

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ARCHEOLOGY

**THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN MT. ELGON CONFLICT: THE CASE OF
SABAOT'S LAND DEFENCE FORCE 1993 -2011**

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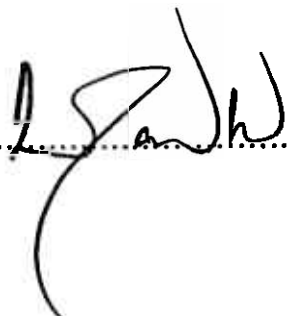
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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for the same award in any other university.

MWANGI F. NJOROGI  DATE 22/11/2012

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for seeing me through this project. I also dedicate it to my mother Priscilla Nyambura-a voice of encouragement and hope; my dear wife Miriam Natecho and my children Zac, Jemmy and Victor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACDI:	Agency Canadian Development International.
CRADLE:	Christian Rights Advisory Documentation and Legal centre.
CRY:	Conflict Resolution by Youth.
DDR:	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration.
DN:	Daily Nation.
ECOWAS:	Economic community of West African States.
HRW:	Human Rights Watch.
ICT:	Information Communication and Technology.
IDP:	Internally Displaced Persons.
MRU:	Mano River Union Youth Peace and Development Forum.
NGO:	Non Governmental Organizations.
PTSD:	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
SLDF:	<i>Sabaot</i> Lands Defense force.
UNAMA:	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programs
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund.
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commission for Refugees.
UNV:	United Nations Volunteer Program.
YIHR:	Youth Initiative for Human Rights.
KNYA:	Kenya National Youth Alliance.
IMLU:	Independent Medical Legal Unit

1.6 Working Definitions

Armed conflict: This is a conflict that has degenerated to the use of violent physical force between combatants or upon civilians resulting into damage of property, injury and loss of life. It is a situation where war has broken out either between two sovereign states or between the armed forces of a particular state and a rebel group.

Boda boda -modified bicycles or motor cycles used to carry and transport both human beings and luggage.

Mosop /chepkitale – land between Mt. Elgon forest and the mountain peak believed to belong to the *Ogiek /Ndorobo*; a sub tribe of the *Sabaots*. The *Ogiek* are also referred to using this name (*Mosop /Chepkitale*).

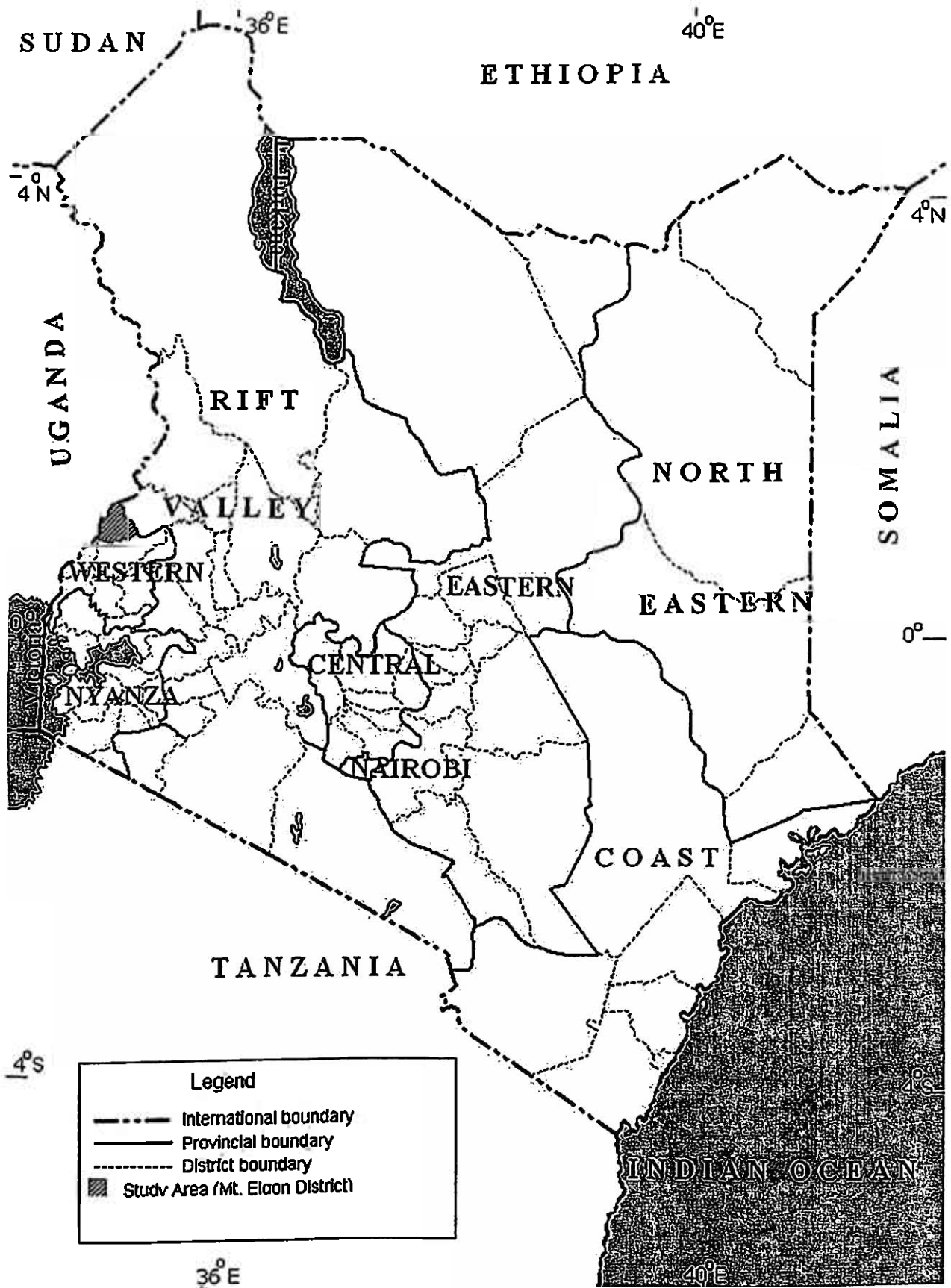
Mungiki- A terrorist group and a banned criminal organization among the Agikuyu in Kenya.

Soy – a *sabaot* term meaning down slop also used to refer to non *Ogiek* in Mt. Elgon.

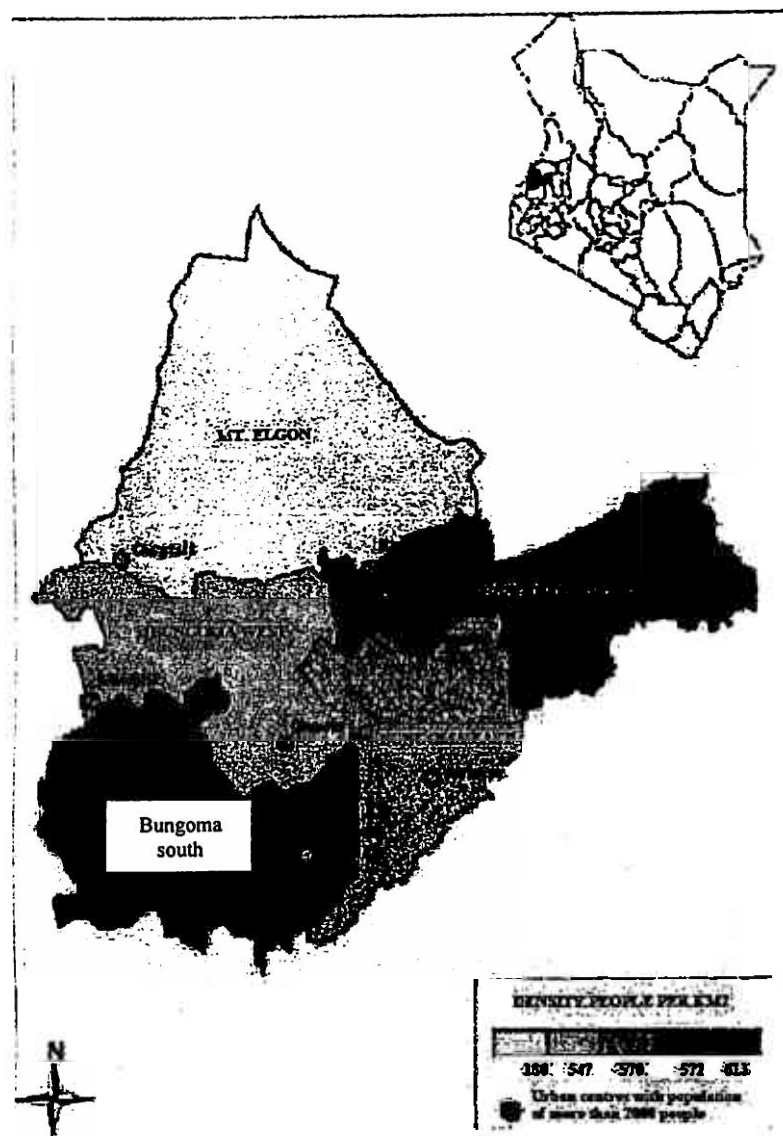
Sungusungu, chinkororo and amachuma: Armed youth militias in *Kisii* County.

Youth: according to the UNO, the youth involves members of the society between 15 years and 24 years. According to the convention on the rights of the child, a child is anyone below 18 years and to *sabaots* anyone who has undergone circumcision but before becoming a young adult.. This study will focus on the youth as people between 19 years and 35 years.

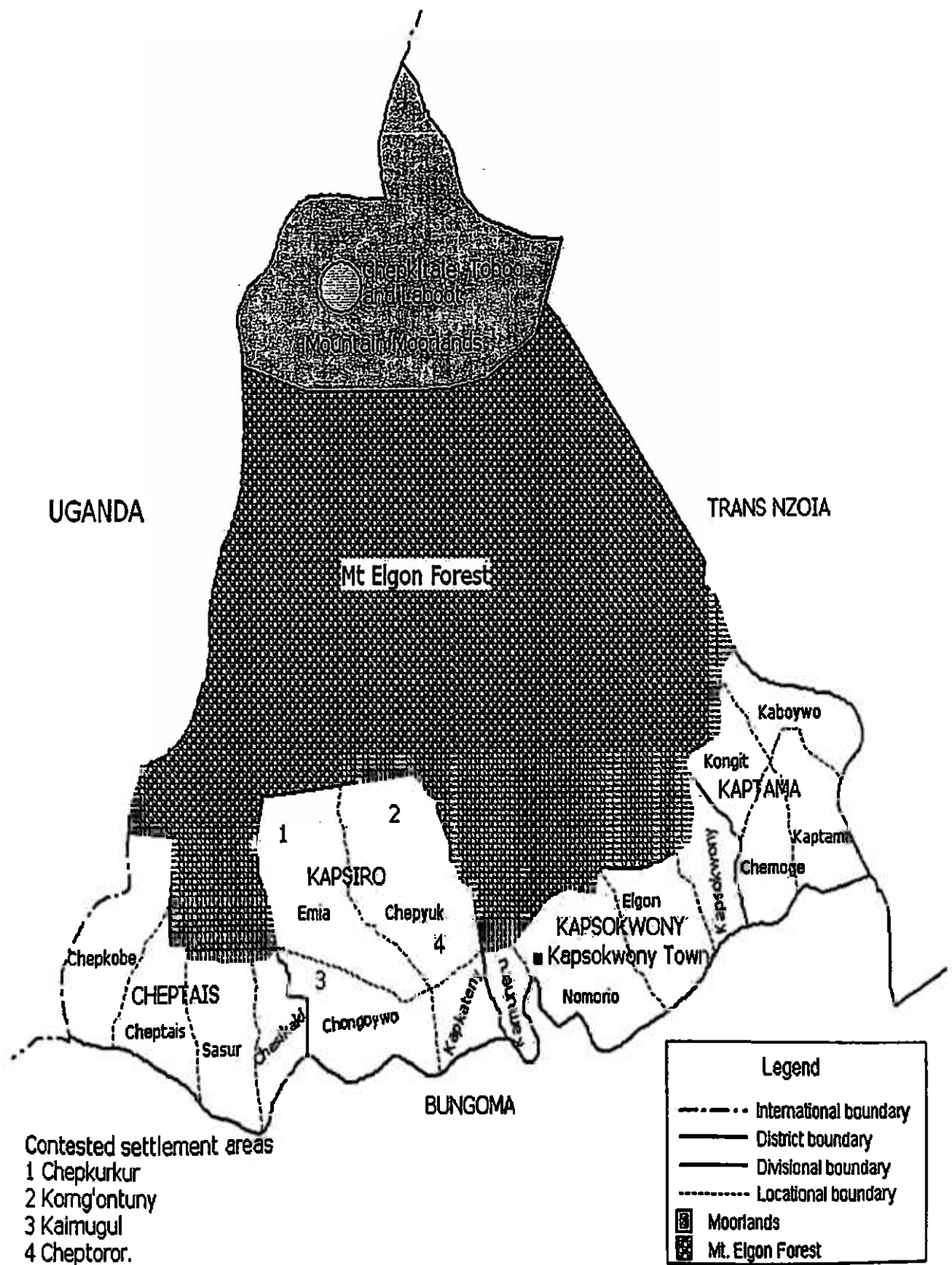
Map 1: Administrative map of Kenya showing location of Mount Elgon District



Map of Bungoma County showing position of Mount Elgon District



Map 2: Map of Mount Elgon District (Source:Kenya National Commission of human Rights)



ABSTRACT

Mount. Elgon District has been inflicted by serious conflict for a long time. The main cause of Mt. Elgon conflict centers on land though other causes like cattle rustling and power struggle among clan members inhabiting this region also play a significant role. Land in this district is a source of inter-ethnic tension. It is particularly portentous in the Chepyuk area where conflict arises over access to arable land.

