri (1), Kiambu (3)

Level of Conflict: - 0.16.

Fifty percent of the respondents indicated that domestic violence was the most prevalent human rights violation in the Central region. This was followed by sexual and gender-based violence and police brutality both rated as most prevalent by 25% of the respondents. According to research carried out by the National Crime Research Centre (NCRC) on gender-based violence in Kenya, Nyeri County was found to have an incidence prevalence of 71.4% of Hitting/Battering/Beatings as a form of gender-based violence.<sup>192</sup> Also, domestic violence had a prevalence of 52.4% thus indicating the prevalence of domestic violence and SGBV in the region. When asked what they perceived as the key drivers of conflict in their region, 75% of the respondents highlighted that high levels of corruption were the most prominent conflict driver, followed by government failure at 50%. Historical unaddressed grievances were also categorized as the most prominent conflict driver by 25% of the respondents.

With regard to identifying the main actors of the existing conflict in the Central region, respondents felt that Government (police, army) was most responsible for the conflict at 75%, this was followed by prominent individuals, who were most responsible for the conflict according to 25% of the respondents. Concerning challenges impacting the

<sup>190</sup> Kenya National Bureau of Standards (KNBS), Gross County Product 2019 report, 2019, 7, url: <https://africacheck.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Gross-county-Product-County-GDP.pdf>

<sup>191</sup> National Crime Research Centre, County Data, Kiambu, <http://www.crimeresearch.go.ke/kiambu/>

<sup>192</sup> National Crime Research Centre, Gender based Violence in Kenya, 2014, 28, [http://crimeresearch.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/wwwroot\\_publications\\_Gender-Based-Violence-in-Kenya.pdf](http://crimeresearch.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/wwwroot_publications_Gender-Based-Violence-in-Kenya.pdf)

resolution of the conflict 100% of the respondents observed that lack of political will and mistrust among parties in conflict were the most significant challenges facing the successful resolution of the conflict in the region. Other significant challenges were an authoritative government at 75%. The respondents also highlighted other challenges in resolving conflict. These were a fragile government, negotiations not involving all parties, unmet demands from conflict parties, and unresolved grievances from past conflicts all at 67%.

## Recommendations

Respondents shared several suggestions for addressing the existing conflict in the central region. To begin with, resolving the conflict would involve the whole community as each one had a role to play. This meant including religious and community leaders more in peace processes. Having said this, the government was still expected to lead by example and make a significant contribution to the resolution of the conflict. It was also suggested that corruption should be addressed and there should be equity in the sharing of resources. Finally, historical grievances should be resolved.

In conclusion, the level of conflict in the Central region is – 0.16. This conflict indicates a level of perceivable peace, which may have underlying structural tensions. Therefore, while in the Central region is not open conflict there exist systemic injustices especially concerning gender-based violence and police brutality. As highlighted by the respondents this was perceived as being caused by high levels of corruption and government failure. For example, security forces do little to address incidences of gender-based violence in the region. Also, systemic injustices are reflected by high levels of corruption, which means justice is at times skewed and opportunities, especially economic opportunities are not equitably distributed. This is further emphasized by the fact that most of the respondents felt that the government was most to blame for the conflict. Therefore in the Central region, there is the sense that government has a significant role to play in addressing existing injustices in the region and that it has so far not met the expectations of the citizens.

## Coast Region

For the Coast region of Kenya, the CMT research included Kilifi, Kwale, Lamu, and Mombasa counties. Some of the cross-cutting security issues in the region include the prevalence of drug abuse as well as stealing, theft of stock, and murder. Notably, Lamu is one of the poorest counties in the country and has been plagued with issues of terrorism.<sup>193</sup>

53 respondents

Counties included in the region: Kilifi (13), Kwale (6), Lamu (3), and Mombasa (31)

Level of Conflict: 0.85

Police brutality (42%) and resource-based conflict (40%) were the most prevalent conflicts

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<sup>193</sup> National Crime Research Centre, County Data, Lamu, <http://www.crimeresearch.go.ke/lamu2/>

in the Coast region. Respondents also indicated that sexual and gender-based violence (39%) and theft (38%) were some of the most prevalent conflicts or human rights violations in the region. During a focus discussion group (FDG) in Malindi, participants<sup>194</sup> shed light on why theft was highly prevalent in the Coast region by pointing to the prevalence of drug abuse in the region, which had taken a toll on youth in particular and negatively impacted the family unit. In many instances drug addicts turned to theft to sustain their habit, thus manifesting in a high incidence of theft in the region. The focus discussion group participants also emphasized the high prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in Malindi. Participants reported that during election cycles SGBV increased. However, it had also significantly increased within the reporting period because of COVID-19. Participants reported that SGBV in the area included rape, molestation of both boys and girls, incest, and domestic violence. For example participants from the gender-based violence, network reported that six out of ten houses in the Malindi area experience domestic violence each day, underscoring the prevalence of SGBV in the Coast region.

**Figure 11: Types of Conflict / Human rights violations most prevalent in Coast Region**

| Types of Conflict/HR Violations  | Highly prevalent | Moderately prevalent | Less prevalent | Not prevalent | Unsure |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|--------|
| Sexual and Gender Based Violence | 39%              | 35%                  | 18%            | 4%            | 4%     |
| Domestic Violence                | 33%              | 42%                  | 19%            | 4%            | 2%     |
| Armed robbery                    | 37%              | 33%                  | 17%            | 10%           | 4%     |
| Inter-ethnic violence            | 22%              | 20%                  | 36%            | 20%           | 2%     |
| Theft                            | 38%              | 30%                  | 26%            | 2%            | 4%     |
| Cattle rustling                  | 2%               | 0%                   | 18%            | 71%           | 8%     |
| Political violence               | 24%              | 18%                  | 31%            | 20%           | 8%     |
| Violent extremism                | 20%              | 27%                  | 22%            | 18%           | 14%    |
| Resource-based conflict          | 40%              | 38%                  | 8%             | 8%            | 6%     |
| Police brutality                 | 42%              | 23%                  | 27%            | 6%            | 2%     |

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

Similar to the Central region police brutality stood out as the most prevalent type of conflict in the region. Noting that the data collection period for this study was between July and September 2020, this police brutality is linked to the onset of the COVID-19 curfew, which the police force enforced using brutality. For example, Human Rights Watch (HRW) in April 2020 reported that “at least six people died from police violence during the first 10 days of Kenya’s dusk-to-dawn curfew, imposed on March 27, 2020, to contain the spread of Covid-19.”<sup>195</sup> Police brutality was particularly pronounced in the Coast region where citizens were teargassed as they lined up to board the ferry after work hours.<sup>196</sup> Consequently, in

<sup>194</sup> Participants for the Focus Discussion group included participants from county government, the Gender based violence (GBV) network, People living with disabilities (PLWD), religious leaders, civil society, a youth representative, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) and a boda boda representative

<sup>195</sup> “Kenya: Police Brutality During Curfew,” April 22, 2020, Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/22/kenya-police-brutality-during-curfew>

<sup>196</sup> “Kenya: Police Brutality During Curfew,” April 22, 2020, Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/22/kenya-police-brutality-during-curfew>

September 2020, several human rights groups including Amnesty International and Haki Africa filed a case in court seeking compensation from the state on behalf of the victims of police brutality in enforcing curfew laws.<sup>197</sup> Resource-based conflicts also featured prominently indicating the economic challenges of individuals in this region. In the Coast region, the resource-based conflict also included a high prevalence of land conflicts that is, boundary disputes, land grabbing, squatter-land lord conflicts as well as inheritance killings. Specifically, an increase in inheritance killings had been reported with elderly owners of land being killed by relatives seeking to inherit the land. In many instances, the FDG participants emphasized, these killings involved claims of witchcraft against an individual to legitimize a killing.

In terms of identifying key drivers of conflict, most respondents identified high levels of corruption (74%) and unemployment (68%) as the most prominent conflict drivers in the Coast region. The high rate of unemployment in the region was linked to a high incidence of drug abuse, as young unemployed people resorted to drugs and consequently theft to sustain their habit. Other significant drivers of conflict in the region were government failure. Related to this, respondents identified the government as most responsible for the conflict at 51%. Other prominent actors responsible for the conflict or human rights violations in the Coast region were armed groups/political militia groups (45%) and prominent individuals, ascertained by 44% of the respondents. Therefore to address the conflict, respondents rated poor development in the region/country as the most challenging impediment to the successful resolution of the conflict in the region. Other significant challenges towards addressing the conflict in the region as identified by respondents were mistrust amongst parties in conflict at 58% and a fragile government at 56%.

## Recommendations

When asked, respondents shared several recommendations towards addressing the conflict in the Coast region as below:

**Peace initiatives:** Respondents asserted that it was important to bring all the conflicting parties together and find a solution to the problem without being biased. There should also be more public sensitization on peace benefits.

**Security:** Police patrols in the local region should be increased and generally improve security by deploying more security personnel. This will be especially helpful in addressing issues of theft which is a significant security risk in the region, especially due to the prevalence of drug abuse.

**Justice:** Conflicts such as land grabbing by tycoons and government officials and other historical injustices should be promptly resolved.

**Socio-economic:** The government should ensure the equal distribution of opportunities and infrastructure across the county, e.g. availability of hospitals, schools, social halls, etc. Also,

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<sup>197</sup> Andrew Wasike, "Kenya: Legal action taken over cops' lockdown brutality," Anadolu Agency, September 29, 2020, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/kenya-legal-action-taken-over-cops-lockdown-brutality/1983085>

the local people should be involved in county development agendas and important projects like building roads, building infrastructure, and other economic activities, this creates employment, especially for the youth.

In conclusion, the conflict level of 0.85, indicates peace in the region, however, this does not indicate stable peace because there are underlying security risks that require to be addressed. In as much as the conflict in the region is not overt, insecurity exists in the region, occasioned by the poor functioning of existing security structures especially by the government. Unemployment is a significant driver of conflict in the region that could trigger conflict in the future if not effectively addressed. This is especially noteworthy because the youth population in rural areas is significantly high. According to the 2019 census, Kenya had a youth population (people under the age of 35 years) of 35.7 million (75.1%), and 32.73 million of these (68.9%) live in rural areas.<sup>198</sup> In the Coast region, unemployment is further exacerbated by the high prevalence of drug abuse. There is also the general perception that government is responsible for the ongoing challenges in the region, and that the government is not doing enough to address potential drivers of conflict, poor development in the region could also be a key driver of conflict in the region in the future if not adequately addressed by both the county and national governments.

### **Eastern Region**

The Eastern region of Kenya included Kitui, Machakos, Meru, Isiolo, and Samburu counties. While the upper region of the region has a drier climate the lower regions have consistent rainfall. Moreover, the upper regions mostly practice pastoralism, while the lower regions mostly practice agriculture.<sup>199</sup> Conflicts within the region are often boundary conflicts. Furthermore, the National Crime Research Center reports that in 2018, some of the most prevalent crimes across the region were stealing, theft of stock (including cattle rustling), and burglary and breaking.<sup>200</sup> Notably, in Isiolo, the illegal possession of arms and weapons was also one of the most prevalent crimes in the county according to the report.<sup>201</sup>

25 respondents

Counties included in the region: Kitui (1), Machakos (1), Meru (1), Isiolo (21), and Samburu (1).