The government efforts to settle the land issue through formation of settlement schemes was marred by massive irregularities especially political interference and corruption of government officials and land officials causing many bona fide members to miss land allocation. This perceived problem led to the formation of Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) in which the youth got actively involved. In short, this study examined the role played by the youth and how their lives and those of other inhabitants were generally affected by this conflict. The study also aims at generating strategies on how to involve the youth in creating sustainable peace building.

The specific objectives included examining causes of conflict in Mount Elgon area; Youth involvement in the conflict and lastly to explore ways in which they could be involved in peace making and peace building in Mt. Elgon region.

My research was based on the social conflict theory. Social conflict theory is a Marxist-based social theory which argues that individuals and groups within society have differing amounts of material and non-material resources and that the more powerful groups use their power in order to exploit groups with less power.

The finding determined that the issue of land is the major cause of this conflict. It also determined that for sustained peace to be maintained in Mt. Elgon region, the youth who forms the majority should be involved in the process of peace making and peace building. More research is needed to find ways of fully engaging the youth in Peace making processes. All groups involved in peace making in Mount Elgon should fully involve the youth.

Key Words: Youth, conflict, peace making, peace building and sustainable peace.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

Kenya's recent history is dotted with several intense episodes of land-ownership conflict. This is starting with the bloody repression of the *Mau Mau* movement by the British colonial power. This conflict caused many deaths among the freedom fighters and also prompted the first regrouping of Kenyan Africans in readiness to take over land that was in the hands of the white settlers. Access to land in this former European colony is still to this moment a hotly disputed issue.

Secondly, the colonial heritage had adopted a tradition of the local communities where territorial control was a paramount priority. Stemming from this, communal boundaries defined communal territories, both in the form of nature reserves (forest, national parks) and ethnic reserves, which often took on the aspect of administrative bodies. The result was a sectorization with certain repercussions on distribution of the different communities that populate the country.

Other causes of inter-ethnic tension have been the emergence of tribal based militias. The latest flare up of violence involved the *mungiki* in central province. It caused a conflict between this outlawed sect and vigilante groups in parts of the province that are hunting down the sect members. This is evidenced clearly when the Chairman and Treasurer of the Kenya National Youth Alliance (KNYA) which is the Mungiki political wing, were gunned down at Uplands after a car chase on the Nairobi – Naivasha highway. The commission set up to investigate the 2008 post-election violence reported that *Mungiki* members were suspected of perpetrating the violence in some parts of Kenya like Naivasha and Nakuru. In the list of illegal criminal groups proscribed by the government, include the SLDF, *mungiki* and other three rather curious entries; *sungusungu*, *chinkororo* and *amachuma*.¹ What the general public understands is that they are criminal gangs and that they share all or almost all the characteristics of the other groups in the list.

¹ Onyinkwa Onyakundi Mashariki Media Company Monday, 18 May 2009

Mount Elgon in western Kenya is one of the areas in the country that have experienced conflict since colonial times.

In Mount. Elgon the heart cause of the conflict is the land issue though other causes like cattle rustling and power struggle among clan members inhabiting this region also play a significant role. Land in this district has become a source of inter-clan tension. It is particularly portentous in the Chepyuk area of the Mount Elgon district. This area has been affected by conflict over access to arable land. The government had intended to settle in this area a group of Sabaots (chepkitale) who had been displaced from tranzoia by colonial settlers. Many *Sabaots* were displaced from *Trans-Nzoia* district when the colonial government appropriated their land for settler farms in the 1920s and 1930s. They moved to two areas; *Chepkitale* and *Chepyuk*. The ndorobos/Chepkitale were forced out of *Chepkitale* into *Chepyuk* when chepkitale was made a forest reserve in 1968. In Chepyuk, the *Chepkitale* got the other clan of the Sabaots; the *Soy* who had settled there illegally. The Government has ever since tried to settle the two Sabaot clans but the exercise was been marred by massive irregularities like corruption favoritism and political influence. These, coupled with increase in population of the two clans led to some bona fide members of the two clans to miss land allocation. This therefore led to the formation of the Sabaots Land Defense Force(hereafter SLDF) in 2005 by the Soy clan to disrupt land allocation and seek redress from the Government for alleged injustices during the land distribution excecise. The SLDF was dominated by the youth led by a commander called Wycliffe Matakwei Komol. The youth were so much involved in SLDF activities . They used AK 47 Riffles said to have been supplied by local politicians. They also used crude weapons like machetes , bows and arrows.This study is therefore examining the role played by the youth in SLDF and how their life is generally affected by this conflict. The study will also examine the role played by the youth in peace making and therefore seek strategies through which they can be fully involved in peace making and peace building in Mount Elgon district.

1.2 Statement of problem

The progress of any society is based, among other elements, on the society's capacity to involve young women and men in building and designing their future."²

Despite progress of the society being based on the society's ability to involve the youth in building and designing the future, the society is not fully providing a channel for young people to express their needs, aspirations and grievances in societies affected by conflict. The overall problem is that the youth are not fully engaged in peace making and peace building processes despite the fact that they are key in shaping the future of the society.

The society offers limited opportunities for their participation in decision making processes especially in peace making and peace building; as such, the problem of non-involvement of the youth with its diverse negative effects on the society's efforts in search for sustainable peace. This is quite pronounced in Mount Elgon; that even after the youth being involved actively in Mount Elgon Conflict they were not fully engaged in peace making. Little is known about youth engagement in peace making and peace building in Mt. Elgon, specifically after the quash of the SLDF.

This study is therefore directed to examine the active role played by the youth in Mount Elgon conflict and seek strategies through which they can be fully involved in peace making and peace building processes.

1.3 The General Goal and objectives

The general goal of this study is to examine the active role played by the youth in Mt Elgon conflict and seek strategies in which they have been involved in peace making and building in Mount Elgon district.

Objectives

1. To examine cause of conflict in Mount Elgon area.
2. To examine youth involvement in the Mount Elgon conflict.
3. To explore ways in which the youth have been involved in peace making and Peace building in Mount Elgon.

² David Oluwamayowa Fakunle, The Role of the Youth in Promoting Peace and Conflict. <http://www.tigweb.org/youth-media/panorama/article.html?ContentID=16843> p.1 Retrieved 24.09.2010

1.4 Justification of the study

Political participation does not fully involve young people so as to provide a channel for individual actualization to enable them express their needs, aspirations and grievances. Senior members and politicians have instead used the youth for their own selfish gains with great negative impact on the latter. There is very little information if any, that exist about the youth and violence in Mount Elgon. It is casually known that, the youth were actively involved in the activities of Sabaot Land Defense Forces (SLDF) as combatants rather than peacemakers.

Up to the the time this research was conducted, there is no any systematic research that has been carried out to help in understanding the nature of Mount Elgon conflict. This means, descriptive and analytical research on the youth involvement in violent conflict in Mt. Elgon region is non existent. Study on the role played by the youth in such conflict is very important since it will help in understanding and generating strategies for involving them in productive initiatives through peace making. This reason justifies the gap to be filled by this study. The recommendations and lessons learnt will be appropriate for the policy and decision makers in involving the youth in constructive development initiatives.

1.5. Scope and limitation

This study covered the period between 1993 and August 2011. The year 1993 is when land allocation in Chepyuk settlement scheme was annulled by the Government creating tension between chepkitale and the soy later leading to the formation of the Land Defense Force (SLDF) while 2011 is a period of three years after the government of Kenya had intervened and restored peace in Mt. Elgon. This gives an opportunity to find out to what extent the youth have been involved in peace making and peace building process. The will be contacted in Kopsiro and Cheptais Divisions; the main operational areas of SLDF militia. In this study only the Sabaots(Soy and Chepkitale) will be interviewed because they are at the center of the land conflict in Mount Elgon.

The findings of this study may not conclusively provide explanation as to the active role played by the youth in Mount Elgon violence and consequent involvement in peace initiative. Due to the vast and rugged terrain area covered, the sample size may

not accurately represent the target group however the study will use respondents, who will randomly be selected from the four divisions.

Challenges

In this research, the following challenges were experienced:

Language barrier; the dominant language in this region is *Sabaot*. Most of my informants especially the elderly do not know Kiswahili and English. I used a research assistant from the area to overcome this problem.

Secondly, Mt. Elgon has a problem of lack sufficient transport network. I made sure I gave myself enough time so that when it was unavoidable I trekked to reach informants. However; there are motorbikes called *bodabodas* which are the main means of transport.

Thirdly, the SLDF menace was still fresh in peoples mind. It was therefore sensitive to get information related to killings, rape, abduction and other forms of torture. My questions had open ended questions to allow informants to give as much information as they as they could.

1.7 Literature Review

The literature on youth contains a fundamental contradiction. Youth are most commonly depicted as either passive victims of trauma or active security threats. These separate depictions have separate origins. The most renowned description of how war traumatizes children; which includes adolescents or those at the lower end of the youth category, is Graça Machel's landmark 1996 submission to the UN General Assembly, the Report on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children. The report describes the ruinous effects of war on all children. All children, she added, who have lived through conflict need psychosocial support.³ This work does not however explore on the possibilities of utilizing this young people in peace processes.

Machel's work illuminates what Eyber and Ager consider a dominant trend that emphasizes child and youth vulnerability rather than resilience. While not denying war's negative effects on young people, they argue that Western conceptions of childhood tend to regard children as vulnerable, passive beings who need to be

³ Machel, Graca. 1996. Impact of Armed Conflict on Children. United Nations, Geneva 1996.P51-306

protected and cared for instead of active community members.⁴ They further argue that popular conceptions of trauma stem from the creation of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a psychiatric diagnosis of American veterans of the Vietnam War. These writers seem to be concerned more on the ruinous effect of conflict on the youth and forget that they can as well be a solution to these conflicts if their potentials are tapped well.

1.7.1 Why the Youth Join Conflict

Brett and Specht find that some war-affected youth choose to join military groups because the family either expects military service from children (especially sons) or the lack of a family makes military service more attractive. Young people who have to find something to do because they lack viable education or employment options may become soldiers. Poverty and peer group pressure are additional motivations for enlistment.⁵ However, Brett and Specht fail to get into details of how these young people, once in the conflict can be engaged in ending conflict and peace building thereafter.

Peters, Richards and Vlassenroot contend that a great many young people in civil wars such as Sierra Leone and Mozambique were not abducted or forced to fight but elected to do so for reasons that they imply are fairly reasonable. They assert that some young people may view soldiering as a means of survival, joining a movement, and seeking less arduous work.⁶ To some degree, some youth appear to have profited from the experience of soldiering. Moreover, the rebel groups provided their soldiers with food when their own Government would not. These writers however, fail to explain how these young people can be involved in getting out of this vulnerability and how they can be involved in peace making and peace building processes.

⁴ Eyber, Carola and Alastair, Ager Researching Young People's Experience of War: Participatory Methods and the Trauma of Discourse in Angola. In Boyden, Jo and Joanna de Berry (eds) Children and Youth on the Frontline. Berghahn Books, New York. 2004.P.189

⁵ Brett, Rachel, and Irma Spetch. Young Soldiers: Why They Choose to Fight. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. 2004.p.126

⁶ Peters, Krijn, Paul Richards, and Koen Vlassenroot. What Happens to Youth During and After Wars? A Preliminary Review of Literature on Africa and Assessment on the Debate. ROWOO Working Paper (October). 2003p.14

Robert D. Kaplan has famously characterized male youth in urban West Africa as out of school, unemployed, loose molecules in an unstable social fluid that threatened to ignite.⁷ Such menacing descriptions were supported by Samuel P. Huntington's argument that societies are particularly vulnerable to war when people aged 15-24 the youth comprise at least 20% of the population.⁸ This big number accompanied by poverty and proximity to war zones, raises the possibility of the youth joining fighting. He too fails to explain whether they play a significant role in peace making and peace building.

According to Urdal, the countries assumed to be under a particular risk of experiencing armed conflict, due to accumulation of the risk factors of youth bulges, intermediary political regimes and negative or stagnant economic growth are Zambia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Yemen, Niger, Togo, Iran and Jordan.⁹

Urdal's statistical analysis neither supported Huntington's argument regarding a 20% threshold nor Kaplan's argument that the world is moving toward a new age of insecurity. Instead, it depicted high numbers of youth as a blessing and a curse. A large youth population can boost an economy.¹⁰ Kaplan, Huntington and Urdal fail to show possibilities of utilizing the youth in peace making and peace building.

Rowe et.al argues that adolescent males with high levels of testosterone in their blood are easily influenced by peers. If their peers are involved in delinquent behavior, they are likely to copy it.¹¹ It would seem to be fairly obvious that ignoring, isolating or denigrating young people is unlikely to yield positive results. Rowe et. al. explore peer influence on the youth but fails find out how this peer influence can be utilized in conflict resolution and peace making processes.

⁷ Kaplan, Robert D. *The Ends of the Earth: A Journey at the Dawn of the 21st Century*. Random House. New York. 1996. P.16

⁸ Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. Simon & Shuster. New York 1996. P259-261

⁹ Urdal, Henrik. *The Devil in the Demographics: The Effect of Youth Bulges on Domestic Armed Conflict, 1950-2000*. Social Development Papers: Conflict Prevention & Reconstruction Paper No. 14 (July). Washington, DC: World Bank. 2004.P.17

¹⁰ Urdal, Henrik. *Op.cit.*p.17

¹¹ Rowe, Richard, et.al. "Testosterone, Antisocial Behavior, and Social Dominance in Boys: Pubertal Development and Biosocial Interaction." *Biological Psychiatry* 2004 p.546-552.

1.7.2 Effects of Conflict on the Youth

McKay, Susan, and Dyan Mazurana argue that increasingly, simplistic characterizations of war-affected children and youth are either traumatized victims, or violent contributors to warfare; suggesting that war's impact on youth is complex.¹² However they do not go further to give a solution to the impact; neither do they suggest ways of involving the youth in finding a solution to the conflicts.

Boothby et al. have found that "former child soldiers who are provided rehabilitative services and accepted back into their families and communities will become productive, responsible and caring adults"¹³ Boothby does not however show how they are rehabilitated and whether these youth are actively involved in conflict resolutions and the rehabilitation process.

According to Marc Somers, there are multitudes of ways that children and youth are exploited by their commanders: as porters, domestics, sex slaves, spies, human shields, minesweepers, miners, military policemen, and suicide bombers.¹⁴ He does not say anything on involvement of the youth in peace making processes.

P. Richards says, the possession of arms was viewed as a means of subsistence by youth and child soldiers—and particularly by the footloose and often angry core members who faced educational difficulties and social exclusion.¹⁵ This is a clear indication that the youth involved in conflict missed education and became social misfits. He too fails to shed light on youth involvement in peace processes.

Date-Bah says, many deaths occur from the collateral effects of warfare – such as famine, disease, and the destruction of health services than actual fighting. Armed conflicts are one of the central factors driving the expansion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which disproportionately attacks youth and significantly decreases the ability of households to cope with crises.¹⁶ The tendency for youth to flock to cities

¹² McKay, Susan, and Dyan Mazurana. *Where are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique: Their Lives during and After War*. Montreal: Rights and Democracy. 2004. P.66

¹³ Boothby, Neil, Jennifer Crawford and Jason Halperin. *Mozambique Child Soldier Life Outcome Study: Lessons Learned in Rehabilitation and Reintegration Efforts*. p.1.

¹⁴ Somers, Marc. *Urbanization, War, and Africa's Youth at Risk: Towards Understanding and Addressing Future Challenges*. Creative Associates International, Inc. USAID, Washington, DC. 2003. P.56

¹⁵ P. Richards, "The social life of war: Rambo, diamonds, and young soldiers in Sierra Leone", *Track Two*, vol. 8, No.1 (July 1999) p.7.

¹⁶ Date-Bah, Eugenia. Introduction. In *Jobs after War: A Critical Challenge in the Peace and Reconstruction Puzzle*, International Labor Office, Geneva. 2003. P.8-9

during and after wars is an increasingly significant phenomenon.¹⁷ These writers fail to link the youth with peace making but only talk of the effects of war on them.

According to McCrumen another effect conflict is physical torture especially beatings. In Kenya, suspects of *Mungiki* have faced the wrath of both the police and the sect members themselves. Young male residents of Mathare say they are not certain who is more terrifying - the Mungiki, who beat them and take their money, or the police, who beat them, accuse them of being gang members and demand money from their families.¹⁸

1.7.3 Youth in Peace Making, Peace Building and Changing the Culture of conflict

Boyden and de Berry's edited volume is devoted to shifting the paradigm away from accepted wisdom about war's punishing effects on young people to argue that age is not necessarily the critical determinant of vulnerability. Even when confronting by appalling adversities, Boyden and de Berry explain, many youth are able to influence positively their own fate and that of others who depend on them.¹⁹ But they do not show how this can happen. Is it through peace making?

Nordstrom states that girls in war zones are actors in the drama and tragedy of war along with adults and not, as their plight are frequently depicted, mere casualties who do not act.²⁰ She detects a punishing prejudice in the international development world favoring the perspectives and agendas of boys, and argues that the lack of political, economic and educational development for girls is a symptom of many societies' failure to see women as political, economic or educated actors. This attitude, Nordstrom states, pervades the core ethos of many development organizations. Nordstrom does not however state whether this has an impact on involvement of the youth in peace processes.

¹⁷ Rabwoni, Okwir. Reflections on Youth and Militarism in Contemporary Africa. In De Waal, Alex and Nicolas Argenti (eds) *Young Africa: Realizing the Rights of Children and Youth*. Africa World Press, Trenton, NJ. P. 2002..57

¹⁸ Stephanie McCrummen .Washington Post Foreign Service Monday, July 2, 2007

¹⁹ Boyden and de Berry's :*Armed Conflict in South Asia: A review of trends and issues identified through secondary research*. RSC Working Paper No.7. Refugee Studies Center, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.2004 p.46. .

²⁰ Nordstrom, Carolyn May; *Girls and Warzones: Troubling Questions*. Life and Peace Institute, Uppsala, Sweden. 1997. p.6-77

Mazurana et al. similarly note how, despite the pervasive use of girls in fighting forces in wars across the world, girls continue to be marginalized in programs for child soldiers at both national and community levels.²¹ These researchers fail to clearly show the extent of this marginalization and how best they could be utilized in these programs.

Patricia Mbote points out those situations of armed conflicts result into insecurity at the expense of public services like health and education. She further says that the situation is worse where the women are forcibly displaced into refugee camps.²² This work however forgets of the combatants who are the main causes of insecurity and whether they can play any role in peace processes.

According to KNCHR: training on conflict resolution and peace building in Mt. Elgon region investigation show that S.L.D.F mainly comprise of young men disgruntled by the land allocations.²³ They further assert that the majority of victims of conflicts are women and children. In their training program they place special focus on women whom they say will reach out to the young men who fuel the conflict.²⁴ KNCHR does not focus on the youth whom they confirm fuel conflict and the possibility of using them in peace processes.

UNDP 2006 report on youth and conflict points out how political participation is not providing a forum for young people to express their needs, aspirations and grievances. They further confirm that the declining level of political engagement of the youth has been a matter of concern for decision makers worldwide. This report points out adolescents and young people as target for all development efforts since they are often disproportionately affected by poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. UNDP has initiated a world program which outlines the impact of conflict on youths and highlights the role youths should play in peace building, conflict prevention and

²¹ Dyan Mazurana. and McKay, Susan, . *Where are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War.* Montreal: Rights and Democracy. 2004.

²² Patricia Mbote: "Gender Conflict and Security." In *Age of Globalisation.* Nairobi. 2004. p.92.

²³ KNCHR: *Training on Conflict and Resolution and Peace Building in Mt. Elgon.* 2006. p.1.

²⁴ UNDP Op.cit.p.37

conflict resolution.²⁵ However highlighting the role the youth should play is not enough, implementation is more important.

According to Karen Akoka, the youth can reshape the culture of violence by initiating activities which draw them away from the culture of conflict and violence. In Israel the youth have formed Beit Ham (Hebrew for “warm house”), an organization for youth in underprivileged neighborhoods. The youth come from different socioeconomic backgrounds, but all are facing problems of drugs, violence, social integration or broken homes. Some of these clubs specialize in particular activities and the youth can choose between arts, music, theater, and sports; others conduct more general activities. Also included in the program are meetings with psychologists, specialized educators and support groups, which help the young people cope with the problems they face in daily life. Karen Akoka’s work is relevant to my study; however, it also fails to highlight on how the youth can be involved in peace making.

According to UNDP 2004 report, in Afghanistan three decades of conflict have had long-term repercussions on the country's youth many of whom are disfranchised and lack educational and employment opportunities. Literacy and secondary school enrollment rates are also low. The situation for Afghan girls and women is particularly concerning; research shows that they suffer high levels of violence and discrimination and have poor access to justice and education. Afghan girls are also under traditional pressures to enter early marriage and early pregnancy.

Possibly one of the biggest roles in the process of restructuring Afghanistan can be played by the youth of Afghanistan. 68% of the Afghan population consists of people who are under the age of 25 years. Examples of youth involvement range from a teen training to be midwife to help combat the country's high maternal mortality rate to young women protesting against a law restricting their rights to a young woman nurturing Afghan girls through soccer.

In order to better address these youth development goals, the seven UN agencies (UNAMA, UNICEF, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNESCO, UNV and UNFPA) and

²⁵UNDP. Op.cit. p.37

eight government ministries have decided to develop a joint program. Afghan Youth participate effectively in socio-political process, with emphasis on national and local governance, democracy, reconstruction and peace building; Afghan young women and men have access to, and participate in, the socio-economic development, with emphasis on education, skills development and employment opportunities. The National Youth Program is providing a strong platform for coordination of youth programming and youth policy-making in Afghanistan.²⁶ This work is in line with my study but it leaves out the role the youth can play in peace making.

In Kosovo the youth have started Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) which works in building connections between young people across the Balkans, from different ethnic groups, regions, and countries, to enhance the participation of young people in the transitional justice process, work together for human rights and to build links that will prevent the re-emergence of the ethnic conflict that devastated the region.²⁷ This work is relevant to my study but it does not shade light on the role of the youth in peace making.

In Sierra Leone female social welfare, already poor to begin with, has further compromised during the protracted conflict. Polygamy and female genital mutilation have long been widely practiced, subjecting the female population to major health risks. Many have been forced to become heads of families but have only marginal economic, social and political opportunities.

UNDP is supporting initiation of youth Programs based on the recognition that young people are not sufficiently participating in mainstream avenues of decision making as the disproportionately low representation of young people in local and national governing bodies demonstrates.²⁸

These findings and proposals by the UNDP are relevant to my research. However, my research is mainly focused on implementations of these findings. The youth are a very important factor in peace and conflict resolution as they stand the chance of being

²⁶ United Nations Development Program 2004 <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2010/01/20/afghanistan-youth-find-outlets-amid-ongoing-violence/> p. 3 Retrieved on 24.09. 2010

²⁷ Insight on conflict Monday, August 17th, 2009.p.2

²⁸ Insaight op.cit.p2.

used as elements for violence, hooliganism and conflict-making. We have seen such cases in countries where terrorism is the order of the day. Also, the elites and power hungry politicians make the youth in their communities cause problems so that they can achieve their own selfish interests in government. The youth are vulnerable to these proposals because they do not have the right education.

According to Eze Wosu and A. Kinikanwo, in Nigeria majority of the males engaged themselves in local government revenue collection. Their mode of operation is mounting of roadblocks at strategic places to impound vehicles, trucks and cars that do not have local government or radio stickers. They found this job interesting and make a lot of money out of it. This avenue provided a source of livelihood for the rural migrants in urban centers.²⁹

Migrant girls engaged in sales, working in cyber café, computer operator. Others engaged themselves in restaurants, hotels, beer parlor and bakeries of bread and wedding cakes. Some of these activities imbued some of the young female migrants with skills which hitherto they never possessed: skills capable of empowering them in future.