Level of Conflict: 0.88

Cattle rustling was rated as highly prevalent by 76% of the respondents, indicating that it is the most prevalent conflict or human rights violation in the Eastern region. Other conflicts or human rights violations rated as highly prevalent by most of the respondents included resource-based conflict (75%) and inter-ethnic violence 67%. These observations mirror responses from a focus discussion group (FDG) carried out in Isiolo. The participants pointed to land conflicts as being the most prevalent conflict in the area, whereby two individuals

<sup>198</sup> Wandiri Gitogo, "Census 2019 Data Shows Kenya Has a Youthful Rural Population", The Kenyan Wall Street, March 9, 2020, <https://kenyanwallstreet.com/census-2019-datashows-kenya-has-a-youthful-rural-population/>

<sup>199</sup> National Council of Churches of Kenya, "Upper Eastern Region", <http://www.ncck.org/upper-eastern-region/>

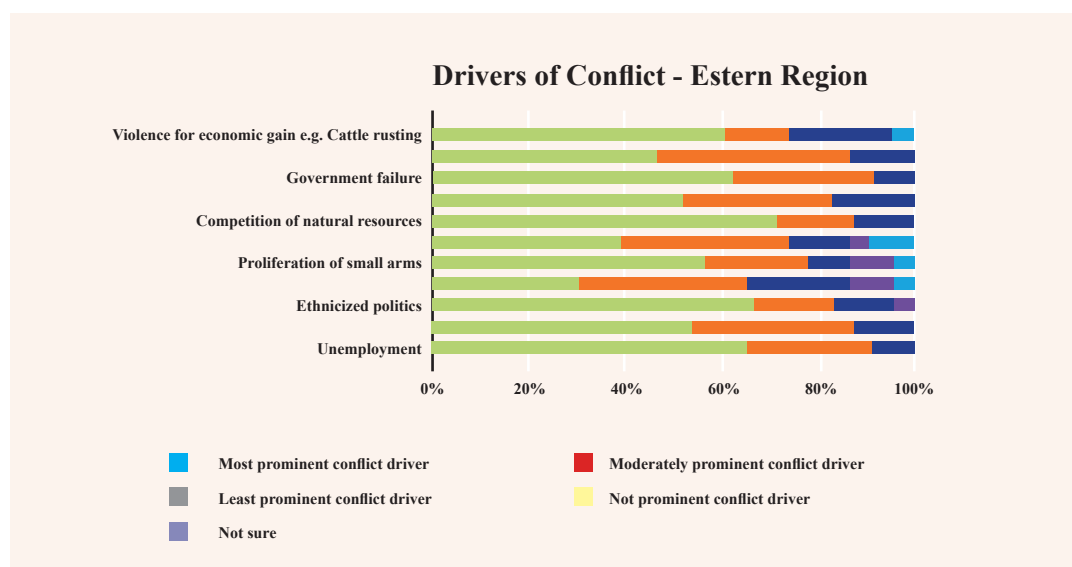
<sup>200</sup> National Crime Research Center, County Data reports, <http://www.crimeresearch.go.ke/#>

<sup>201</sup> National Crime Research Center, County Data, <http://www.crimeresearch.go.ke/isiolo/>

or groups of people claimed ownership of a parcel of land, consequently leading to conflict. In addition, there were also boundary conflicts. For example in Isiolo, there were border conflicts in Isiolo South and part of Garissa and between Isiolo and Meru. This was mainly because there are no clear boundaries. In Isiolo, the FDG participants explained that cattle rustling is a common practice by the Morans. It usually involved circumcised boys, who spent time together and engaged in cattle rustling and gun fighting. However, participants mentioned that this was periodic.

Further to this, respondents perceived the most prominent conflict drivers behind the conflict in the Eastern region to be: competition for natural resources (71%), ethnized politics (67%), and unemployment (65%). This points to economic constraints within the region, especially in Isiolo which was represented by a majority of the respondents. This is in line with a study done in Isiolo which also pointed to competition over natural resources as the most prominent conflict driver by 67% of the respondents, followed by ethnic hatred (46%), and then political competition and lack of opportunities/unemployment, both at 26%.<sup>202</sup> Most of this competition for natural resources in the region is fueled by a “scramble for land”<sup>203</sup> which has led to land scarcity, thus fueling conflict in the region.

**Figure 12: Drivers of Conflict – Eastern Region**



(Source: HIPSIR Research)

In identifying the actors of the conflict, 45% of the respondents identified armed groups/political militia groups as most responsible for the ongoing conflict in the Eastern region. Other respondents pointed to Government (police, army) as being the most responsible (42%) and prominent individuals 39%. A high percentage of the respondents who identified armed groups/political militia groups as most responsible for the conflict points to the reality

<sup>202</sup> “Isiolo County: Crime and Violence Rapid assessment”, World Bank, 2017, 22, <http://crimeresearch.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Isiolo-County-Crime-And-Violence-Rapid-Assessment-Report.pdf>

<sup>203</sup> “Isiolo County: Crime and Violence Rapid assessment”, World Bank, 2017, 23, <http://crimeresearch.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Isiolo-County-Crime-And-Violence-Rapid-Assessment-Report.pdf>

of the availability of small arms and light weapons, which have been used especially in cattle rustling.<sup>204</sup> Consequently, when it came to identifying existing challenges to the successful resolution of the conflict in the region, respondents observed that the most significant challenges to addressing the conflict in the region were mistrust amongst parties in conflict (96%), lack of political goodwill (92%), negotiations not involving all parties (79%) and poor development in the region/country (79%). The FDG in Isiolo also highlighted that the proliferation of small arms and lights weapons was a leading challenge to successfully resolving the conflicts in the region.

## Recommendations

### Peace initiatives

To address the conflict in the region, respondents suggested that all key actors should be involved in peace processes, this includes government, community leaders, and religious leaders. Peace initiatives should also aim at addressing the existing grievances as opposed to quick fixes that aimed at quelling conflict as opposed to tackling the root causes of the conflict. For example in the Isiolo FDG, a respondent pointed out that, “peace agreements are not sustainable. Most times, the community agrees to peace when government officials are present. After they leave, things go back to the start, vengeance must play.” Effective disarmament in the region was also required.

### Government

Political goodwill must be there, this includes the government’s commitment to the disarmament of those that own illegal arms.

### Culture

Lastly, those who circumcise should sensitize the young boys. The chiefs, who are aware when these communities circumcise should use the opportunity to sensitize against cattle raids and rape. This was highlighted because, during the circumcision season, the prevalence of gender-based violence increased (specifically in the Isiolo/Meru region) as a way of proving their initiation. In summary, a 0.88 score for the Eastern region indicates that conflict in the region is not open and widespread; however, there exist conflicts that characterize the region for example competition for natural resources such as water and land, as well as cattle rustling. As some participants mentioned in most instances these low-intensity conflicts flare up during the election period. Therefore if left unaddressed they can morph into an open and high-intensity, widespread conflict in the region. For many of these conflicts, for example, land conflicts, competition for natural resources, and cattle rustling can be effectively resolved with the county and national governments’ dedicated intervention.

### Nairobi

Nairobi region is coterminous with the capital city of the country and it is also the most populous county. It is the center of politics, administration, and economy in Kenya.

<sup>204</sup> “Isiolo County: Crime and Violence Rapid assessment”, World Bank, 2017, 27, <http://crimeresearch.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Isiolo-County-Crime-And-Violence-Rapid-Assessment-Report.pdf>

Economically the county mainly relies significantly on the service sector which accounts for 52.1% of the county's revenue in the areas of community, social and personal services as well as the professional business services sector.<sup>205</sup> Emma Elfversson and Kristine Höglund identify four types of conflict in Nairobi, which are distinct yet intertwined with broader complex conflict dynamics in Kenya. These four types of conflict are 1) Urban land conflict, 2) election-related violence, 3) state repression and extrajudicial violence, and 4) terrorism and radicalization.<sup>206</sup> These conflict types correspond with respondents' perceptions of conflict in Nairobi.

69 respondents

Level of Conflict: 0.7

61% of the respondents perceived police brutality as the most prevalent conflict or human rights violation. Other conflicts or human rights violations rated highly as most prevalent were resource-based conflict (41%), theft (32%), and domestic violence (32%). Similar to the Coast region, Nairobi experienced some of the worst police brutality during the police enforcement of the curfew during the partial lockdown of the city.<sup>207</sup> When asked to identify conflict drivers, 83% of the total number of respondents in the Nairobi region rated high levels of corruption as the most prominent conflict driver in the region. Other prominent conflict drivers as perceived by the respondents included unemployment at 68% and government failure in its mandate to administer fairly, distribute resources equitably, and provide public services efficiently (51%). Corruption in Kenya has been identified as a major impediment to development as well as the delivery of government services to citizens. For example, during the Coronavirus pandemic in September 2020, government officials were alleged to have stolen COVID-19 funds "meant to purchase emergency Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers and hospitals across the country."<sup>208</sup> These allegations have impeded the fight against the pandemic and highlight the level of corruption in the country within the government as well as the private sector. Other major corruption scandals that have been reported in Kenya since 2013 (start of the Uhuru administration) include the Eurobond Scandal, the National Youth Service Scandal, the Arror, and Kimwarer Dams Scandal, the Waluke Maize Scandal, and the Obado Corruption Scandal.<sup>209</sup>

In identifying those most responsible for the conflict in the Nairobi region, most of the respondents 57% pointed to prominent individuals as being most responsible for the conflict in the Nairobi region. Also, 55% of the respondents pointed to government, police, and army as being most responsible, while armed groups/political militia groups were most responsible according to 17% of the respondents. During the data collection period, there was increased activity from prominent individuals as well as the government concerning

<sup>205</sup> InfoTrack Research and Consulting, "County Regions – Nairobi City County," <http://countytrak.infotrakresearch.com/nairobi-city-county/>

<sup>206</sup> Emma Elfversson & Kristine Höglund, "Violence in the city that belongs to no one: urban distinctiveness and interconnected insecurities in Nairobi (Kenya)," *Conflict, Security & Development* 19, 4(2019): 348, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2019.1640493>

<sup>207</sup> "Kenyans protest police brutality in Nairobi - yet again," *Africa News*, July 9, 2020, <https://www.africanews.com/2020/07/09/kenyans-protest-police-brutality-in-nairobi-yet-again/>

<sup>208</sup> Immanuel Iganza, "Coronavirus corruption in Kenya: Officials and businesspeople targeted," *BBC News*, September 24, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54278417>

<sup>209</sup> Karen Koech, "The Kenya's Corruption Journey, A 10 Year Audit on provisions in the constitution on leadership and integrity in curbing graft," *The Youth Café*, September 18, 2020, Accessed December 22, 2020, url: <https://www.theyouthcafe.com/perspectives/the-kenyas-corruption-journey-a-10-year-audit-on-provisions-in-the-constitution-on-leadership-and-integrity-in-curbing-raft>

the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI). This saw prominent political individuals holding meetings, press conferences, and rallies, thus heightening political temperatures, especially in Nairobi being the capital city.

**Figure 13: Actors Responsible for Conflict in Nairobi region**

| Actors                                  | Most prevalent | Moderately responsible | Responsible | Not Responsible | Unsure |
|---|----------------|------------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------|
| Government (Police, army)               | 55%            | 35%                    | 9%          | 1%              | 0%     |
| Armed groups/political militia groups   | 17%            | 29%                    | 22%         | 23%             | 9%     |
| Prominent individuals                   | 57%            | 26%                    | 10%         | 4%              | 1%     |
| Neighboring countries                   | 1%             | 13%                    | 24%         | 37%             | 25%    |
| International state actors (AU, UN, EU) | 1%             | 9%                     | 22%         | 46%             | 22%    |
| Multinational corporations              | 3%             | 12%                    | 28%         | 43%             | 13%    |

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

In terms of addressing the existing conflict in the Nairobi region, 70% of the respondents observed that lack of political goodwill was the most challenging impediment to successfully resolving existing conflict in the Nairobi region. 67% of the respondents on the other hand pointed to mistrust amongst parties in conflict as a significant challenge to resolving the conflict. Finally, 60% of the respondents who answered the question rated unresolved grievances from past conflicts as being most challenging to addressing the conflict in the Nairobi region.