In Uganda, Conflict Resolution by Youth (CRY) was formed and was incorporated into a company limited by guarantee in Uganda. CRY is a membership organization. The organizational slogan is "Youth are a resource". CRY Uganda arose out of the desire to change the prevalent culture of violence to that of non-violence in addressing issues that face young people today. These issues are addressed through dialogue, peace theater, entrepreneurship, professional youth exchange, modern debate, peace camps, Training & Education, media outreaches, ICTs, Sports, networking, advocacy, institutional development, monitoring and evaluation; community outreaches.³⁰ This work also concentrates on survival mechanisms and forgets their role in peace making.

Kenya is not left behind in changing the culture of conflict to a non-violent one. This has been significant in the *Kibera* slum. *Kibera* is east Africa's largest slum (one million people) located in Nairobi, Kenya. Most of the people living in *Kibera* are

²⁹ Eze Wosu* and A. Kinikanwo Anele: Rural-urban migration of young persons from selected conflict ridden communities in Rivers State: A sociological approach. African Journal of Political Science and International Relations Vol. 4(6), June 2010 pp. 209-214.

³⁰ Conflict Resolution by Youth (CRY) Youth are a Resource! .<http://cryuganda.org/>

children and youth. *Kibera* Film School, the first ever in an African slum, opens up new creative possibilities for young women and men. Youth trainees develop their talents, tell their stories, and become role models that transform their communities. *Kibera* Film School trainees aim at inspiring youth living in slums throughout Africa. Youth are trained in all aspects of film making - scriptwriting, casting, acting, camera, sound, editing, marketing and distribution. Trainees film their own stories and local events, share their films and get feedback at community screenings.³¹

In Mount Elgon District, very little has been said on the involvement of the youth in peace making and peace building processes. They are mentioned in peace building but in a casual manner. For instance, the Free Pentecostal Fellowship of Kenya (FPFK) in its News Letter Peace Rights Voice says that Reintegrating SLDF ex-combatants into society is one of the major challenges confronting Mt. Elgon region. During the conflict, combatants committed widespread atrocities against residents, including those in their own communities. These acts of violence created suspicion and fear about the prospect of ex-combatants returning to their communities.³²

Reintegration was impeded by acute shortage of relevant skills to support sustainable livelihoods, and the fact that many ex-combatants were not able to take advantage of opportunities in post-conflict reconstruction. To overcome this, Peace and rights programme livelihood programme sought to equip former fighters with productive skills and employment options so that they could return to normal community life. This return is dependent on the rehabilitation of basic social, economic and physical infrastructure and the revitalization of social services. This News Letter does not however give details how the youth can be actively in this peace building process; neither does it mention their involvement in peace making

The existing literature seems to concentrate much on youth involvement in post conflict peace building and forgets their role in peace making processes. This study will examine ways in which youth have participated in Mt. Elgon conflict; how they

³¹ Transform Lives of African Youth by Making Films <https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/kenya-slum-filmmaking/>

³² The Peace Rights Voice: A News Letter of the Free Pentecostal Fellowship of Kenya-Peace and Rights Programme Issue no.4 June 2011

have managed and reshaped the culture of violence specifically in Mt. Elgon. It will also explore ways in which the youth can be involved in peace making and peace building processes.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

All empirical studies should be grounded in theory.³³ A theory is a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and propositions that present a view phenomenon by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena.³⁴

My research was based on the scarcity perspective of resources accessibility theory, which stresses on competition between groups for access and control over limited resources as an important motivating factor for conflict.³⁵ The scarcity of these resources may affect society in a number of ways. These include population growth as well as inwards migration leading to increased demand for and/or consumption of resources; 'a decline in economic performance' of a resource, which means that more resources would be required to meet the needs of a population than before; depletion or diminished quantities of a resource; or unequal distribution of a resource; leading to absolute scarcity. Scarcity raises the value of the resources, placing them beyond the reach of the powerless groups, while encouraging the powerful ones to appropriate more of the resources. In the circumstances, each group will struggle to access the scarce resources by any means, including violence.³⁶

In Mt. Elgon District, there has been a serious scarcity of land; the main source of livelihood for the people in this area. This has been a result of delayed efforts by the government to distribute the available land to the local population of the *Soy* and *Chepkitale/Mosp*. The number of those to be allocated land went up to 7500 up from 600 the initial target ;it was agreed that, each get two and half acres. However, the

³³ Singleton et.al. Approaches of Social Research. O.U.P Oxford.1988.P.136.

³⁴ Keringer, Fred. Foundations of Behavioral Research. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc.

³⁵ Reuveny, R and Maxwell, J W 2001. Conflict and renewable resources. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45(6):719–742.

³⁶ Reuveny, R and Maxwell, J W 2001. Conflict and renewable resources. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45(6):719–742.

number was very high and some had to be left out. The available land was enough for only 1732 people. The *Ogiek* and the Soy were to share on equal basis i.e. 866 by 866 people. The exercise was marred by massive corruption. This corruption caused many bona fide members to miss the allocation of land. The unsuccessful and unfair allocations of land have become a major cause of conflict in Mt. Elgon between the *Mosop* and the Soy. The poor and the underprivileged missed land allocation unfairly and resorted to a violent armed conflict to create a radical change that would benefit them. Most of those who missed land allocation included the youth. Many have been rendered landless; others have vacated their own homes and many have even lost their lives.

The weaknesses of this theory is that it over emphasizes scarcity of resources as a major factor in emergence of conflict in the society. There are several situations in which an abundance of resources is likely to trigger violent conflict. Much of the violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, especially the Kivu's, can be attributed to the perceived need to control Kivu's resources. The conflicts in Sierra Leone and Angola were prolonged as many of the parties to the conflicts vied for control over diamond mines. The violence in Nigeria is in part attributable to the abundance of petroleum reserves and the competition between groups for access to oil rents. The separatist conflict in Katanga, Republic of Congo can also be partly attributed to the discovery of significant copper, gold and uranium deposits. It must also be taken into consideration that the type of abundant resource can have an impact on the method of fighting. An easily lootable resource, such as diamonds, tends to create situations in which warlords emerge to oppose government forces. Warlords are most likely to arise to power in regions with easily lootable resources and that are away from the centre or seat of government power.³⁷ Resources which require extensive extraction and transportation practices, tend to spark separatist conflicts.

To overcome this problem my research incorporated other theories; for instance; the Political conflict theory which asserts that human beings have a basic need to identify themselves and that most often this identification process is fulfilled by belonging, or

³⁷ Tschirgi, N. (2004). Political Economy of Armed Conflicts and Peace Building, Conflict, Security and Development, (4)3, 379-380

not belonging, to a particular political group. Membership within these groups develops what Ritzer and Goodman term the looking-glass self. The looking-glass self and group membership in turn shapes how these individuals interact within society.³⁸ In Mt. Elgon politics have played a role in propagation of the conflict. Politicians use the conflict to acquire favor from the disadvantaged groups by promising them a solution to the conflict and a fair land distribution.

On the other hand Gene Sharp argues that power is not monolithic; that is, it does not derive from some intrinsic quality of those who are in power. For Sharp, political power, the power of any state regardless of its particular structural organization ultimately derives from the subjects of the state. His fundamental belief is that any power structure relies upon the subjects' obedience to the orders of the rulers.³⁹ Former governments seem to have been seeking obedience of Mt. Elgon people by promising them settlement of the land issue but not really solving it. This has continued to trigger conflict in the area.

My research also borrowed from the Cultural conflict theory. Richerson and Boyd emphasize that the characteristic of culture is of general relevance to group members and that it is represented in people's minds and expressed in their behaviors and interactions.⁴⁰ Culture of a people directly influences their behavior. For instance most of the conflicts in the North Rift have been as a result of cattle rustling. This forms part of their culture and they enjoy doing it. Cattle for payment of dowry are acquired through raiding. In Mt. Elgon raiding is partly cause of the conflict. Though not rampant, there are a few reported cases of animals stolen across the district; some of which are taken to Uganda.

1.9 Research Hypothesis

This study was guided by the following hypothesis:

1. Conflict in Mount Elgon is centered on land.

³⁸ Ritzer, George and Goodman Douglas. *Social Theory* (sixth Edition), McGraw-Hill: New York 2004. p.196

³⁹ "Gene Sharp: Author of the nonviolent revolution rulebook". *BBC News*. 21 February 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12522848> Retrieved 27.06 2011.

⁴⁰ Richerson, P. J., and Boyd, R. *et by genes alone: How culture transformed human evolution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2005

2. Active involvement of the youth in Mount Elgon conflict is likely to have been propelled by the persistent problem of land distribution in the region.
3. Lack of sustainable peace in Mt. Elgon is attributed to non-involvement of the youth in peace making and peace building processes.

1.10 Methodology

This study methodology presents the study approach, sampling strategies, data collection strategy, data analysis procedure and challenges encountered.

The study used both qualitative and quantitative approach that employed the use of survey questionnaires which were both closed and open ended. The use of closed questionnaire helped in capturing the background information in the Mt. Elgon conflict. At the same time, the open ended questions used to capture respondents' attitude and opinion which is important in generating information of the sensitive nature as this conflict.

The target populations for this study were the soy and the Ndorobo who were involved in the land conflict leading the formation of the SLDF in Mount Elgon. Those interviewed were mainly from Kopsiro and Cheptais Divisions The heart of the SLDF menace. The target groups included the youth, women, men, government officials (provincial administration) and security personnel in the age brackets 19 years and 50 years.

The study employed the use of stratified random sampling technique to select respondents. This technique enabled get representations of various groups involved in this conflict as mentioned above. This method ensured that all subgroups were well represented in the study. The respondents were reached through the snowballing technique. In this case, the provincial administration and elders gave direction to where respondents are who in turn gave direction to more resourceful persons.

This study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected using questionnaires that were both closed and open ended. The latter was used to avoid restricting respondents to specific responses only. This instrument enabled the generation of information that was touching on individual experience, involvement in the conflict and its impact on the youth and how they can bring sustainable peace. In

addition tape recorder and photographing were used. Interviews were also conducted in the region to compliment questionnaires. The study covered a total of 120 respondents living in Mt. Elgon region especially Cheptais and Kopsiro Divisions where the SLDF dominated.. For security reasons names used are not real. Out of 120 respondents of the age bracket between 19 years and below and 50 years and above whom were interviewed in August 2011.

The study also used secondary information that was specifically gathered from reports and publications from NGO's, Kenya National Commission on Human Right and Newspapers. Others included journals, periodicals, books and development plans.

The data was analyzed using Excel which is a computer analysis package which is retrievable. Manual summaries of responses and case studies were also used to explain and supplement the quantitative findings.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MOUNT ELGON CONFLICT

2.1 Introduction

Different ideas have been developed to explain the causes of conflict in Mt. Elgon region. The factors responsible for conflict in Moun Elgon range from those related to the historical settlement pattern of Sabaot communities, economic, political and social issues. Therefore this chapter will delve into the underlying causal factors related to conflict in Mount Elgon District. The section will focus on major aspects that explain why there was persistent conflict in Mount Elgon. Special attention will be given to the management of land policy and law and the emerging land scarcity. Specifically the attention will be on the Chepyuk settlement scheme comprising of the three phases which resulted in the never ending conflict.

2.2 Land based Causes of Conflict in Mount Elgon

Various theories have been fronted in the attempt to explain the conflict in Mt. Elgon. For instance one theory argues that the conflict in Mount Elgon can be traced to colonial land policy where African land was alienated to create white settler farms in Trans-Nzoia region which is still perceived by the Sabaot to be their ancestral land. This resulted to the displacement and subsequent settlement of the sections of Sabaot community particularly the Mosop in Chepkitale region which was declared as trust land because the region is on the upper slopes of MountElgon which acts as a water tower. Another Sabaot group known as the Soy was settled in the lower sides of the slopes of Mount Elgon.⁴¹

After their settlement in the above mentioned areas, the Sabaots became victims of the government policy concerning management of land in Mount Elgon and the land laws which the Sabaots did not even understand. This was clearly seen in the establishment and management of Chepyuk settlement scheme. The establishment of Chepyuk settlement scheme and the subsequent dynamic settlement process in the three phases was based on several socio-economic factors that characterised each phase. The main objective of establishing Phase 1 of the Chepyuk settlement scheme at Emia and

⁴¹ International Rescue Committee, Kenya *Humanitarian Assessment Mount Elgon District, 2008*

Chepyuk locations of Kopsiro division was the need to settle the Mosop who had been moved from Chepkitale trust land or the Moorland.⁴²

The government gave various reasons why it had to relocate the Mosop from Chepkitale area. According to the government, the Mosop had been exposed to frequent attacks by the Ugandan community. The government therefore wanted to protect the Mosop from the incursions and cattle raids from the communities across the neighbouring Uganda who were composed of former soldiers of Idi Amin who had fled to Mount Elgon in 1979-1983. Secondly the government argued that there was need to educate the Mosop. The Mosop were therefore moved in order for the government to be able to provide them with services like health care and education. The physical access and infrastructure in the Moorland made it difficult for the provision of such services. Another reason was that the government wanted to protect the water tower. The trust land area was a water catchment area which needed to be preserved and the area subsequently established as a game reserve.⁴³

Although the government gave its reasons why it choose to move the Mosop, the Mosop were not in agreement with the government. They raised a case with the government to be allowed to maintain their traditional forest conservation system as they harness its utility in various ways such as bee keeping and honey harvesting as well as preservation of their grazing rights. They proposed to the government that they be allowed to participate in the utilisation of the game reserve just like the Maasai in the Kajiado.⁴⁴ Rejection of the Mosop proposal was a clear indication that they would face insufficiency of land particularly as the population increased. The land based conflict therefore became a common feature in the Mt. Elgon region.

The land-based conflict in Mt. Elgon District could be looked at from the perspective of shortage of the resource. Why this research argues so is because, there were no reported conflicts between Soy and the Mosop when the later were allocated Chepyuk phase I as more land was still available. Equally the relationship between the Sabaot and non-Sabaots was also cordial. However, as the non-Sabaots started owning land

⁴²Milka Chesakiit, Oral interview 29th August 2011, Sasur in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

⁴³ Jones Chemondi, Oral interview 29th, from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

⁴⁴ Simiyu Robert R, *Militianisation of resource conflicts: The case of land-based conflict in the Mount Elgon region of Western Kenya*, Institute for Security Studies, 2008.

in Chepyuk through purchase, competition for land resource gained momentum. At the same time the Mosop were moved from Chepkitale trust land, which is 35,000 hectares and squeezed into Chepyuk scheme which was only 6,500 hectares. This resulted in the drastic reduction of available grazing land and also limited access to forest resources.⁴⁵ Since the Mosop were used to large ranges where they grazed their animals, they now started encroaching on agricultural land that will see them engage in conflict with the agricultural Soy clan.

In addition, the government just allocated the Mosop the land but did not formalize their occupation by providing documentation. As the delays occasioned by government formalisation in land allocation and issuance of land titles were continuing, the population of the district was growing across all the communities. For example, those who were children in the initial allocations and thus didn't qualify would be adults by the time the government is concluding the process. This therefore resulted in the surge of the number of applicants despite the fact that land for distribution was not expanding.⁴⁶ Therefore the demand for the limited land for government allocation continued to increase, which coupled with irregular allocations, gave rise to opportunities for conflict. As families strained to access adequate land, they become vulnerable to the land based negative ethnicity perpetuated by political leadership or militia groups. Such leadership and groups, as was evidenced by the ideologies of Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF), promised more access to land that was in the hands of other clans or communities in the region.⁴⁷

From the argument above, it was evident that not every household would access land in Chepyuk settlement scheme Phase 1. The government therefore undertook an initiative of starting Chepyuk settlement scheme Phase II in Cheptoror and Kaimugul in Kopsiro Division in 1979. The rationale was the need to resettle the families which missed out on land or were evicted in Phase I.⁴⁸ Although the government set up Phase II, it still could not accommodate everyone who missed out. Equally due to

⁴⁵ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics *Geographical dimensions of the well being in Kenya: Who and where are they?* Volume I, A constituency Level Profile, 2003

⁴⁶ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics *Geographical dimensions of the well being in Kenya: Who and where are they?* Volume II, A constituency Level Profile, 2003

⁴⁷ Milka Chesakiit, Oral interview 29th August 2011, Sasur in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

⁴⁸ Jones Chemondi, Oral interview 29th, from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

irregularities associated with government allocations and corruption, other communities were moving in. The government had no alternative but to start Chepyuk settlement scheme Phase III. The Phase III resettlement was done in Chepkurkur and Korng'otuny in Kopsiro division. The rationale was based on the petition from the Soy clan for the families which were dispossessed of their land in Phase II.⁴⁹ Phase III faces a lot of challenges because most of the inhabitants had invaded the forest and allocated themselves some large tracts of land and they were not ready to leave the land that they had grabbed.

After the gazettelement of the forest and formal allocation of land, some of the genuine already settled families were evicted or missed out in all the allocation phases. The presumption by the communities was that the government would later demarcate the land and each family would still be allocated the land where they were occupying. The delays in completing the resettlement process in each phase therefore gave rise to opportunistic negative ethnicity that blew off into conflict. For example, whereas the initial settlement was meant for the Mosop families who were relocated from Chepkitale, families from the Soy were the key beneficiaries in the subsequent phases. Consequently, each clan started treating the other with suspicion which was further aggravated by nepotism and irregularities during vetting and allocation processes in phases II and III.⁵⁰ The evictions or missing out on allocations by genuine families in each phase left some of them with unaddressed grievances which in deed spilled over to phase III resettlement and consequently triggered and escalated the conflict.⁵¹

Another grievance that triggered the conflict was the untenable land tenure. The government land surveys and allocations had major gaps in granting land security to some of the allottees in the form of land titles. However, despite non-formalisation of the allocations, some of the allottees sold the parcels of land to others. A case in point is where the Mosop preferred to sell their land or rent it out to the members of the Soy clan or non-Sabaots like the Bukusu and the Kikuyu and moved back to Chepkitale.

⁴⁹ Milka Chesakiit, Oral interview 29th August 2011, Sasur in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

⁵⁰ Meshack Kimurwa; Oral Interview conducted on 28th August 2011; Huruma area in Chepkurkur Kopsiro Division.

⁵¹ Agnes Maywa; Oral Interview conducted on 28th August 2011; Huruma area in Chepkurkur Kopsiro Division.

However, later on there was no proof of ownership despite the transactions having taken place. This created discord when members of the Mosop were evicted again from Chepkitale and came back to claim their earlier held land.⁵² The people who had settled in Phase I and II were the most affected.

In other situations, the multiple allocations of parcels of land to more than one person resulted in some losing land they would have otherwise owned legally. Therefore, the land transactions in Chepyuk phase I, II and III which did not have legal force due to lack of titles and the consistent evictions of families or non allocation to deserving cases negatively affected those families economically. In this regard, in 2006, when the latest conflict erupted, those who felt aggrieved during the previous allocations felt compelled to fight for their economic rights. As such, the conflict in Mt. Elgon District was by and large a result of real and perceived dispossession or denial of economic rights and livelihood in the form of land. This coupled with politicisation of social and ethnic diversity hence contributed to conflict in the region. In addition, this was a vulnerability factor making the youth to join groups like SLDF as a way of making a livelihood.⁵³

Chepyuk Phase III has been the seedbed of atrocious conflict in Mt. Elgon. Chepyuk III was initially occupied illegally. The Mosop having been the official beneficiaries of Phases I and II, Soy leaders also wanted something that was officially theirs from the start. The Soy began by illegally moving into the controversial forest area that is known as Chepyuk III. There were no administrators, no government, no law and order. People simply moved in and hived off for themselves as much land as they were able to hive off the forest and lay claim to. There was no formal government recognition of their presence on this land, for a long time. In 2001, Soy leaders visited and petitioned the then President Daniel arap Moi to formally recognise them as the owners of this land and to give them title deeds. They were led by Mr. Fred Kapondi, who was then the District Kanu Chairman for Mt. Elgon District.⁵⁴

⁵² Simiyu Robert R, *Militianisation of resource conflicts: The case of land-based conflict in the Mount Elgon region of Western Kenya*, Institute for Security Studies, 2008.

⁵³ Jones Chemondi, Oral interview 29th, from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

⁵⁴ KNCHR, *The Mountain of Terror – a Report on the Investigations of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon*, May 2008

The Moi government yielded to their pleas. The land was to be surveyed and each family allocated 2.5 acres. All the anomalies that had informed allocation in Phases I and II replayed themselves in Phase III. But they were even more sharply defined at this stage. Claims of nepotism, political interference, corrupt acquisition by government officials and allocation to outsiders and disrespect for the standard allocation of 2.5 acres were common. This derailed the process. Once again there were several people laying claim to the same parcel of land. Besides, local Soy and Mosop leadership started demanding on each side that the entire Phase III land should be exclusively given to their community. The Mosop even recommended that if this was not possible, then the Phase III scheme should be scrapped altogether and that the land reverts to its forest status.⁵⁵

2.3 Identity

Four main communities occupy Mt. Elgon District namely the Sabaot (Soy and Mosop), the Bukusu and the Iteso. The distinction between the Mosop and the Soy is linguistically misleading. Indeed, these are same people but distinctions drawn because land crises. The Soy and Ndorobo are strictly linguistically speaking the same language community. The names Mosop refer to the same cluster of people who are pastoralist and live up north in the higher parts of the Mountain. While the name Soy refers to the same people but occupying lower lands on the same mountain. The Mosop and Soy are one and the same people. The only distinctive factor is that the people who live in the higher ground are pastoralists, while those in the lower grounds are agrarian.⁵⁶ Although the Soy and the Mosop are the same people, sharing of resources have contributed introduction of the identities that led to conflict among themselves. There emerged rivalry and conflict among the different factions of Sabaot clans that are affiliated to different politicians. All these have contributed to the ethnic dimension of the Mt. Elgon conflict.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ International Rescue Committee, *Humanitarian Assessment Mt. Elgon District*, Nairobi: IRC, 2008

⁵⁶ Albert Simotwo; Oral Interview conducted on 30th august 2011; Cheptoror area Kopsiro Division.

⁵⁷ KNCHR, *The Mountain of Terror – a Report on the Investigations of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon*, May 2008

The question of identity is also clear when dealing with the Sabaot-Bukusu relationships. The Sabaots claim historical injustices committed by the Bukusu against them. They claim that the Bukusu took over most of their ancestral land in the wider Trans-Nzoia region after the colonial government. The Sabaot also claim that they were forced to live in Bungoma County away from their kinsmen the Kalenjin community in the Rift Valley. Bungoma County is dominated by the Bukusu while the Sabaot are the minority. The problems between the Bukusu and the Sabaot began during the resettlement programme in the Trans-Nzioa County. The Bukusu had strong national leadership that negotiated on their behalf while the Sabaot lacked such leadership. The Bukusu managed a bigger share of land allocation than the Sabaot despite Sabaot's claim on Trans-Nzoia as their ancestral land.⁵⁸

Because of their strong leadership, the development was concentrated on the Bukusu side while the Sabaot side was neglected. The Bukusu were deliberately marginalising the Sabaot on ethnic lines. Due to the feeling of marginalisation, the Sabaot demanded to have an administrative district established for them and away from the Bukusu influence. However, the Bukusu have on several occasions been allocated land in Mt. Elgon. This has resulted in simmering suspicion among the two communities resulting into conflict.⁵⁹ On any occasion of eviction from the forest land the Sabaot blamed the Bukusu of being behind the decision even when it was done by the Moi administration.