## Recommendations

When asked to share recommendations towards addressing current conflict in the region, respondents shared the following:

### Government:

The government should fight corruption because according to respondents, this is the root cause of most conflicts in the country. Furthermore, the conflicts experienced in Nairobi can only be resolved by way of focused and committed leadership. The government should also be genuinely involved in fighting corruption, from the topmost office. In addition, local leaders should be at the forefront of mediating peace talks with conflicting parties. Therefore, should leaders be found culpable of inciting warring parties, they should immediately lose their posts as leaders. Concerning police brutality, the government should not deny the existence of police brutality rather it should seek to professionalize the police force to better placed to serve as opposed to terrorizing citizens.

### Socio-economic

Conflicts in the region though political are triggered by economic empowerment discrepancies. There needs to be equitable distribution of national wealth to the counties followed by accountability to their use. Thereafter each county should chart out a development plan

that cuts across all wards and involves youth and women, community-based organizations, churches as well as political leaders. If this happens, political conflicts and the cut-throat competition for leadership becomes less of a trigger of conflict.

In summary, a conflict level of 0.7 in the Nairobi region is indicative of unresolved grievances. The capacity of prominent individuals to whip up the emotions of the citizens is high and can lead to high-intensity open conflict. Therefore, prominent individuals have a role to play in de-escalating conflict. Also, the increased incidences of police brutality need to be addressed, because if left unresolved, it can lead to further polarization between the citizens and police force and it would consequently take very little to ignite violent resistance against the police. The high percentage of unemployed youth also requires urgent attention, as a high number of unemployed and frustrated youth also pose a security risk in the Nairobi region.

### **North Eastern**

The North-Eastern region of the country for this research includes Garissa, Mandera, Marsabit, Tana River, and Wajir. This region is the poorest in the country with most economic activities revolving around pastoralism. In addition development indices in the region lag behind the rest of the country.<sup>210</sup> This region has also been negatively impacted by conflicts that take place in neighboring countries, for example, Somalia.

35 respondents

Counties included in the region: Garissa (4), Mandera (6), Marsabit (2), Tana River (20), and Wajir (3)

Level of Conflict: 0.57

58% of the respondents identified inter-ethnic violence as the most prevalent conflict or human rights violation in the North-Eastern region. Also, 54% identified resource-based conflict as the most prevalent conflict while 50% identified sexual and gender-based conflict as the most prevalent conflict in the region. According to a report by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) published in 2019, inter-ethnic conflicts were also described as being most prevalent in the North-Eastern region. In this region, inter-ethnic conflicts are identified as clan conflicts among the various clans in the region. Garissa County is dominated by Ogaden clans, Wajir County the Degodia and Ajuuran clans and Mandera County is dominated by the Garre and Murule clans.<sup>211</sup> This informs respondents' identification of ethnicized conflict as a significant conflict driver with 65% of the respondents rating it as the most prominent conflict driver. Other significant conflict drivers as highlighted by the respondents included competition for natural resources (57%) and historical unaddressed grievances 52%. This is in line with the RUSI report that highlighted competition for scarce natural resources as one

<sup>210</sup> The World Bank, "Boosting prosperity improving equity in North Eastern Kenya," News, May 08, 2018, Accessed December 21, 2020, url: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/05/08/boosting-prosperity-improving-equity-in-north-and-north-eastern-kenya>

<sup>211</sup> Gayatri Sahgal, Timothy Kimaiyo, Abdulrahman Hamo Mohamed, Stephen Rotich, David Karieny and Ahmed Osman WarfaClan, "Conflict and Violent Extremism in the North-Eastern Counties of Kenya," Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, 2019, 7, [https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/20190628\\_cr\\_clan\\_conflict\\_and\\_violent\\_extremism.pdf](https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/20190628_cr_clan_conflict_and_violent_extremism.pdf)

of the major drivers of conflict in the region.<sup>212</sup> Some of these natural resources include water and land.<sup>213</sup> On the other hand, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) carried out in Marsabit pointed to the prevalence of land conflicts including boundary disputes. Cattle rustling also stood out as being a significant conflict in Marsabit. Furthermore, there is also competition for water as well as more fertile land. For example, the FDG in Marsabit highlighted the competition that existed in the area for Saku constituency which is considered more fertile than the surrounding areas. Consequently, according to the participants “the Gabras are encroaching into the Saku constituency from North Horr constituency, and then there is this rivalry between the Borana and Gabra.” They added that “there are targeted killings especially when elections are nearing with the Boranas killing Gabra, Gabra killing Borana and the Rendile killing Gabra/ Borana.” This competition for natural resources also informs inter-ethnic conflict in the region.

In terms of actors, 43% of the respondents identified prominent individuals (such as high profile political leaders and community leaders) as most responsible for the conflict in the area, followed by the government (police, army) rated as most responsible for the conflict by 35% of the respondents and armed groups/political militia groups at 32%. In an attempt to address the conflict in the region, 77% of the respondents rated lack of political will and mistrust amongst parties in conflict as the most challenging obstacles towards achieving peace in the region. Seventy-one percent of the respondents also perceived that unresolved grievances from past conflicts were another very challenging obstacle to achieving peace in the region. The lack of political will and mistrust amongst parties in conflict to address the conflicts in the region can be traced back to the onset of the devolution government which allowed individuals to make political and economic gains, especially through government office.<sup>214</sup> The RUSI report points out that, “where clientelism was an accepted practice such that clan leaders were expected to promote the interest of their clan group in return for electoral support, devolution had increased the benefits of political office.”<sup>215</sup> Competition for political office has therefore been used as a battleground for clan conflicts in the North-Eastern region. The FDG in Marsabit also highlighted that the proliferation of small arms and lights weapons was a leading challenge to successfully resolving conflicts in the region.

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<sup>212</sup> Gayatri Sahgal, Timothy Kimaiyo, Abdulrahman Hamo Mohamed, Stephen Rotich, David Karienyé and Ahmed Osman WarfaClan, “Conflict and Violent Extremism in the North-Eastern Counties of Kenya,” Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, 2019, 7, [https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/20190628\\_cr\\_clan\\_conflict\\_and\\_violent\\_extremism.pdf](https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/20190628_cr_clan_conflict_and_violent_extremism.pdf)

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., 8-9

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 9

**Figure 14: Challenges to addressing conflict in the North-Eastern region**

| Challenges  | Very Challenging | Moderately Challenging | Not a Challenge | Not sure if it is a challenge |
|---|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Lack of political goodwill                        | 77%              | 14%                    | 3%              | 6%                            |
| Authoritative government                          | 37%              | 40%                    | 20%             | 3%                            |
| Fragile government                                | 35%              | 32%                    | 26%             | 6%                            |
| Mis-trust amongst parties in conflict             | 77%              | 17%                    | 3%              | 3%                            |
| Negotiations not involving all parties            | 49%              | 49%                    | 9%              | 3%                            |
| Tensions between parties unabated                 | 54%              | 31%                    | 9%              | 6%                            |
| Breakdown of peace talks                          | 49%              | 34%                    | 14%             | 3%                            |
| Peace agreement not trully implemented            | 63%              | 31%                    | 6%              | 0%                            |
| Unmet demands from conflict parties               | 63%              | 14%                    | 20%             | 3%                            |
| Exclusion of other interest groups in peace talks | 57%              | 26%                    | 11%             | 6%                            |
| External funding of armed groups                  | 34%              | 26%                    | 20%             | 20%                           |
| Availability of small arms and light weapons      | 40%              | 37%                    | 6%              | 17%                           |
| Poor development in the region/country            | 63%              | 37%                    | 0%              | 0%                            |
| Unresolved grievances from past conflicts         | 71%              | 26%                    | 0%              | 3%                            |
| International interference by external actors     | 20%              | 34%                    | 26%             | 20%                           |

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

## Recommendations

### Socio-economic

The Kenyan Government should ensure vocational training centers are fully equipped to offer a wide range of competence-based skills. One respondent specifically highlighted that “Donors like the EU who are supporting the Kenya Red Cross to implement conflict prevention, peace, and economic opportunities projects should extend their project duration because in 2020, Covid-19 has led to the closure of TVETs and all schools in Kenya and I can honestly confirm that the project has brought about behavior change within Somali youths who used to view vocational training as a reserve for those who failed in life to an opportunity to get back on track and be economically independent and ultimately be a productive person within the society.”

### Security

Security apparatus should observe human rights since some of their actions lead to radicalization and the urge for revenge.

### Peace initiatives

Peace processes in the North-Eastern region should use a holistic approach towards peace-building interventions which includes facilitating the participation of youth, women, and people with disabilities in decision making. Also, communities in the region should be involved in the establishment and implementation of the Joint Inter-Communal Dialogue frameworks with the government providing infrastructure and security in marginalized areas. Finally, respondents suggested that community resilience towards peacebuilding should be strengthened.

## Government

There is a need to improve the relationship between government forces and locals, especially concerning excessive force used by security forces to enforce peace. Their relationship is currently tenuous and is thus a fault line to peace efforts in the region. Furthermore, County Governments should ensure they work with the National Government in coming up with modalities to tap into the youths to be peace ambassadors across all the regions.

In summary, with a conflict level of 0.57, this indicates that in as much as there is no open conflict in the North-Eastern region of Kenya, there exist significant threats to the peace and security in the region, these threats include clan tensions that are yet to be resolved. These tensions and competition among clans are further exacerbated by poor development in the region. As a World Bank report notes, the North-Eastern region has significantly lower developmental indices as compared to the national average. For example, the average poverty rate for the region is 68% while the national average is 36%.<sup>216</sup> Poor development if left unaddressed creates an environment of discontent and frustration which can trigger conflict.

## Rift Valley

The Rift Valley region of Kenya includes the following counties, Baringo, Elgeyo Marakwet, Nakuru, Nandi, Narok, Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, Turkana, West Pokot, and Kajiado. It is a vast region within the country with an economy based on agriculture and pastoralism. Significantly much of the tea and horticulture exported by the country comes from this region. According to the National Crime Research Center, most of the crime occurring in the region is Burglary and Breaking and Stealing as well as theft of Stock (including cattle rustling).