2.4 Leadership and Governance

Leadership and governance failed the test of providing security to its people in Mt. Elgon District. The conflict can be subsumed to be simply and squarely the result of failure in leadership. From the very outset of conflict, the question of land, which is at the heart of the conflict, was handled irresponsibly and even indiscreetly by those in government leadership. At the very beginning the British colonial authorities moved the Sabaot people from their land without any regard to how and where they would settle. Even in the Lancaster House talks, the government failed to invite the Sabaot

⁵⁸ International Rescue Committee, *Humanitarian Assessment Mt. Elgon District*, Nairobi: IRC, 2008

⁵⁹ Meshack Kimurwa; Oral Interview conducted on 28th August 2011; Huruma area in Chepkurkur Kopsiro Division.

people. Mt. Elgon people were not considered.⁶⁰ At independence, the Jomo Kenyatta Government attempted to address the land question among the Mosop between 1965 and 1971. Poor management of the project sowed the first seeds of what has contributed to the conflict that was witnessed from 1996-2003. In the first instance, the initiative shows signs of insincerity on the part of local leaders behind the initiative. The quest for land was initiated by the then Member of Parliament, the late Daniel Moss. In asking for the land from Mzee Kenyatta, Moss said that there was need to move the Mosop to more hospitable and agrarian land.⁶¹

It was strongly expressed that they needed to be drawn into modernisation. That they should participate in agricultural activities and send their children to school, while also enjoying other modern conveniences such as hospitals, roads and allied infrastructural facilities. The political leadership that asked for this land had hidden political and economic agenda. Politically, the Sabaot leaders saw a good opportunity to beef up their numbers in this area. This would enable them to boost their numerical strength in local government politics against the Bukusu and Teso. The Mosop were initially ill-placed for agrarian activity. This led to their being taken advantage of by the agrarian Soy and other peoples. Some Mosop sold their land to the Soy or to outsiders, including Bukusu, Teso and even to government officials in the then Bungoma District. Others allowed members of these other communities to lease their land in whole or in part, for pittance consideration. Equally some Government officials were in fact direct beneficiaries of this land, as were the political leaders who had asked the Government for excision of the land. There was major failure on the part of Government, giving as the officials did, letters of allocation and ballots to up to three people for the same parcel of land. The government also did not do a proper survey of land. Land demarcation was therefore quite arbitrary. This paved way to easy dispossession on part and sometimes even on the entire piece that one was entitled to.⁶²

⁶⁰ Isaiah Lucheli, *Moorland Defence Force Presents another Headache for Government*, Sunday Standard June 1, 2008, p.33

⁶¹ *Ibid*

⁶² Oral interviews with NCCK and Action Aid officials in Kakamega, 22/8/2011

Land surveys eventually took place between 1988 and 1989. The process was driven by the provincial administration, under the stewardship of Mr. Francis Lekool. The government officials corruptly obtained land for themselves. This made most members of the Soy clan to establish a militia group known as the SLDF again taking advantage of the government failure. SLDF established an illegal court system while government slept. They imposed fines and other illegal penalties on perceived wrong doers and government did nothing about this for two years. They even passed death sentence against offenders and went on to execute the sentence. They carried out wide range raids with adequate fore-notice and yet nothing happened on the government side. They would even inform the police about where and when they were going to strike next, yet no pre-emptive action was taken by government. They even disarmed the police, with impunity.⁶³

The Sabaot had a high sense of relative deprivation and political marginalisation. The Sabaot felt both hopeless and frustrated with regard to government initiating of development projects. They saw little hope of having a government that would have addressed their grievances.⁶⁴ The Sabaots were not happy about this state of affairs. Before taking up arms, the disaffected people went to court to seek an order stopping the survey and allocation. They included those left out of the 1732 allottees as well as the large land holders. Although they are said to have gotten the court order, government disregarded the court order and went on with the survey and land allocation anyway. Upon completion of allocation, government engaged in forceful eviction from Phase III of all who had not been allocated. The government officials burnt down houses and destroyed other property in the eviction exercise. There were perceptions of disregard for the rule of law by government and general feeling of bitterness and anger among the displaced Soy people. The Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF) was born, ostensibly to fight for the rights of the displaced people.⁶⁵

⁶³ Kenya National Commission on Human Rights Report on Mt. Elgon, p.6

⁶⁴ Simiyu Robert R, *Militianisation of resource conflicts: The case of land-based conflict in the Mount Elgon region of Western Kenya*, Institute for Security Studies, 2008.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*

The conflict in Mt. Elgon has often been informed not just by what can only be described as corrupt and poor decisions by provincial administration but by the collapse of governance and even apparent complicity of government officials in prurient and atrocious activities. Firearms are believed to have been irregularly introduced into civilian hands in the early 1990s, by very high ranking government officials. It was alleged that there were Kenyan fugitives operating in eastern Uganda, seeking to overthrow the government of Retired President Daniel arap Moi. They were said to be under the leadership of a certain Brigadier Odongo and a Wangamati.⁶⁶ The government in its counter efforts gave arms to youth in Mt. Elgon to protect Kenya from Brigadier Odongo's army never left the Mountain. The youth who were given weapons played a key role in the 2006 – 2008 armed conflict.⁶⁷

SLDF became law unto themselves as government slept. They established parallel informal government in Mt. Elgon District which for two years terrorised all and sundry almost as if they were the leaders of a sovereign state whose internal affairs government did not wish to interfere with. Ordinarily the National State Intelligence Service (NSIS) ought to have alerted government on what was in the offing. Politicians have been active players in the Mt. Elgon conflict. Some local politicians fanned the conflict between the Mosop and Soy communities by playing them against each other.⁶⁸ For instance during the 2007 general election campaigns, prominent politicians from outside the District are reported to have toured the area time and again, sometimes allegedly holding secret meetings at night. They are said to have promised the Soy and SLDF that if they voted in a particular manner, they would be helped to expel from the district all the people who did not belong to their community. The SLDF was to make sure that everybody voted in a specific way. Arms were also brought in by the same politicians.⁶⁹ Politicians have at every phase unduly influenced the allocation of land. They sought to have their close friends, family members and political supporters enjoy undue leverage over everybody else.

⁶⁶ Republic of Kenya, *Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee to Investigate Ethnic Clashes in Western and other Parts of Kenya*, Nairobi: Government Printers, September 1992.

⁶⁷ Makabila, S. & Okwayo, J., "Financiers told to heed amnesty call or face law", Sunday Standard, June 1, 2008, p.33

⁶⁸ KNCHR, *The Mountain of Terror: a Report on the Investigations of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon*, May 2008

⁶⁹ Further security survey needs to be undertaken to confirm this. NSIS may have some useful information in this respect. We were not able to meet and talk to them.

2.5 Traditional Institutions of Governance

The institution of the Laibon is still very strong in both Mosop and Soy areas. The Laibon is a traditional religious leader who is believed to possess spiritual powers. The people believe that the Laibon communicates with God and that he is God's messenger. The Laibon is reclusive and mysterious. Few people have seen him. Fewer still have ever heard him speak. Even when he communicates God's message to the people, he does so only through a respected council of elders. But what he says is not open to question or defiance. You question or defy the Laibon at your own peril. There are seven Laibons in the Mount Elgon District. But only two of these have been active in recent times, Laibon Psongoywo in Cheptais region (Soy) and Laibon Sangula, in Mosop.⁷⁰

The two Laibons have been struggling for supremacy over each other a struggle that would seem to underline the fact that the Mosop and Soy people are essentially one people. These two Laibons would appear to have been very active in the 2006-2008 armed conflict. Laibon Psongoywo is reported to have prepared SLDF militias with traditional blessings before they went out to war. He is reported to have administered upon them potent concoctions that made them wild. He was arrested at the height of the military operation and later released.⁷¹ Apart from the Laibons there was also the question of Moranism. The Morans are traditionally the young warriors who defend the ethnic group against its enemies. At initiation, the youth are taught about the ethnic group, its values and about its heroes. They hear tales of great men who led the community in trying and difficult times in the past. They are taught about courage and chivalry and about the need to die for their community, should the need arise. After initiation, the Moran is in a state of permanent alert to fight for their ethnic group whenever he should be called upon.⁷²

⁷⁰ Albert Simotwo; Oral Interview conducted on 30th August 2011; Cheptoror area Kopsiro Division.

⁷¹ Stephen Makabila & Joel Okwayo, "Financiers told to heed amnesty call or face law", Sunday Standard, June 1, 2008, p.33

⁷² Independent Medico-Legal Unit, *Preliminary Report of Medico-Legal Investigation of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon "Operation Okoa Maisha"*, Nairobi: IMLU, 2008

The conflict in Mount Elgon was to a large measure fuelled by the local professional class. This included the elites from the society like teachers, lecturers in Universities and other senior government employees. They play the role of enlightening the locals of the historical injustices in the area and advice on the importance claiming their rights. Many of them influenced the conflict even as they operated from the Diaspora. It was important that this class is made part of the solution. The findings show that professionals from both the Soy and Mosop regions were key in ideological influence upon their people. They were well respected in their communities and were looked upon for guidance. It was clear that the conflict has engaged their mind for a long time. They have prepared position papers which have been presented to various forums. Some of them even have websites and blogs where the conflict is frequently discussed.⁷³

2.6 Corruption

After the 2005 Referendum, the third phase was finally implemented. The number of those to be allocated land went up to 7500 and it was agreed that, each get two and half acres. However, the number was very high and some had to be left out. The available land was enough for only 1732 people. The *Ogiek* and the Soy were to share on equal basis i.e. 866 by 866 people. The exercise was marred by massive irregularities.⁷⁴ The vetting committee was under pressure from political leaders not to give land to people seen as sympathetic to those posing a political threat to them at that time. This was a feature of the broader political conflict between the then sitting member of parliament for Mt. Elgon, John Serut, and his protégé the MP who was to be, Fred Kapondi. As a result some bona fide members missed allocation of land. Their names were missing from the 1732 people listed for land allocation.

Discontent developed amongst a group of people, particularly on the realization that the vetting process was not going to be restarted afresh. These are the people who came together to form a militia group called the Sabaot Land Defense Force

⁷³ Stephen Makabila & Joel Okwayo, "Financiers told to heed amnesty call or face law", Sunday Standard, June 1, 2008, p.33

⁷⁴ Land Alliance update, volume 5, number 1, April-June 2007

(hereafter SLDF) in the year 2006 to disrupt land allotment and seek redress for alleged injustices during land distribution in *Chepyuk* with the conflict putting two main clans of *Sabaot* against each other.

This marked the beginning of violence and killings mainly attributed to the *Sabaot Land Defense Force* that took up arms and went into hiding in the forest. The opposition and general dissatisfaction culminated in the killing of a chief and an assistant chief in the area. Compounding the problem further, with the allegations of bribery amongst the land brokers who are said to have taken colossal amounts of money from the squatters with the promise to get them land allocation in the scheme; this escalated killings in the area with the *SDLF* hunting them down. It is also said that a number of people sold their property in order to pay the brokers in the hope of getting land in the scheme. Further to this, the residents lived in constant fear of killings and harassment by members of the group at the same time unable to report the same to the police for fear of reprisal or destruction of their property.

According to the Western Kenya Human Rights Watch (WKHRW),⁷⁵ which investigated and reported on human rights abuses by all parties in Mt. Elgon, the *Sabaot Land Defence Force* emerged as an armed group immediately after the December 2002 general elections. WKHRW claims that recruitment of fighters began in March 2003 and training, at camps in the forest, began in July 2003.⁷⁶ However, violent attacks did not begin in earnest until 2006, in the wake of the implementation of the phase III resettlement program when the SLDF resisted attempts to reallocate land, and then in the run-up to the 2007 elections when they targeted political opponents of Fred Kapondi, in particular supporters of his erstwhile colleague and then rival, John Serut.

The SLDF is an armed group organized and funded by local politicians, although the actual politicians in control have changed over time.⁷⁷ The SLDF is very similar in its activities to the majimboist groups that were armed by the state in 1991-92 and 1996-97 to drive out non-Kalenjin groups (mostly Luhya in Mt. Elgon) who were unlikely

⁷⁵ Western Kenya Human Rights Watch is an independent Kenyan non-governmental organization based in Bungoma that has no affiliation of any form to Human Rights Watch.

⁷⁶ Job Bwonya, "Extract Notes from a Study: On Chepyuk Conflict in Mt. Elgon District September 2006-March 2007. on file with Human Rights Watch.

⁷⁷ Human Rights Watch interview with human rights activists, Bungoma, March 28, 2008.

to vote for the ruling KANU party.⁷⁸ This happened in Mt. Elgon, as well as across the Rift Valley and coastal provinces in the elections of 1992 and 1997. The political objectives of the SLDF becomes clear when one looks at the pattern of attacks, the ethnicity and political affiliation of the victims, and the relationship between the timing of violence and the electoral cycle. Basically, the SLDF, as with many other armed groups in Kenya, had twin purposes, on the one hand land-related objectives, and on the other to further the political aims of certain local leaders.

2.7 The 2007 Pre-election Politics and Mount Elgon Conflict

The Mount Elgon conflict took a new dimension of politics and ethnicity in the run-up to the December 2007 general elections. The SLDF allied itself with the opposition party, the ODM, and was opposed to all leaders and supporters of other parties, especially those from the ruling coalition that later became the Party of National Unity (PNU). The SLDF went so far as to intimidate and even execute PNU supporters. Two brothers of the the MP John Serut and a chief oe Kapkateny Location were Killed for allegedly supporting PNU. As a result of intimidation, two ODM civic aspirants, Moses Makoit of Cheptais ward and Nathan Warsama of Sasur ward, were elected unopposed. Serut supported the PNU, which was also the party the government favored, and sought re-election at the 2007 polls on PNU ticket, at a time many prominent politicians from the region were changing to the ODM.

In November 2007 Kapondi, who was still in police custody, won the ODM party nomination to stand for Mount Elgon parliamentary elections the next month, by an overwhelming majority. This sent a clear message to the government, because he won even though he did not campaign for nominations and even as they were casting their ballots for him, his constituents were uncertain whether he would be available and eligible to contest the general election.

⁷⁸ Majimboism is a term used to refer to support for a federal constitution that gives more powers to regions and thus encourages a more ethnically fragmented power structure in Kenya. Some politicians have manipulated the concept to incite ethnic hatred against traditionally non-native groups, especially in the Rift Valley, thus encouraging an understanding of majimboism as a blueprint for ethnic enclaves in Kenya.

Just a few days before the general election the state withdrew its case against him. To Kapondi this confirmed his position that there had been a political motive behind his arrest and he challenged the state to continue with the case, declaring that 'he was determined to go all the way to know why [he] was arrested'.⁷⁹ Kapondi easily won the elections, defeating the incumbent MP and ruling PNU party candidate and his arch rival, Serut, to become the new MP for Mount Elgon. This development had important ramifications at both the local and the national levels. Locally, it implied a shift in power relations and access to national resources in favour of the Soy. Given the history of patronage in respect of land in the district, and Kapondi's previous efforts to further the land rights of the Soy clan in particular, the new political dispensation heightened expectations among the Soy especially those allied to Kapondi that they would be able to regain their land. On the other hand, the Mosop and Serut's Soy supporters feared exclusion and they and other non-Sabaot in Mount Elgon and neighbouring districts feared that Kapondi's victory would embolden the SLDF and worsen their persecution and that he would use his new position to protect the militia. Persistent refusal by two SLDF leaders, Matakwei (deputy leader and top military commander) and John Kanai (political spokesman), to disclose the identity of the real leader of the militia fanned speculation that some powerful people, including the newly elected area MP whom the SLDF had fiercely supported in the elections, may have been behind its operations and were providing financing. Others were said to include councilors (among them Makoit and Warsama), former MPs and local professionals, although all of them repeatedly denied any involvement in the SLDF.

After the declaration of the PNU's candidate, Mwai Kibaki, as the victor in the December 2007 presidential elections - which ODM believed its candidate, Raila Odinga, had won - violence broke out across the country, especially in the ODM strongholds of Rift Valley, Coast and Western provinces, and parts of Nairobi. Because, as was pointed out earlier, politics in Mount Elgon closely mirrors that of Rift Valley Province, this situation worsened the violence in Mount Elgon, which had overwhelmingly voted for the ODM. While the proximate cause of the conflict in Rift Valley might have been the election dispute, the underlying cause was the longstanding and entrenched land question. The fact that a national election dispute

⁷⁹ *East African Standard*, 29 November 2007.

would aggravate local conflict relates to the fact that, as elsewhere in Africa, 'outcomes of struggles over the meaning and allocation of property rights will be shaped in part by who manages to win political power at the national level'.⁸⁰

The fact that they had lost the resources (taken though they may have been) of which the patronage of Daniel arap Moi assured them after his exit from power, was not lost on the residents of Mount Elgon; even the Chepyuk Settlement Scheme was expanded during Moi's tenure. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that while the Soy overwhelmingly supported Kapondi, the Mosop supported Serut. Members of some of the non-Sabaot communities, especially the Bukusu (a Luhya subgroup), were also labeled as 'political enemies' for supporting the PNU and the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Kenya (FORD-K), which had joined forces with other parties under the PNU umbrella. Sporadic though its activities may have been, the SLDF left a trail of destruction, deaths, displacements and social disarticulation that also decimated people's livelihoods. Human rights organizations operating in the area have documented a wide range of human rights abuses and estimates that over 600 people died, more than 100 were abducted and over 30 were maimed. The militia's maiming signature took the form of chopping off their victims' ears, especially those of young men who refused to enlist with the militia or supported candidates other than those favored by the SLDF leadership.⁸¹

There are accounts of how SLDF militiamen armed with guns and machetes broke into people's houses in the early morning hours, beat up their victims, and commanded them to hand over money and other valuables thus:

I was woken up by a knocking at the door. I opened it and there were guns and torches staring at me. They rounded up my cows, beat me and stabbed me as we walked. When we reached the bush they tied me by my feet to a tree, my head hanging down. There were others hanging also. They beat me very badly and said: 'Either surrender all your possessions including your land or you die now'. I told them to

⁸⁰ Boone, C 2007. Property and constitutional order: land tenure reform and the future of the Africanstate. *African Affairs*, 106(425):557-586.

⁸¹ Robert Romborah Simiyu ; Militarization of Resource Conflict : The case of land based conflict in the Mount Elgon Region of Western Kenya.

*take it. They cut off my ear as a mark, then they made me eat it. I crawled home, I could not walk.*⁸²

They also destroyed property, torched houses, and blindfolded and abducted men, often telling their victims' spouses that they would never see their husbands again. Not all SLDF victims were as 'lucky' though, and many are said to have died and their bodies dumped in the forest. According to one woman, after her husband was abducted she only learned about his fate 'when a man she knows to be a member of the SLDF gave her a pile of the clothes he was wearing when he was abducted and said, simply, "sorry" '. According to Human Rights Watch, an area chief also recalled that five bodies of people who were opposed to the SLDF were found in his area 'with their throats cut' one morning. The SLDF also allegedly raped their victims, both men and women, sometimes in turns, and forced their victims to have sex with one another as well. A police spokesman confirmed that on 4 April 2008 the police rescued three women who had been raped and tortured by a gang in the forest after being abducted⁸³. The extent of SLDF atrocities came to light when mass graves believed to be those of its victims were uncovered in March 2008 at three different sites in the forest⁸⁴.

2.8 Emergence of counter-insurgency militias

After repeated attacks by the Soy-led SLDF, the Mosop organised their own defence despite the presence of security apparatuses and the establishment of three police bases in the area (at Chepyuk, Kipsikrok and Kaimugul). Apparently the murder of a respected Mosop elder and retired chief, Tenderesi Temoi, precipitated the formation of a counter-insurgency militia called the Moorland Defence Force (MDF).⁸⁵ As the name suggests, the MDF operated in the moorlands high in the mountain from where the Mosop had been relocated early on and to which they fled after attacks by the SLDF. One of the MDF fighters who explained their reasons for forming the MDF

⁸² Human Rights Watch 2008

⁸³ *Daily Nation*, 6 April 2008

⁸⁴ *Daily Nation*, 25 March 2008

⁸⁵ Robert Romborah Simiyu ;Militianisatio of Resource Conflict : The case of land based conflict in the Mount Elgon Region of Western Kenya.

pointed out that the police bases did not protect them from the SLDF militia.⁸⁶ 'They continued raiding us and we became desperate, leading to the creation of MDF'⁸⁷. Like the SLDF, the MDF had retired military officers in its ranks who trained the youths in various aspects of combat. The Western Province Commissioner denied the existence of such a militia, saying only that those who had been in possession of illegal firearms from the area which was alleged to be under the control of the MDF had surrendered their weapons to the state. However, a local religious leader, the Reverend Stanley Taboi, conceded that the Mosop took up arms but did not do so to fight innocent people but to defend themselves from SLDF aggression and that MDF fighters had surrendered their weapons because they supported the military operation against the SLDF.

Another militia group that was formed in a desperate attempt to defend people targeted by the SLDF (especially members of the Soy clan allied to Serut) was called the Political Revenge Movement. Nothing much is known about this group, except that it is associated with close friends of Serut and that, like the MDF, it is based deep in the forest. Members of this militia are said to have been among key informers and associates of the army during operations and that they helped to identify suspected SLDF militiamen especially with regard to computer/satellite screening of individuals who had used or held guns .⁸⁸

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter put it clear that there have been many underlying causes of conflict in Mount Elgon District. These includes the issue of land, Identity, poor Leadership and corruption. Other factors that have fueled conflict in Mount Elgon include the 2007 pre-election politics and emergence of counter insurgency militias like the Moorland Defence Force. The political campaigns were pegged on the issue of land in the region The SLDF allied itself with the opposition party, the ODM, and was opposed to all leaders and supporters of other parties, especially those from the

⁸⁶ Independent Medico-Legal Unit 2008. Preliminary report of medico-legal investigation of torture by the military at Mount Elgon 'Operation Okoa Maisha'. Available at http://www.kma.co.ke/downloads/IMLU_report.pdf [accessed on 20 August 2011].

⁸⁷ Luchuli, I 2008. Moorland Defence Force presents another headache. *East African Standard*, 1 June.

⁸⁸ Kenya National Commission on HumanRights 2008

ruling coalition that later became the Party of National Unity (PNU). These issues need to be addressed both by the local leaders, NGOs and the Government. This, if done, will save this region from persistent conflict that has been experienced for a long time.

This chapter has tried to shed light on the various causes of conflict in mount Elgon. However land remains at the center

CHAPTER THREE

CONFLICT IN MOUNT ELGON

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is necessary in the search for understanding of the conflict in Mount Elgon. Land is a contested natural resource in Kenya. The nationalist struggle for independence was largely anchored on the need for access, use and control of the land by the indigenous people. The Mount Elgon conflict therefore represents the overwhelming desire for access to and use of land by various groups that inhabit the areas. This chapter documents history of Mount Elgon, the people who occupy the area and the colonial declaration that laid the foundation to the conflict in the areas.

3.2 The Area and the people

Mount Elgon is the fourth highest mountain in Africa with a peak of 4320 metres above the sea level. The mountain is named after the Elgeyo ethnic group, who once lived in huge caves on the south side of the mountain. It was formally known as Ol Doinyo Ilgoon (Breast Mountain) by the Maasai and as Masaba on the Ugandan side. It is the oldest and largest solitary volcano in East Africa, covering an area of around 3500 km². The soils on Mount Elgon are from the Andisol order meaning developed in volcanic ejecta.⁸⁹ The climate of Mount Elgon shows an approximately bimodal pattern of rainfall, with the wettest months occurring from April to October.⁹⁰ The forest zone receives the maximum rainfall and is important in the mountain's role as a water catchment for several million people.⁹¹

Mount Elgon is located on the North Western Kenya and Eastern Uganda international boundaries. It covers two administrative districts and provinces Mount Elgon district in Western province and Trans Nzoia district in Rift Valley province. It is a large extinct volcano of tertiary origin with an altitudinal range of between 2030 and 4320 metres above the sea level. It lies at latitude 1° 08' N and 34°45'E and

⁸⁹ Center for Multiparty Democracy: Politics and Parliamentarians' in Kenya 1944-2007

⁹⁰ Uganda Wildlife Authority, www.uwa.or.ug. <http://www.uwa.or.ug/elgon.html>, Retrieved on 2008-03-16.

⁹¹ Scott, Penny (1998). *From Conflict to Collaboration: People and Forests at Mount Elgon, Uganda*, IUCN. ISBN, 1998, p. 9

receives an annual precipitation of 1280 mm and minimum and maximum temperatures of 9°C and 22°C respectively. The soils are poorly drained dark peaty loams, ranging in colour from reddish brown to black. They are shallow with rock outcrops above 3000 m. On the mountain footsteps covering most of the forest is mostly well-drained humid friable clay with dark red subsoil derived from volcanic rocks.⁹²

Mount Elgon vegetation can be zoned into four that is open woodland, tropical moist forest, bamboo and afro-alpine zone that is above the bamboo zone. *Juniperus procera*, *Hagenia abyssinica*, *Olea welwitschii*, *Ohotstetteri*, *Prunus africana*, *Podocarpus falcatus* and *Platifolia* species dominate the moist tropical forest. Moorlands, swamps and rocks form a major part of the afro-alpine zone. Mount Elgon area is largely forested and plays an important role as the water tower in the Nile basin. Because of its importance as the water source, the government of Kenya gazetted area as a government forest reserve in 1932. The gazetted land covers an area of about 49,382.9 ha. The forest is divided into three management units namely the natural forest reserve, the commercial exotic plantations and the national park. These are named Kimothon forest, Mount Elgon and Chorlem forest blocks respectively. The national park was gazetted in 1968 and covers an area of 16 900 ha while the plantations of cypress pines cover an estimated area of 4,500 ha.⁹³

Gazetting of the forest land and the national park is mentioned here because the process played a very important role in the conflict which is the subject of this study. Gazetting the areas placed the management of the areas under the Forest Department which manages the forest reserve while the Kenya Wildlife Service manages the National Park. This affected the commercial and the subsistence values of the people living around the forest. The gazetting reduced the available land for the pastoral dwellers and cultivating communities raising competition that resulted to frequent

⁹² Wass Peter (Ed), *Kenya's Indigenous Forests: Status, management and conservation*, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, 1995.