58 respondents

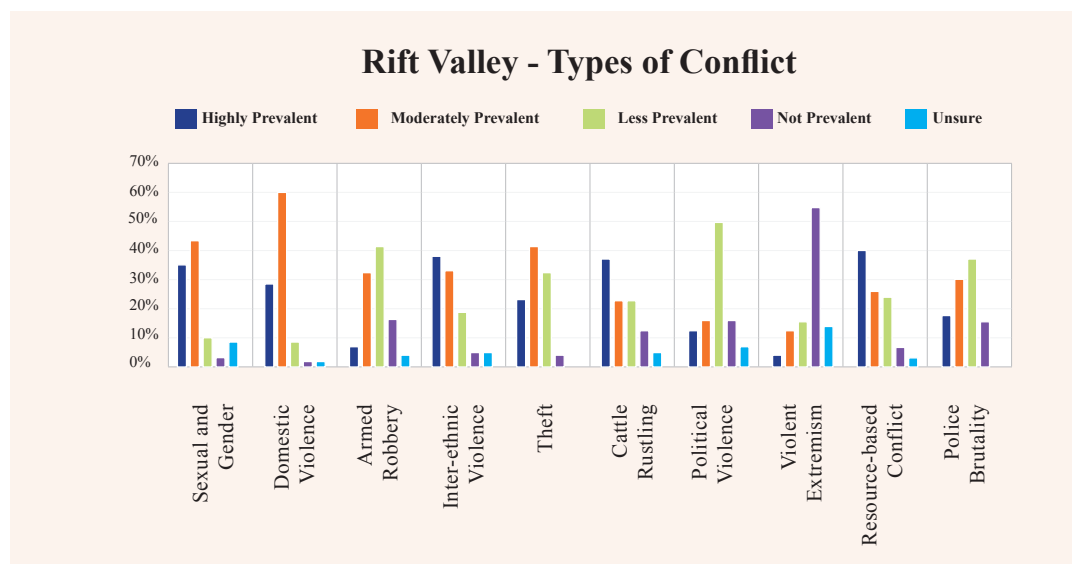
Counties included in the region: Baringo (5), Elgeyo Marakwet (6), Nakuru (12), Nandi (8), Narok (1), Trans Nzoia (1), Uasin Gishu (3), Turkana (7), West Pokot (5) and Kajiado (10).  
Level of Conflict: 0.9

Forty percent of the respondents' highlighted resource-based conflict as being the most prevalent type of conflict in the region. Other notable conflicts or human rights violations highlighted by the respondents were inter-ethnic violence 38% and cattle rustling 37%. Generally, the Rift Valley region of Kenya has experienced inter-ethnic conflict especially between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin ethnic groups.<sup>217</sup> As much as there has presently not been open conflict between the two groups, there exist historical grievances. Also, much of this conflict involves land. Inter-ethnic conflict has also been experienced between the Turkana and Pokot and much of it has revolved around cattle rustling.<sup>218</sup>

<sup>216</sup> The World Bank, "Boosting prosperity improving equity in North Eastern Kenya," News, May 08, 2018, Accessed December 21, 2020, url: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/05/08/boosting-prosperity-improving-equity-in-north-and-north-eastern-kenya>

<sup>217</sup> "Kenya's Rift Valley: Old Wounds, Devolution's New Anxieties," International Crisis Group, May 30, 2017, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-of-africa/kenya/248-kenyas-rift-valley-old-wounds-devolutions-new-anxieties>

<sup>218</sup> Ltipalei, Jonathan, Kivuva, Joshua M., and Jonyo, Fred O. (2020), The Contextualization of the Nilotic Pastoralist Conflicts in Northern Kenya, *Journal of Social and political Sciences*, 148 – 149. DOI: 10.31014/aior.1991.03.01.154

**Figure 15: Rift Valley Region – Types of Conflict**

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

To affirm this, competition for natural resources (which includes land) was recorded as the most prominent conflict driver by 55% of the respondents, followed by high levels of corruption (48%) and government failure (47%). Respondents also identified prominent individuals as most responsible for the conflict in the Rift Valley region, by 34% of the respondents. Other actors perceived to be most responsible for the conflict were government (police, army) (30%) and armed groups/political militia groups (26%). Finally, in considering how the conflict can be resolved, mistrust amongst parties in conflict was identified as the most challenging obstacle to bringing about a resolution to the conflict in the region by 77% of the respondents who answered this question. 72% of the respondents also identified unresolved grievances from past conflicts and peace agreements not fully implemented.

## Recommendations

To address the conflict in the Rift Valley region, respondents submitted the following suggestions.

### Peace initiatives

Community dialogue, community empowerment, and goodwill from political leaders were required to effectively address the conflict. Specifically, peace initiatives should involve the locals as they were best placed to understand and address the root causes of conflict, for example, the land conflicts. Furthermore, continuous peacebuilding should be carried out as opposed to a one-off event that was not as effective. Peace initiatives should also incorporate religious institutions like churches because they are at the grassroots level. They are influential especially at the grassroots and they are more influential than the politicians.

### Security

Water points and pasture land should be established in addition to addressing boundaries

disputes. Mainly because competition for natural resources is a significant trigger of conflict in the region.

### **Government**

Respondents asserted that the government must repossess all illegal arms, address historical marginalization, and ensure the equitable distribution of resources. Beyond this, the government bears the responsibility of addressing conflicts between pastoralist and agro-pastoralists

### **Justice**

Address historical injustices of regional marginalization for example in the North Rift region. This has been partly addressed through devolution, however not satisfactorily.

### **Socio-economic**

There should be the equitable sharing of resources especially in response to the plight of squatters, there should be conflict-sensitive resettlement of squatters, including Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs). Social cohesion programs should also be initiated to allow members of various communities to peacefully live alongside one another. Involving and engaging youth and women in peace activities including economic empowerment should also be encouraged. Finally, individuals affected by conflict should be involved in dialogue to enhance the success of existing conflicts in the region.

Therefore, a conflict level of 0.9 in the Rift Valley region peace is generally experienced outside the election period while inter-ethnic tensions escalate during the election season. Consequently, while conflict in the region is not open, high intensity, and widespread, the root causes of the conflict are yet to be sufficiently addressed. A significant portion of these root causes of conflict in the region revolve around natural resources and are linked to economic benefits.

### **Western/Nyanza**

The Western /Nyanza region includes Bungoma, Busia, Homa Bay, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya. Aside from Nairobi, this region is one of the most populous areas of the country. Some of the cross-cutting issues affecting the region include unemployment, poverty, and high dependency levels.<sup>219</sup>

43 respondents

Counties included in the region: Bungoma (4), Busia (1), Homa Bay (2), Kakamega (5), Kisumu (24), Siaya (6), and Vihiga (1)

Level of Conflict: 0.63

Forty-four percent of the respondents highlighted sexual and gender-based violence as being highly prevalent in the region. Other conflicts or human rights violations that were highlighted as being highly prevalent were police brutality (36%) and domestic violence

<sup>219</sup> National Council of Churches of Kenya, "Nyanza Region," <http://www.ncck.org/nyanza-region/>

(29%). A study conducted by the National Crime Research Centre (NCRC) in 2019 in Kisumu County confirms these findings. The research identified the leading causes of crime and violence in Kisumu County as gender-based violence and sex-related offenses such as rape, defilement, and indecent acts with a child.<sup>220</sup> However, the study also emphasized that the cases of sexual and gender-based violence in the county are usually under-reported and thus the few that are reported, are a significant under-representation of the existing realities on the ground.<sup>221</sup> In identifying conflict drivers in the region, unemployment at 83% stood out as the most prominent driver of conflict, according to the respondents. Other conflict drivers rated highly as most prominent were high levels of corruption by 77% of the respondents and historical unaddressed grievances acknowledged by 59% of the respondents. The 2019 NCRC study reported similar findings concerning conflict drivers in Kisumu County, identifying poverty, rampant unemployment, and idleness among the youth as the most significant conflict drivers.<sup>222</sup> The report also highlighted that youth idleness was particularly responsible for political violence especially during the election season. In this case, politicians used the youth to carry out violent acts.<sup>223</sup>

A Focus Discussion Group was also conducted in Muhoroni, one of the sub-counties of Kisumu County. It is a significant focus area of conflict between two communities, that is the Luo community and the Kalenjin community. The FDG identified boundary conflicts between the Luo and Kalenjin as being most salient in the area historically occasioned by a pronouncement made by former president Daniel Arap Moi that altered previous boundary lines. Consequently, disputes have arisen between the two communities as to the actual location of boundary lines. This conflict is exacerbated during election cycles in the country. Another significant conflict in the area as identified by participants<sup>224</sup> was the theft of cattle. Luo youth steal cattle within the Luo community and sell them to the Kalenjin who are predominantly pastoralists. These activities point to high levels of youth unemployment in the region, which is a security risk. The study conducted by NCRC, also highlighted the prevalence of boundary conflicts between the Luo and Kalenjin, as well as cattle theft by the youth in Nyakach. Concerning the identification of actors most responsible for the conflict in the region, government (police, army) was rated highly by 52% of the respondents as being most responsible for the conflict in the region, especially in the form of police brutality. Also, respondents pointed to prominent individuals (35%) and armed groups/political militia groups (15%) as being most responsible for the conflict in the region. The indication of prominent leaders as being most responsible for conflict in the Western/Nyanza region could point to the influence of political leaders in the region. Shedding light on this, a study conducted by Manasseh Wepundi and John Obiri identified “the manipulation of the grassroots by the elite (driven by materialism, conspicuous consumerism and greediness)” was one of the drivers of conflict in the region.<sup>225</sup> Finally, in addressing the challenges in the region, lack of political will and an authoritative government were both rated as the most

<sup>220</sup> Munyae Mulinge, Kennedy Mktutu, Obondo Kajumbi, Carol Yogo, Elizabeth Owino, Mark Shiundu, and Phyllis Muriuki, “Crime, Violence and Prevention Rapid Assessment Report in Kisumu County,” National Crime Research, 2019, 11, <http://crimeresearch.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/KISUMU-COUNTY-CRIME-VIOLENCE-PREVENTION-SURVEY-2019.pdf>

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 11

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 22-23

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 24

<sup>224</sup> Participants for the FDG included Religious leaders, a former councilor, women leader, a youth, and village elder, member of the community policing group and representatives of the Muhoroni parish Catholic Justice and Peace Commission who were the hosts.

<sup>225</sup> Manasseh Wepundi and John Obiri, *The Invisible Violence: An opportunity of Peace Building. A Case Study of Nyanza, Rift Valley and Western Province*, ed. Okoth Okombo (Nairobi: Konrad Adenauer-Stiftung, 2014). [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289252329\\_The\\_Invisible\\_Violence\\_An\\_opportunity\\_of\\_Peace\\_Building\\_A\\_Case\\_Study\\_of\\_Nyanza\\_Rift\\_Valley\\_and\\_Western\\_Province](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289252329_The_Invisible_Violence_An_opportunity_of_Peace_Building_A_Case_Study_of_Nyanza_Rift_Valley_and_Western_Province)

challenging obstacles to resolving conflict in the region by 67% of the respondents. Other obstacles to peace rated highly as very challenging were external funding for armed groups identified by 63% of the respondents and mistrust amongst parties in conflict and tensions between parties unabated both with 62%.

## **Recommendations**

### **Peace initiatives**

Respondents highlighted several peace initiatives that could be directed at resolving existing conflict in the region, this includes the creation of local peace committees involving all the stakeholders particularly the special groups that is, the youth and women guided by the elders and other gatekeepers for participatory identification of conflict matters and coming up with local solutions in addressing them. The marginalization of communities should also be avoided regardless of their ethnic affiliations and religious beliefs by ensuring equitable distribution of resources.

### **Government**

Respondents suggested that both devolved units of the county and national governments must be strengthened. This includes incorporating the effective provision of all government services. To this effect, there should be zero tolerance for corruption. Other respondents felt that the commission reports such as the Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) land reforms should be implemented to address past injustices. Lastly, devolving more funds to the counties and equitable distribution of resources in parts of the country would help address economic inequalities.

### **Justice**

Justice is an integral aspect of addressing conflict consequently, respondents suggested that it was important to address past historical injustices among the various communities in the region, especially concerning historical marginalization.

### **Youth**

Employment for the youths was required including income-generating activities to end idleness. Other suggested youth programs included behavior change programs, life skills training, and technical skills training to give the youth a sense of purpose as well as skills to improve their livelihoods. The Western /Nyanza region violent conflict escalates during the election period and is fueled by prominent politicians taking advantage of the large numbers of unemployed youth in the region to make a political statement. Outside the election season, attention should be placed on addressing the high prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in the region.

## **South Sudan**

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.<sup>226</sup> As a result of long periods of conflict the country has lagged in development

<sup>226</sup> The World Bank, "The World Bank In South Sudan," October 13, 2020, Accessed December 22, 2020, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview>

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.<sup>227</sup>

South Sudan had 140 respondents 48% of the respondents came from Juba.

Level of Conflict: 0.9

The majority of respondents highlighted that resource-based conflict was the most prevalent type of conflict in South Sudan (46%), followed by cattle rustling (40%) and political violence (40%). In addition, one respondent observed that “South Sudan has been in a prolonged civil war and therefore human rights violations were rampant.” Early marriages were also highlighted as human rights abuses in South Sudan. As much as South Sudan political leaders signed the RA-RCSS in 2018, thus bringing an end to a conflict that had raged since 2013, conflict in South Sudan still exists, with many of the opinion that the agreement is a short term solution that has not addressed the deep-seated roots of the conflict.<sup>228</sup> While a unity government was formed in February 2020, as part of the conditions of the RA-RCSS, conflict has continued in some areas. Mostly seen as an upsurge of communal conflict in the country, much of which has presented itself as cattle raids.

A report by Relief web highlights the intensity of the ongoing conflict that is currently localized. The report notes that since June 2020, “the on-going hostilities in Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Unity, Western Bahr el-Ghazal, and Warrap States have resulted in the killing and injury of hundreds of civilians, and the displacement of more than 80,000 others.”<sup>229</sup> The report also noted that sexual and gender-based violence has continued in the same regions.<sup>230</sup>

**Figure 16: Types of conflict / human rights violations identified in South Sudan**

| Types of Conflict/HR Violations  | Highly prevalent | Moderately prevalent | Less prevalent | Not prevalent | Unsure |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|--------|
| Sexual and Gender Based Violence | 34%              |                      | 5%             | 0%            | 0%     |
| Domestic Violence                | 34%              |                      | 6%             | 1%            | 0%     |
| Armed robbery                    | 32%              |                      | 7%             | 0%            | 0%     |
| Inter-ethnic violence            | 33%              |                      | 11%            | 1%            | 0%     |
| Theft                            | 35%              | 3%                   | 14%            | 3%            | 0%     |
| Cattle rustling                  | 40%              | 4%                   | 14%            | 1%            | 0%     |
| Political violence               | 40%              | 37%                  | 14%            | 9%            | 0%     |
| Violent extremism                | 32%              | 34%                  | 22%            | 9%            | 2%     |
| Resource-based conflict          | 46%              | 44%                  | 8%             | 2%            | 0%     |
| Police brutality                 | 20%              | 25%                  | 44%            | 10%           | 1%     |

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

<sup>227</sup> The World Bank, “The World Bank In South Sudan,” October 13, 2020, Accessed December 22, 2020, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview>

<sup>228</sup> Sam Mednick, “South Sudan’s Unity Government Struggles to Silence the Guns,” World Politics Review, September 14, 2020, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/29052/despite-a-unity-government-in-south-sudan-conflict-rages-on>

<sup>229</sup> United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, Renewed violence and delayed implementation of the peace agreement severely threaten peace and stability in South Sudan, UN experts note, August 14, 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26167&LangID=E>

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

In terms of identifying key drivers of the conflicts, respondents pointed out that the most prominent drivers of conflict in South Sudan during the reporting period were unaddressed historical grievances identified by 63% of the respondents, followed by high levels of corruption acknowledged by 61% of the respondents, Government's failure to provide basic needs such as employment, food, and security. On the other hand violence for economic gain such as cattle rustling, was selected by 60% of the respondents. In addition to this illiteracy was highlighted as a driver of conflict and a respondent summarized this by noting that, "The conflict in South Sudan is as a result of historical and persistent marginalization that resulted in a call for separation by the South from North Sudan. Religion and race also played a big role in the North-South conflict. South Sudan got independent and started on nearly nonexistent governance structures coupled with a high level of underdevelopment, nearly 85% of illiteracy, the proliferation of small arms, ethnic animosity and mistrust, sectarianism, and armed groups." The high rating for unaddressed historical grievances points to the reality that the root causes of the conflict are yet to be adequately dealt with as pointed out by Alan Boswell, an analyst on South Sudan.<sup>231</sup>

Beyond this, when asked to identify the main actors involved in the conflict, 51% of the respondents felt that the Government (police, army) was most responsible for the conflict, followed by armed groups/political militia groups (34%) and finally, multi-national corporations (32%). A respondent further pointed out that, "South Sudan is blessed with natural minerals, the Nile and agricultural land. While the war is fought at a local level, in my view international actors contribute to fueling it. The proxy war between China and the US and other international actors through oil drilling companies. The stability of South Sudan will mean that they will use water from the Nile River which interferes with Egypt and Sudan. Keeping South Sudan unstable in part is helpful to the countries up the north." A United Nations Human Rights Commission report supports the respondents' perceptions highlighting that, "the response to these attacks by Government authorities (has been) woefully inadequate."<sup>232</sup> This puts the South Sudanese government front and center as first a key actor responsible for the conflict and on the other hand, it is expected by citizens to resolve the conflict and address gross human rights violations in the country.

**Figure 17: Actors responsible for Conflict in South Sudan**

| Actors   | Most responsible | Moderately responsible | responsible | Not responsible | Unsure |
|--|------------------|------------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------|
| Government (Police, Army)  | 51%              | 14%                    | 35%         | 0%              | 0%     |
| Armed groups/political militia groups  | 34%              | 22%                    | 44%         | 0%              | 0%     |
| Prominent individuals (opposition leaders, rebel leaders, government leaders, community leaders) | 24%              | 20%                    | 55%         | 1%              | 0%     |
| Neighbouring states  | 8%               | 21%                    | 68%         | 4%              | 0%     |
| International state actors (AU, UN, EU)  | 4%               | 16%                    | 73%         | 6%              | 1%     |
| Multinational corporations   | 3%               | 13%                    | 48%         | 6%              | 1%     |

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

<sup>231</sup> Sam Mednick, "South Sudan's Unity Government Struggles to Silence the Guns," World Politics Review, September 14, 2020, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/29052/despite-a-unity-government-in-south-sudan-conflict-rages-on>

<sup>232</sup> United Nations Human Rights Commission, "Renewed violence and delayed implementation of the peace agreement severely threaten peace and stability in South Sudan, UN experts note," August 14, 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26167&LangID=E>

respondents' perceptions highlighting that, "the response to these attacks by Government authorities (has been) woefully inadequate." This puts the South Sudanese government front and center as first a key actor responsible for the conflict and on the other hand, it is expected by citizens to resolve the conflict and address gross human rights violations in the country.

Lastly, 69% of the respondents felt that the most challenging elements to existing peace interventions in resolving the conflict in South Sudan were, mistrust amongst parties in conflict, unmet demands from conflict parties, and unresolved grievances from past conflicts. Other significant challenges included poor development in the region/country indicated by 68% of the respondents, lack of political goodwill, and peace agreements not fully being implemented both highlighted as significant challenges by 67% of the respondents. Overall the responses pointed towards a multiplicity of challenges that mar the efficacy of peace interventions in addressing the South Sudan conflict.

A respondent (a peace practitioner) also highlighted that, "Cultural beliefs and traditional practices such as marriages with a high bride price in cattle fuels cattle rustling which is a common practice in most parts of South Sudan's pastoralist communities. There was also the "continual arming of the communities by the politicians."

## **Recommendations**

### **Peace Initiatives**

Respondents highlighted several aspects of peace initiatives that would help address the conflict in South Sudan the most prominent of these initiatives was dialogue. Respondents also stated that it was important that there were locally-led peace mediation and locally accepted mediators for conflict resolution. Also, grassroots reconciliation was needed and there should be less external influence on peace initiatives.

### **Governance and Leadership**

Governance and leadership were noted as an integral aspect of conflict resolution. This requires transparent elections, new leadership in government, the implementation of all peace agreements by the government, and tribal balanced leadership of the country. It was particularly important that there is SPLM unity, party dialogue on power-sharing, and political will to address conflicts and promote democratization to ensure justice and the rule of law in the country. There is also a need for transparency concerning financial resources in South Sudan, especially oil money to provide the effective provision of services to people.

### **Justice**

A call for justice was strongly expressed with respondents pointing out that peace could not be achieved apart from justice. Therefore, conflict resolution mechanisms should include justice as a key component of the process for victims to receive justice and to address historical injustices.

### **Constitution and rule of law**

There is a need to strengthen law and order in the country to address the conflict. To achieve this, all laws should be enforced equally not favoring some people. Years of conflict have

undermined the rule of law in the country, so much so that, “there is not enough understanding of the proper application of the rule of law and assigned roles and processes; statutory courts face a trust deficit from the citizens...”<sup>233</sup>

### **Peace agreements**

Past peace agreements should be implemented as they have a role to play in addressing the conflict. Also, there is a need to promote the awareness of peace agreements at the grassroots level as these are the citizens that are most affected by conflict. Finally, peace agreements should be implemented promptly.

### **Security**

To establish security in the country inclusive local disarmament is required. This includes keeping the army away from politics. More specifically, guns should be removed from civilians and the army should be reformed which would involve training, professionalizing the army, and having old military leaders retiring. Also, there should be civic education for the military and they should also enjoy a good salary. Lastly, police training is required and prisons should be reformed.

### **Social/Economic**

As a start, the pain and loss of victims should be addressed through justice and psycho-social support. Beyond this, schools should be built and education prioritized especially for the youth who should be disarmed and encouraged to go to school. Development is needed including the equitable distribution of resources and power and corruption should be fought.

### **Women and Youth**

Youth dialogue is required and women and youth should be included in leadership positions as well as the peacebuilding process. For example, Susan Sebit highlights that when it comes to including women and youth in peace-building activities in South Sudan, “it’s always older women who occupy the space. Young women are also going through a lot, but they get dismissed. They get told ‘you’re young, what do you know?’ But then the youth peace and security agenda don’t always include women, so [young women] are not being seen. The youth agenda is being taken over by men, they’re not giving space to young women.”<sup>234</sup>

### **Regional / International**

South Sudan can learn from successful peace processes, for example, The Karamojong peace initiatives. Also, participation from regional bodies e.g. The East African Community (EAC) would be beneficial to South Sudan especially with regard to accelerating development in the country. Finally, the United Nations can be useful in maintaining rule of law and peace in the country.

### **Religion**

Several respondents suggested that the church should be involved in peace negotiations and mediation, mainly because churches were more trusted by the local communities as opposed to government or political leaders.

<sup>233</sup> Max Planck Foundation, South Sudan, “Strengthening the rule of Law in South Sudan,” Accessed December 22, 2020, <https://www.mpfpr.de/projects/south-sudan/strengthening-the-rule-of-law-in-south-sudan/>

<sup>234</sup> UN Women, “From where I stand: ‘Young women’s inclusion in peacebuilding will create sustainable peace’,” News, August 8, 2019, Accessed December 23, 2020, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/8/from-where-i-stand-susan-sebit>

In summary, a conflict level of 0.9 indicates that the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (RA-RCSS) in 2018 may have been instrumental in bringing an end to the conflicts that had raged since 2013. However, it has not been effective in addressing the deep-rooted underlying causes of conflict in South Sudan. Currently, there have been incidences of violence in some parts of the country including a violent eruption due to a disarmament exercise in Warrup State in August 2020.<sup>235</sup> In addition, efforts to unify the South Sudanese army, which was one of the conditions of the RA-RCSS have been so far unsuccessful.<sup>236</sup> Lastly, the effects of natural disasters such as flooding and the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic<sup>237</sup> have stretched the ongoing aid activities and created a dire situation that requires urgent attention, to ensure that the country does not revert to widespread violent conflict.

## Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has experienced considerable conflict since independence. With the most peaceful elections, the country has experienced taking place in 2018, the country has attempted to stabilize peace throughout the country. However, despite its efforts the Eastern region of the country has continued to experience conflict occasioned by the proliferation of armed groups as well as interferences with its neighboring countries to the East. The ongoing conflicts have entrenched instability in the region and lowered development indices. Consequently, data collected in DRC for the CMT 2020 was only from the Eastern region of the country (North and South Kivu) and is therefore only representative of this region of the country.

Level of Conflict: 1.04

Respondents: The Democratic Republic of Congo had a total of 152 respondents. 98% of the respondents were from North Kivu (Goma).

When asked to identify current conflicts, there was a clear indication that currently, the most prevalent human rights abuse in Eastern DRC is sexual and gender-based violence rated by 75% of the respondents as being the most prevalent type of conflict or human rights abuse, this was followed by armed robbery (59%) and theft (54%). This was emphasized by a respondent who pointed out that, “GBV is highly prevalent, the killing and raping of women and young girls.” Mirroring these perceptions, a 2019 Relief web report highlighted that in the DRC, “humanitarian actors assist approximately 30,000 survivors per year. Reported cases include rape, sexual slavery, trafficking, forced/early marriage, intimate partner violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse.”<sup>238</sup>

This highlights the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in the Eastern region of the DRC. Further collaborating these indicated conflicts and human rights violations in Eastern DRC, a youth-led research by Search for Common Ground in 2020, pointed

<sup>235</sup> “Death toll from South Sudan soldiers, civilians clashes hits 127,” Al Jazeera, August 12, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/8/12/death-toll-from-south-sudan-soldiers-civilians-clashes-hits-127>

<sup>236</sup> “Efforts to unify soldiers in South Sudan ‘stuck’: UN envoy,” Al Jazeera, September 29, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/29/efforts-to-unify-soldiers-in-s-sudan-stuck-un-envoy>

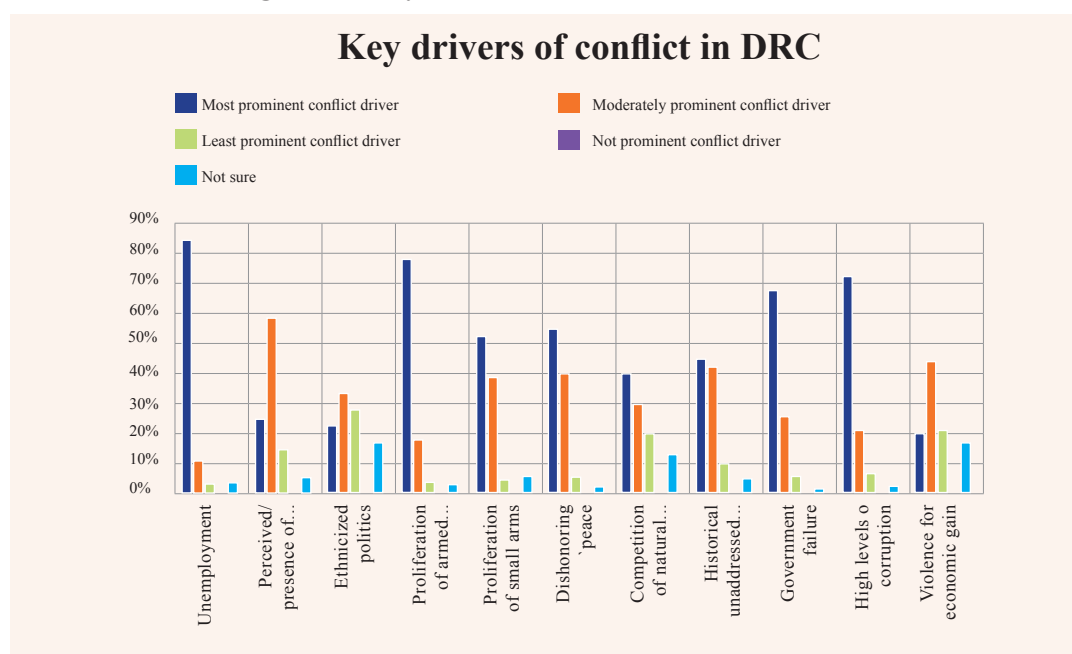
<sup>237</sup> Lisa Schlein, “South Sudan Flooding Plunges 700,000 Into Hunger, Livelihood Crisis,” VOA News, September 29, 2020, <https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/south-sudan-flooding-plunges-700000-hunger-livelihood-crisis>

<sup>238</sup> United Nations Fund for Population Activities, Gender Based Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo : Key Facts and Priorities of humanitarian actors, May 2019, [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/endsgbvoslo\\_advocacy\\_note\\_may2019.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/endsgbvoslo_advocacy_note_may2019.pdf)

out that in North and South Kivu there exist, “acute levels of insecurity, instability, and intercommunal conflict, exposing youth to harassment by armed groups, criminal gangs, and members of state security forces. These transpire in the form of kidnappings, armed robbery, petty theft, illegal roadblocks, arbitrary detention, and cattle rustling. In South Kivu, cattle raiding was identified as a major source of violence, while in North Kivu violence driven by land conflicts were named as a key source of violence.”<sup>239</sup>

Tied to this, respondents pointed out that the most prominent drivers of conflict in Eastern DRC were unemployment (85%), the proliferation of armed groups (78%), and high levels of corruption at 73%. This is exacerbated by the fact that the country has a high youth population who need work. According to a Demographic and Health Program survey on health in the DRC, the Congolese population is predominantly youthful with the percentage of youth people under 20 years being 61% of the population.<sup>240</sup> Consequently, with a lack of employment, many of these youth are easily recruited by armed groups, especially given the proliferation of armed groups in the region.<sup>241</sup> The 2020 report by Search for Common Ground found out that several factors led young people to join armed groups in the DRC as opposed to one single factor. These factors included, “political, socio-economic, social-psychological, and individual push factors.”<sup>242</sup>

**Figure 18: Key drivers of Conflict in Eastern DRC**



(Source: HIPSIR Research)

<sup>239</sup> Search for Common Ground, Perceived Risk Factors Driving Youth Involvement in Violence in Eastern DRC: Situational Analysis and Programming Options, 2020, 7, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Perceived\\_Risk\\_Factors\\_Driving\\_Youth\\_Involvement\\_in\\_Violence\\_in\\_Eastern\\_DRC\\_YLR\\_April\\_2020.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Perceived_Risk_Factors_Driving_Youth_Involvement_in_Violence_in_Eastern_DRC_YLR_April_2020.pdf)

<sup>240</sup> Enquête Démographique et de Santé (EDS-RDC) 2013 – 2014, 2, <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR300/FR300.pdf>

<sup>241</sup> Jason Stearns, Judith Verweijen, and Maria Eriksson Baaz, The national army and armed groups in the eastern Congo Untangling the Gordian knot of insecurity, The Rift Valley Institute, 30, <https://riftvalley.net/sites/default/files/publicationdocuments/RVI%20Usalama%20Project%2011%20The%20National%20Army.pdf>

<sup>242</sup> Search for Common Ground, Perceived Risk Factors Driving Youth Involvement in Violence in Eastern DRC: Situational Analysis and Programming Options, 2020, 7, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Perceived\\_Risk\\_Factors\\_Driving\\_Youth\\_Involvement\\_in\\_Violence\\_in\\_Eastern\\_DRC\\_YLR\\_April\\_2020.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Perceived_Risk_Factors_Driving_Youth_Involvement_in_Violence_in_Eastern_DRC_YLR_April_2020.pdf)

In identifying the main actors of the conflict in the Eastern region of the country, 71% of the respondents perceived that the actors most responsible for the conflict in Eastern DRC were prominent individuals and international state actors (AU, UN, EU) followed by Government (police, army) and neighboring countries rated as most prominent by 70% of the respondents. Therefore, in addressing the conflict in the Eastern region 90% of the respondents observed that lack of political will was a significant challenge to the success of existing peace interventions in addressing the conflict in DRC. They also indicated that international interference by external actors (79%) was another significant challenge. Finally, the respondents also pointed to unresolved grievances from past conflicts (70%) as affecting the success of peace interventions in the region. Indeed the conflict in the Eastern region of the DRC has involved international actors, both from neighboring countries to the East<sup>243</sup> as well as international actors from the West. In many instances, the citizens have felt insecure<sup>244</sup> and perceive the government lacks the political will to address the insecurity in the region and is at times complicit in the violence.

**Figure 19: Challenges to addressing the conflict in Eastern DRC**

| Challenges   | Very Challenging | Moderately Challenging | Not a Challenge | Not sure it is a challenge |
|--|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Lack of political goodwill   | 90%              | 8%                     | 0%              | 2%                         |
| Authoritative government   | 28%              | 36%                    | 17%             | 19%                        |
| Fragile government   | 42%              | 31%                    | 9%              | 18%                        |
| Mis-trust amongst parties in conflict  | 31%              | 36%                    | 18%             | 14%                        |
| Negotiations not involving all parties   | 39%              | 39%                    | 7%              | 16%                        |
| Tension between parties unabated   | 38%              | 35%                    | 15%             | 13%                        |
| Breakdown of peace talks   | 47%              | 38%                    | 11%             | 4%                         |
| Peace agreements not fully implemented   | 66%              | 22%                    | 3%              | 9%                         |
| Unmet demands from conflict parties  | 57%              | 29%                    | 6%              | 8%                         |
| Exclusion of other interest groups in peace talks (e.g. women's groups, community base organizations, etc) | 60%              | 29%                    | 3%              | 9%                         |
| External funding of armed groups   | 64%              | 28%                    | 5%              | 3%                         |
| Availability of small arms and light weapons   | 68%              | 23%                    | 3%              | 6%                         |
| Poor development in the region/country   | 68%              | 28%                    | 2%              | 3%                         |
| Unresolved grievances from past conflicts  | 70%              | 19%                    | 5%              | 7%                         |
| International interference by external actors  | 79%              | 17%                    | 0%              | 3%                         |

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

## Recommendations

### Government

Government and leadership, in general, should carry out their responsibilities especially concerning good governance, taking charge of the military, and addressing people's needs.

<sup>243</sup> "DR Congo army says Burundi rebels forced from strongholds," Al Jazeera, October 26, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/26/dr-congo-army-says-burundi-rebels-ousted-from-strongholds>

<sup>244</sup> Catherine Wambua-Soi, "ADF rebels cleared from last stronghold in Beni: DR Congo army," Al Jazeera, February 28, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/2/28/adf-rebels-cleared-from-last-stronghold-in-beni-dr-congo-army>

## Regional /International

The DRC requires the participation and partnership of the region's countries in resolving its conflict effectively. This includes unity among populations in the region and resolving the question of Rwandese presence in Eastern Congo.

## Constitution /Peace agreements

Respect for the constitution as well as signed peace agreements should be upheld.

## Social

Society has been traumatized as a result of the conflict therefore psycho-social support should be availed to ensure the citizens co-habit peacefully. Special attention should be given to the vulnerable in society. NGOs, the church, and the judiciary should be more visible in addressing social needs. Corruption should be fought.

## Security

Eastern DRC borders should be secured, national security should be enhanced and finally, the army should be demilitarized and disarmed.

## Peace Initiatives

Peace organizations have a significant role to play in resolving the conflict in Eastern DRC. This includes encouraging peace research, empowering the population on how to take charge when leaders are corrupt, and ensuring that all conflicts are addressed including those that are seemingly minor. In addition, to ensure the sustainable success of conflict resolution, integration projects and community projects should be included.

## Spiritual

Prayer is an integral component of addressing the conflict in Eastern DRC and should be encouraged.

In summary, a conflict level of 1.04 shows that the conflict in the Eastern region (mainly North Kivu) of the DRC is experiencing widespread tensions in the region. If not adequately addressed with a sense of urgency by all relevant stake-holders including government, regional bodies, civil society, and the international community, the ongoing situation is expected to escalate to a confrontation and subsequently crisis levels where violence would be widespread and high intensity. Currently, pockets of violence are being experienced in the Eastern region of the DRC with much of it being carried out by armed groups. While there have been efforts by the DRC army to rid the region of rebel groups,<sup>245</sup> there are still episodes of violence especially in the rural areas<sup>246</sup> where civilians bear the brunt of the attacks resulting in death, injuries, and loss of livelihood especially after being displaced.<sup>247</sup>

<sup>245</sup> Felix Tih, "DR Congo army launches major operation against militias," Anadolu Agency, November 1, 2019, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/dr-congo-army-launches-major-operation-against-militias/1632563>

<sup>246</sup> Catherine Wambua-Soi, "ADF rebels cleared from last stronghold in Beni: DR Congo army," Al Jazeera, February 28, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/2/28/adf-rebels-cleared-from-last-stronghold-in-beni-dr-congo-army>

<sup>247</sup> Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – Conflict and displacement (UN, NGOs, media, DG ECHO) (ECHO Daily Flash of 12 February 2020), Relief Web, February 12, 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/democratic-republic-congo-drc-conflict-and-displacement-un-ngos>

## COVID-19 Pandemic

The 2020 CMT survey would not be complete without highlighting the effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. While Africa has experienced fewer infections and deaths compared to other regions of the world,<sup>248</sup> the continent has been impacted by the novel coronavirus in other ways. The effects of lockdowns in Africa have led to economic constraints with many individuals losing their source of income. The pandemic has also affected the education sector<sup>249</sup> and limited access to essential services for many women.<sup>250</sup>

Consequently, this year's survey was impacted by the pandemic lockdowns, especially in South Sudan and the DRC, where gaining access to some parts of the country was limited, furthermore internet connectivity is also limited in both countries.

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<sup>248</sup> World Health Organization, HO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard

[https://covid19.who.int/?gclid=CjwKCAiA4o79BRBvEiwAjteoYKXQzoOsDTY24drxdjOMknBh7WaVvMsDLjs2kDHVq2BB0eoNWBZNZhoCWEAQAvD\\_BwE](https://covid19.who.int/?gclid=CjwKCAiA4o79BRBvEiwAjteoYKXQzoOsDTY24drxdjOMknBh7WaVvMsDLjs2kDHVq2BB0eoNWBZNZhoCWEAQAvD_BwE)

<sup>249</sup> Human Rights Watch, Impact of Covid-19 on Children's Education in Africa, August 26, 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/08/26/impact-covid-19-childrens-education-africa>

<sup>250</sup> Relief Web, WHO concerned over COVID-19 impact on women girls in Africa, June 18, 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/who-concerned-over-covid-19-impact-women-girls-africa#:~:text=The%20economic%20hardship%20due%20to,force%20in%20sub%2DSaharan%20Africa.&text=In%20addition%2C%20women%20face%20a,of%20the%20COVID%2D19%20outbreak>

# CONCLUSION

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## CONCLUSION

### Kenya

Generally in as much as the whole of Kenya is currently not experiencing open and widespread conflict, as noted from almost all the regions under the study, there exist underlying conditions that if not adequately unearthed and addressed have the potential of triggering violent open conflict. Much of these pre-conditions to conflicts revolve around the scarcity and distribution of resources, a paucity of non-partisan leadership, and a diverse collection of unaddressed historical grievances.

The CMT 2020 coincided with the launching and popularization of the BBI report, positioned to address the above-mentioned issues that are found across all regions of the country. However, the BBI has divided the country across the middle. Those pushing for its implementation see it as an effective solution to the recurrent challenges that have plagued the country and have contributed to widespread conflict. On the other hand, those against it, view it as a politically motivated attempt to keep political elites in power at the expense of the vast majority of Kenyans who bear the brunt of any conflict the country undergoes. The government-backed BBI is expected to go to a referendum in 2021. Whichever way the vote goes, the exercise is poised to cause divisions in the country that could only be further magnified with an expected election cycle in 2022. As early as 2020, the political class was engaged in politicking concerning the elections.

Elections in Kenya have been a trigger for conflict in the country especially after the era of multiparty elections was ushered in in 1992. While election disputes specifically trigger election-related conflict in the country, as seen from the data analysis of CMT 2020, elections are an outward expression of unaddressed grievances that citizens have nursed over time. Therefore while attention should be given to mitigating election violence. A more sustainable solution to violence in Kenya would be addressing the underlying causes of conflict. While these causes of conflict may differ slightly from one region to another several core grievances as highlighted above are common across the nation. They are articulated here as 1) the perceived scarcity and partisan distribution of resources (this includes rampant corruption), 2) a paucity of effective leadership and good governance and 3) a diverse collection of unaddressed historical grievances. The CMT 2020 contributes to the understanding of conflict in Kenya, by 1) disaggregating data to find out the regional drivers of conflict and 2) having an overall understanding of the drivers of conflict as a country. This is useful in understanding how regional dynamics impact conflict. This can prompt further research on an in-depth understanding of conflict drivers in Kenya regionally and country-wide and how to address these drivers of conflict effectively before they trigger conflict in the future, especially as the country draws closer to an election period.

## South Sudan

While the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (RA-RCSS) was instrumental in halting widespread violence in South Sudan in 2018, progress in fully implementing the agreement has been slow. This is particularly so in the area of disarmament where citizens are wary of disarmament exercises as they feel vulnerable and insecure especially up against a government that they do not fully trust. The peace agreement has also not been effective in quelling conflict in the country and therefore the country has continued to witness episodes of conflict in various parts of the country.

The COVID pandemic in 2020 also affected any progress that South Sudan may have been able to make politically in stabilizing peace in the country and in terms of securing the country and serving its citizens. The pandemic has been especially felt in a country like South Sudan which was also struggling to avert a humanitarian crisis as a result of protracted conflict.

While the RA-RCSS agreement of 2018 and the formation of the unity government in 2020 have been steps in the right direction they are not a panacea to the damages that ongoing conflict in the country has inflicted on its citizens. In South Sudan's case peace agreements have not resolved deep-seated conflict drivers that have never been fully uncovered and addressed. Consequently, in as much as a vast majority of South Sudan citizens are conflict weary, it would take little to re-ignite widespread conflict in the country especially having used violent conflict to express grievances and settle scores over time. This is indicated by the reluctance of citizens to disarmament exercises. Guns have become a significant component of life for its citizens.

In the case of South Sudan, for peace to be stabilized and consolidated, unity first has to reign with the political class. The onus is on the political class to move beyond suspicions and intrigue to secure a sense of peace in the country that would trickle down to the rest of the population. South Sudanese citizens need to perceive that their leaders are ready for peace and can be trusted or at the very least are committed to leading the country toward peace and development as their leaders. In other words, responsible and trustworthy leadership is needed.

Peace in South Sudan has also been complicated by external interference, especially because of its large oil reserves.<sup>251</sup> While it is not currently feasible for the county to extricate itself fully from the complexities of international interference, the onus is once again on the county's leadership to make decisions that are not based on self-gain but rather on the interests of the country and citizens. Steps such as the country taking full control of its oil sector is progress in the right direction.<sup>252</sup> The CMT 2020, seeks to inspire further research on how South Sudanese leadership can move beyond a peace agreement to reconciliation.

<sup>251</sup> Grace Goodrich, "South Sudan: With an Eye on Oil," Africa Oil and Power, September 9, 2020, Accessed December 24, 2020, url: <https://www.africaoilandpower.com/2020/09/09/south-sudan-with-an-eye-on-oil/#~:text=Rich%20in%20oil%2C%20iron%20ore,where%20oil%20production%20is%20concentrated>.

<sup>252</sup> Benjamin Takpiny, "South Sudan plans full control of its oil sector," Anadolu Agency, December 22, 2020, Accessed December 24, 2020, url: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/south-sudan-plans-full-control-of-its-oil-sector/2085625>

## Democratic Republic of Congo

As highlighted the CMT 2020 conducted research in the Eastern region of DRC, which has been embroiled in many conflicts in comparison to other regions of the country. Despite a peaceful transition of government in 2018, peace is yet to be stabilized in the Eastern region. The region has experienced a proliferation of armed groups, especially since 2015, further exacerbating the security situation in the region. These armed groups are also indicative of a lax in the rule of law in the region. Consequently, individuals will join armed groups to provide security and also as a means of financial gain.

In as much as the DRC government has attempted to bring the region under full government control, the security situation in the Eastern region is also exacerbated by the interference of neighboring countries, which have historically been involved in destabilizing the region.

Therefore, for peace to be consolidated in the region, there is a need for the government to be fully engaged and committed to resolving the conflict in the region. Sexual and gender-based violence also needs to be adequately addressed as it far-reaching ramifications not just for the victims but also for society as a whole. Disarmament of armed groups is also required, however, the government requires to be committed towards the full process of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. While it may be possible to successfully disarm, reintegrating ex-combatants into civilian life requires various sectors of the society to work together to ensure that they re-integrate well back into society.

The country has also been endowed with natural resources that have so far not benefited the vast majority of citizens. These resources have also attracted external interference which further fuels conflict in the Eastern region. To address this the country needs to stabilize politically which will, in turn, allow economic stability, which is necessary both to create economic opportunities for citizens and eventually to give the country negotiating power in using its natural resources for the benefit of its citizens. The CMT 2020 study affirmed the existing drivers of conflict in the region as well as challenges being faced in addressing ongoing conflict. Further research would be required to understand the dynamics of the relationships between DRC and its eastward neighbors as this has stonewalled initiatives towards resolving existing conflict in the region.

In conclusion, the CMT 2020 was an opportunity to understand conflict in the three sample countries, to be able to mitigate violent conflict, and ultimately conceive homegrown solutions towards addressing conflict in the three countries. What this study indicated is that the drivers of conflict are complex and challenges towards addressing the conflict can appear insurmountable especially in conflict situations, where conflict has been protracted (South Sudan, DRC) or in situations where conflict is periodic yet destabilizing (Kenya). Despite these challenges the CMT 2020, has also been useful in revealing that effective solutions towards addressing conflict in the region need not be far-fetched and complex, in many instances the solution lies with the people and their leadership and is well within reach if we reimagine the roles we play.

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# APPENDICES

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: The Data Collection Tool

#### Preliminary Questions

- Which country do you work in?  
☐ DRC  
☐ South Sudan  
☐ Kenya
- Please specify the geographical location where you work.  
☐
- Please indicate your profession and the years of experience you have in the field. (mandatory)

| PROFESSION                 | Please tick              | 1 – 2 Years Experience | 3 – 4 Years Experience | Over 5 Years of Experience |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Peace Practitioner         | <input type="checkbox"/> |                        |                        |                            |
| Political/Community Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> |                        |                        |                            |
| Government Official        | <input type="checkbox"/> |                        |                        |                            |
| Religious Leader           | <input type="checkbox"/> |                        |                        |                            |
| Teacher                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |                        |                        |                            |
| Medical Practitioner       | <input type="checkbox"/> |                        |                        |                            |
| Civil Society              | <input type="checkbox"/> |                        |                        |                            |
| Other (please specify)     | <input type="checkbox"/> |                        |                        |                            |

- Which of the following conflicts or human rights violations are prevalent in your location/region. (Please rate the following according to what you perceive as highly prevalent, moderately prevalent, less prevalent, not prevalent, and unsure).

|                                  | Highly Prevalent | Moderately Prevalent | Less Prevalent | Not Prevalent | Unsure |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|--------|
| Sexual and Gender-Based Violence |                  |                      |                |               |        |
| Domestic violence                |                  |                      |                |               |        |
| Armed robbery                    |                  |                      |                |               |        |
| Inter-ethnic violence            |                  |                      |                |               |        |
| Theft                            |                  |                      |                |               |        |
| Cattle rustling                  |                  |                      |                |               |        |

|                         |  |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Political violence      |  |  |  |  |  |
| Violent extremism       |  |  |  |  |  |
| Resource-based conflict |  |  |  |  |  |
| Police brutality        |  |  |  |  |  |

5. In your opinion, what are the key drivers to conflict in your region? Please select according to what you perceive as the most prominent to the least prominent driver.

|  | Most<br>Prominent<br>Conflict Driver | Moderately<br>Prominent<br>Conflict Driver | Least<br>Prominent<br>Conflict Driver | Not<br>Sure |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Unemployment   |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Perceived/presence<br>of economic<br>marginalization       |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Ethicized politics   |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Proliferation of armed<br>groups                           |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Proliferation of small<br>arms                             |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Dishonoring peace<br>agreements                            |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Competition for natural<br>resources                       |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Historical<br>unaddressed<br>grievances                    |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Government failure<br>(providing basic needs,<br>security) |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| High levels of<br>corruption                               |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Violence for economic<br>gain e.g. cattle rustling         |                                      |  |                                       |             |
| Other (Please<br>specify)                                  |                                      |  |                                       |             |

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

|  | Most Responsible | Moderately Responsible | Responsible | Not Responsible | Unsure |
|--|------------------|------------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------|
| Government (police, army)  |                  |                        |             |                 |        |
| Armed groups/ political militia groups   |                  |                        |             |                 |        |
| Prominent individuals (opposition leaders, rebel leaders, government leaders, community leaders) |                  |                        |             |                 |        |
| Neighboring states   |                  |                        |             |                 |        |
| International state actors (AU, UN, EU)  |                  |                        |             |                 |        |
| Multinational corporations   |                  |                        |             |                 |        |

In the following sections, I wish to ask you about the indicators of conflict you may have observed in your region.

7. In your opinion, to what extent have you observed the following scenarios that show that there is peace stability in your region/location?

| Description Of The Conflict   | Not Observed | Rarely Observed | Sometimes Observed | Consistently Observed |
|---|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| There is an enabling environment that allows economic activities to proceed without interruption. |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There is peaceful co-existence between different ethnic communities                               |              |                 |                    |                       |

|   |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| The government at different levels are providing adequate public services       |  |  |  |  |
| There are good relations between the government and the international community |  |  |  |  |
| There is a perceived equitable distribution of resources                        |  |  |  |  |
| There is perceived low levels of corruption                                     |  |  |  |  |
| There is the enjoyment of human rights (bill of rights)                         |  |  |  |  |

8. In your opinion, to what extent have you observed the following scenarios that show that your region is experiencing socio-political tensions that could lead to conflict?

| Pre-conflict   | Not Observed | Rarely Observed | Sometimes Observed | Consistently Observed |
|--|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| There are complaints of economic hardships, e.g. high cost of living |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Unresolved historical grievances                                     |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Perceived social exclusion by some communities/groups                |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There are reports of hate-speech or inflammatory remarks by leaders  |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There is a rise in the level of criminal activities/gang groups      |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Discontent over lack of social services by the government            |              |                 |                    |                       |

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

| Confrontation  | Not Observed | Rarely Observed | Sometimes Observed | Consistently Observed |
|--|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| There are violent demonstrations /riots  |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There is the acquisition of small arms and light weapons by non-state actors   |              |                 |                    |                       |
| The protagonists have a preference for an armed violent confrontation over the peaceful resolution to the conflict                         |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Existence of inter-ethnic /clan mobilization or groupings for violence   |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There is an increase in negative propaganda to promote violence  |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There is increased reports of human rights violation e.g. theft, armed robbery, police brutality, gender, and sexual-based violence e.t.c. |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There is a disruption of economic activities e.g. looting and theft of property  |              |                 |                    |                       |

10. In determining whether your region is in active armed conflict, please rate the presence of the following armed conflict indicators in your region.

| Active Armed Conflict  | Not Observed | Rarely Observed | Sometimes Observed | Consistently Observed |
|--|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| There is open conflict between different groups and damage to properties         |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There is a media information blackout  |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Government is unable to provide security to its citizens as a result of conflict |              |                 |                    |                       |

|   |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| There is the displacement of citizens which could lead to a humanitarian crisis as a result of conflict |  |  |  |  |
| There is the presence of government security forces to intervene against violent conflict               |  |  |  |  |
| There is the presence of UN-peace keepers to intervene against violent conflict                         |  |  |  |  |
| The imposition of international sanctions against the government  |  |  |  |  |

11. In determining whether your region is experiencing a decline in open armed conflict, please indicate your rating of the following statements.

| Outcome Level  | Not Observed | Rarely Observed | Sometimes Observed | Consistently Observed |
|--|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| There is a reduction in the intensity of warfare       |              |                 |                    |                       |
| There is ceasefire                                     |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Some combatants have surrendered their arms            |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Some combatants are moving to cantonment areas         |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Key actors in conflict are involved in peace processes |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Peace agreements have been signed by the protagonists  |              |                 |                    |                       |
| Peacebuilding activities have been initiated           |              |                 |                    |                       |

12. Please rate the following activities of post-conflict reconstruction in your region.

| Post Conflict Level                  | Not Observed | Rarely Observed | Sometimes Observed | Consistently Observed |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Refugees and IDPs are returning home |              |                 |                    |                       |

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| Regular economic activities are resuming   |  |  |  |  |
| There is an improved security situation as a result of the presence of government security agencies to protect civilians |  |  |  |  |
| A government justice process has been initiated to address conflict crimes   |  |  |  |  |
| There is an absence of violence or fear of violence  |  |  |  |  |
| The causes of conflict are currently being addressed   |  |  |  |  |

13. In your opinion what would you consider the most important peace interventions that have been undertaken to resolve the conflict in your region? (Please highlight those undertaken locally within the country or conducted by citizens or local organizations, and those undertaken regionally by neighboring countries or regional economic communities, etc)
14. Please rate the effectiveness of various challenges to peace interventions in bringing about a resolution to the conflict.

| CHALLENGE                              | Very Challenging | Moderately Challenging | Not a challenge | Not sure if it is a challenge |
|--|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Lack of political goodwill             |                  |                        |                 |                               |
| Authoritative government               |                  |                        |                 |                               |
| Fragile government                     |                  |                        |                 |                               |
| Mis-trust amongst parties in conflict  |                  |                        |                 |                               |
| Negotiations not involving all parties |                  |                        |                 |                               |
| Tensions between parties unabated      |                  |                        |                 |                               |
| Breakdown of peace talks               |                  |                        |                 |                               |
| Peace agreements not fully implemented |                  |                        |                 |                               |
| Unmet demands from conflict parties    |                  |                        |                 |                               |

|   |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Exclusion of other interest groups in peace talks ( e.g women's groups, community-based organizations, etc) |  |  |  |  |
| External funding of armed groups  |  |  |  |  |
| Availability of small arms and light weapons  |  |  |  |  |
| Poor development in the region/country  |  |  |  |  |
| Unresolved grievances from past conflicts   |  |  |  |  |
| International interference by external actors   |  |  |  |  |
| Others ( please specify)  |  |  |  |  |
| Others ( please specify)  |  |  |  |  |

15. Based on your opinion and experience, please give your recommendation on the best way to successfully solve the conflict?

## Appendix B: Indicators of Conflict

| Abbreviation | Description of the Indicator |
|--------------|------------------------------|
|--------------|------------------------------|

### LEVEL 0: PEACE

|      |  |
|------|--|
| L0I1 | There is an enabling environment that allows economic activities to proceed without interruption.                                    |
| L0I2 | There is peaceful coexistence between communities (different communities living alongside / interacting peacefully)                  |
| L0I3 | There is a well-functioning government (that upholds rule of law, provides adequate public services, and offers political stability) |
| L0I4 | There are good relations with the international community  |
| L0I5 | There is a perceived equitable distribution of resources/low levels of corruption  |
| L0I6 | There is a general perception that information is accessible   |

### LEVEL 1: LATENT CONFLICT

|      |  |
|------|--|
| L1I1 | There are complaints of economic hardships (drastic increase in inflation, high cost of living)  |
| L1I2 | There is an awakening of conflict memory by communities  |
| L1I3 | There are some communities or sections of the community perceiving a sense of exclusion (marginalization)  |
| L1I4 | There are reports of hate speech and/or inflammatory remarks   |
| L1I5 | The functions of government deteriorate (inconsistency in the provision of public services, rise in the level of perceived criminal activities in the region/ country) |

### LEVEL 2: CONFRONTATION STAGE

|      |  |
|------|--|
| L2I1 | There is a disruption of economic activities (looting, theft of property, curfews)   |
| L2I2 | There are demonstrations /riots  |
| L2I3 | There is the acquisition of small arms and light weapons by non-state actors   |
| L2I4 | The ability to cooperate or resolve conflict non-violently between the various political alliances has diminished and armed groups are being formed. |
| L2I5 | Increase in fake news, negative propaganda   |
| L2I6 | Weakened government function (increased reports of criminal activity- attacks, killings, sexual violence)  |

**LEVEL 3: CRISIS STAGE**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| L3I1 | There is open conflict/physical combat –combatant and non-combatant fatalities, damage of property, infrastructure           |
| L3I2 | There is a media /information blackout   |
| L3I3 | Breakdown of government functions (no rule of law, government unable to provide security to citizens)                        |
| L3I4 | There are displacements of citizens (refugees and/or internally displaced people), which could lead to a humanitarian crisis |
| L3I5 | International/regional community imposes sanctions, calls to cease violence  |
| L3I6 | Peace enforcement forces have been deployed to the conflict zone   |

**LEVEL -2: OUTCOME STAGE**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| L-2I1 | There is a reduction in the intensity of warfare/ceasefire (no. of fatalities, victims decreases, destruction of property/infrastructure decreases) |
| L-2I2 | Some combatants put down their arms/surrender/parties to conflict tired of fighting   |
| L-2I3 | Key actors actively involved in the negotiation process, mediation activities are initiated, and ongoing  |
| L-2I4 | Peace agreements are being implemented and monitored  |
| L-2I5 | Peacebuilding activities have been initiated or increased in intensity to address the conflict  |

**LEVEL -1: POST-CONFLICT LEVEL**

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| L-1I1 | Refugees and IDPs are returning home /humanitarian crisis under control or resolved              |
| L-1I2 | The economic environment is stabilizing (regular economic activities have resumed)               |
| L-1I3 | Security Sector reforms (SSR) have been initiated to address conflict                            |
| L-1I4 | The justice process has been initiated – includes initiatives to address conflict crimes legally |
| L-1I5 | There is an absence of violence or fear of violence (negative peace)                             |
| L-1I6 | The causes of the conflict have been sufficiently resolved/addressed (positive peace)            |

*(Source: HIPSIR Research)*





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