⁹³ Kamugisha J.R., Ogutu Z.A. and Stahl M., *Parks and People-Conservation and Livelihoods at the Crossroads*, Nairobi: Regional Soil Conservation Unit (RSCU), 1997.

conflicts.⁹⁴ Restriction into gazetted areas raised the population density in the only available areas for settlement.

The population density in these areas is high and multi-ethnic. Similarly people of different ethnicities have migrated and settled in the district. The immigrants have influenced the local communities who were primarily livestock herders to be agriculturists' but significantly, the migration has led to exploitation not only of the indigenous people but also exploitation of the forest products.⁹⁵ The indigenous people of Mt Elgon are the pastoralist population called the Sebei, of Nilo-Cushtic origin which, lives on the northern slopes of Mount Elgon on the Ugandan Side between about 2500 and 3000m where they graze their cattle, sheep and goats on pastures within the forest and on the high moor lands. While on the Kenyan Side of Mt. Elgon, there are the Sabot, Ndorobo, Bukusu and Teso who practice both arable farming and livestock husbandry.⁹⁶

The District's population is predominantly the Sabaot, but there are the significant populations of the Bukusu, Teso and some Kikuyu. The population is especially concentrated in the trading centres of Cheptais, Kapsokwony and Kapkateny. In general, human settlements are concentrated in the lower regions of the District. Hence, Kopsiro division has the highest population density followed by Cheptais, Kaptama and Kapsokwony, respectively. The high population density in Kopsiro Division has contributed to people's encroachment onto the forest. The main pockets of the poor are found in Cheptais Division and Kopsiro Division, which have squatter settlements along the forest boundary.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ongugo P., Policy and Legislative Constraints and Opportunities for Development of Forest Genetic Resources for Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation, in O. Eyog-Matig, B. Kigomo and J.M. Boffa, Editors, Recent Research and development in Forest Genetic Resources, 2001.

⁹⁵ Scott, Penny, *From conflict to Collaboration: People and Forests at Mt. Elgon, Uganda*, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, 1998, p. 158.

⁹⁶ Wass Peter (Ed), *Kenya's Indigenous Forests: Status, management and conservation*, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, 1995.

⁹⁷ Ministry of Planning and National development "Mt. Elgon Development plan, 2005-2010 Effective management for Sustainable Economic growth and poverty Reduction," government printer. 2002.p.5

3.3 The Sabaot People

The Sabaot oral tradition say they are offspring of a man called Kingo.⁹⁸ According to their oral traditions Kingo was a legendary ancestor of the Sabaot people and is argued that he lived on Mount Elgon many years before the Sabaot people came to be associated with the Kalenjin groups of Kenya and Uganda. The Sabaot are part of the Southern Nilotic language cluster of the Kalenjin groups. The Sabaot occupy two administrative counties of Trans-Nzoia and Bungoma (Bong'om).⁹⁹ Apart from the two counties on the Kenyan side, the Sabaot also occupy most of the Ugandan side of Mt. Elgon. In Uganda, these people are known as the Sebei (Sabiiny). Their original territory straddled the present Kenya-Uganda boundary which cuts across Mount Elgon crater in a northeast and southeast direction. Although their clear number is far from being known because of the remoteness of Mt. Elgon area which they settle, the 2009 census indicated that the Sabaot population in Kenya is estimated at 500,000 people. Little is written about these people who were said by the British colonialists as barbaric and still living in caves.¹⁰⁰ This therefore means that to construct their history one needs to depend on their oral cosmologies.

Oral cosmologies are origin stories that suggest the migration and settlement of a people.¹⁰¹ These are logical constructs placed in a genealogical form. It therefore goes without doubt that the only way to understand the Sabaot is through cosmology. Cosmology helps us illuminate the underlying dynamics that inform both the way the Sabaot explain their origin, and their epistemology.¹⁰² The Sabaot people are a composition of several exogamous clans which are grouped in amalgams of pororyeet or corporate groups. This is very important in understanding why they sometimes engaged in wars.¹⁰³ The Sabaot are not just one solid group with one identity. Originally, the Sabaot clan system was structured into strata of three. The first stratum

⁹⁸ It has been a tradition in the past for writers of the Sabaot to refer to them as 'Elgon Maasai', 'Sebei-speakers' or 'Nandi-speaking stock.' These terms were used concurrently to denote the Elgon-Kalenjin speaking cluster collectively.

⁹⁹ The original Sabaot names for the four districts are as follows: Trans-Nzoia (CHEPKOILEL), Bungoma (BONG'OM), Sebei (SAPINY) and Mount Elgon (TULWOB-KONY).

¹⁰⁰ KNA,

¹⁰¹ Vansina, J., *Oral Tradition as History*, Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1992, p. 22

¹⁰² Chesaina, C., *Oral Literature of the Kalenjin*, Nairobi: Heinmann Publishers, 1991.

¹⁰³ Oral interview, Respondent 5, from Huruma Village in Chepkurkur

was that of the commoners which was known as the seretyo or the seretik. The second strata comprised of the prophets or the woorkooy as they were known among the Sabaot people and the final strata comprised of the specialists in the community known as the kitony-kapkoros. This stratum comprised mainly of the blacksmiths and ritual administrators.¹⁰⁴

These classifications are crafty because of various reasons. First, the stratum is not apparent to outsiders who do not see it. Second, even though the community may be aware of the internal dynamics, they do not bring it out clearly so that one can understand the cause of inter clan suspicion that degenerated into the war that was experienced in the Mount Elgon area.¹⁰⁵ This can partly be explained by the passage of time and both the colonial and postcolonial social transformation that blurred the Sabaot people's sharp edges which become sharp again when the Chepyuk settlement scheme was initiated. Traditionally, the Sabaot believe that the Sirikwa clan members are the owners of all Sabaot land hence any transaction that involves land allocation, they should be informed. Members of the Sirikwa clan claim the status of authentic Sabaot as direct descendants of Kingo, the eponymous ancestor who moved from Sengwer and settled on top of Mount Elgon. Sengwer and the location of his settlement on Mount Elgon known as Ng'oriktaab siyeet is venerated and envisioned within the Sabaot people as the cradle and the center of the Sabaot.¹⁰⁶

The Sabaot live on or near the slopes of Mount Elgon. Before colonialism Sabaot people were pastoralists but in recent years, the Sabaot have been forced to drastically change their lifestyle from cattle herding to being agriculturalists specifically planting maize and vegetables because of the scarcity of land. Economically this change was good for the members of the Soi clan, because the frequent hunger spells have all but stopped.

¹⁰⁴ Oral interview, Respondent 5, from Huruma Village in Chepkurkur

¹⁰⁵ Oral interview, Respondent number 24, Sasur in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

¹⁰⁶ Oral interview, Respondent from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

Socially it has been a hard and traumatic change as the former leaders in the society lost their power, old values were eroded, and drinking homemade beer grew to a destructive level. These drastic changes become instrumental to the conflict that was witnessed.¹⁰⁷

Like everyone else Sabaot are proud of their cultural heritage. They remember their best cows by name. The Sabaot do not adapt to change quickly, but most of the children now go to school. That is why the majority of adults have never learned to read. The young, educated people have become the new elite. Traditionally the Sabaot have always believed in a Creator God. He was good and provided sunshine, rain and life, but he was far away. It was the belief in the ancestral spirits that controlled the daily life of the people and brought them fortune or, more often, misfortune. If sickness struck, sacrifices had to be made to appease the angry ancestor who sent the sickness to avenge some wrongdoing against him.¹⁰⁸

3.4 The Mosop and the Soy People

The Mosop people are said to be hunting and gathering group of the Sabaot. They have sometimes been referred to as hunter-gatherers in a rather exaggerated manner. This description gives an impression that they are an extremely simple and traditional people, cut off from what is known as the modern living.¹⁰⁹ This is not hundred percent correct in the modern days. The Mosop have steadily acclimatised into many modern ways, even if they remain somewhat behind as compared to most other Kenyan communities.

The name Ndorobo is commonly used to refer to the Mosop people. The name was borrowed from the Maasai, where it was used to refer to an economically and socially disadvantaged people in the society. It was in the past therefore used derisively and disparagingly to suggest some elements of primitiveness. The same word is therefore used to refer to such a people among the Maasai in other parts of Kenya and in Tanzania. The Kikuyu also have their own Ndorobo. The name Ndorobo, therefore,

¹⁰⁷ Oral interview, Respondent from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

¹⁰⁸ Oral interview, Respondent number 24, Sasur in Cheptais Division – Mount Elgon

¹⁰⁹ Republic of Kenya, *Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee to Investigate Ethnic Clashes in Western and other Parts of Kenya*, Nairobi: Government Printers, September 1992

has no linguistic distinctiveness and certainly does not linguistically differentiate between the Mosop and Soy people of Mt. Elgon District.¹¹⁰ It is, however, significant in defining their relative social disadvantage as contrasted with other Kalenjin communities.

Although it has been argued that the Mosop and the Soy have been argued to be different people, it should be understood that the Mosop and the Soy are one and the same people, except for a few nuances defined by their economic pre-occupations around agriculture and pastoralism. At the advent of colonialism in Kenya, they did not use any of the names such as the Ndorobo, Ogiek, Soy, or Mosop. The Soy and Mosop names came into use after they had been displaced from their original home in Trans Nzoia in early 1930s. The distinction was therefore essentially defined by the terrain they occupied. Those who occupied the forested region on top of Mt. Elgon came to be known as the Mosop while those who settled on lowlands of the mountain came to be known as the Soy.¹¹¹

Both the Soy and the Mosop are known as the Il Kony. The name Kony is therefore derived the name of the Mountain among the soy and the Mosop, and in recent times the name of the District. In the absence of more valid explanation of nomenclature, the land in the Mount Elgon region can therefore correctly be subsumed to be traditionally the land of the Kony. Historical studies show that other peoples may also have traversed these lands, especially the Bukusu and the Teso. The itinerant nature of the pastoralist Kony may also have paved way for easy settlement in the region and in the neighbourhood by more sedentary Bantu speaking communities of the Abaluyia. The Bantu speaking peoples then went on to build fairly permanent settlements and forts around them. But there is no dispute that the Kalenjin speaking peoples, in this case the Kony, were the first known people to lay claim to the territory around Mt. Elgon, as far as diverse places in Bungoma and Uasin Gishu Districts.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Republic of Kenya, *Report of the Judicial Commission Appointed to Inquire into Tribal Clashes in Kenya*, Nairobi: Government Printers, July 1999

¹¹¹ Ogot. A. B., *History as Destiny and History as Knowledge: Being Reflections on the Problems of Historicity and Historiography*, Kisumu: Anyange Press Limited, 2005

¹¹² International Rescue Committee, *Humanitarian Assessment Mt. Elgon District*, Nairobi: IRC, 2008

The Somek, Pok and Bongomek are a strand of the Kony community, essentially speaking the same language and engaging in the same socio-cultural and economic activities. While they have been largely absorbed into the larger Bukusu community, it is instructive to note that the Pok reside west of Kapsokwony, up to Lwakhakha on the Kenya-Uganda border. The Bongomek are principally from Bungoma and the name Bungoma is itself derived from their community name. The name Sabaot would appear to have officially come into use for the first time in 1949, following a population census in which the British colonial government decided that all these peoples were one people. The name Kony may have worked just as well as the name Sabaot. But not everybody agrees to the use of the name Sabaot. The Mosop, or Ndorobo as they prefer to call themselves, are an angry people due to perceived and real marginalisation. On account of this anger, they have often outright rejected to be called Sabaot.¹¹³

It is from this point of view that the Mosop had issues with the Soy. On their part the Soy had issues with the government when it wanted to settle the Mosop on the land that the Soy laid claim. The Soy felt that the surveyors and government administrators were giving land to themselves, to their families and friends and to sundry outsiders who obtained land corruptly. Where the surveys should have helped a great deal, they served largely as agents of humiliation in the eyes of the original Mosop and Soy communities. But significantly, the Soy people would appear to have benefited in all transactions up to this point, leaving the Mosop feeling oppressed and bitter.¹¹⁴ Matters were made worse by the fact that all elected Members of Parliament for the area had come from the Soy community. For example, the former MP for Mt. Elgon Mr. Wilberforce Kisiero was perceived among the Mosop/Ndorobo as leading oppression against them.¹¹⁵ They successfully lobbied for the dismissal of Kisiero from government, where he was serving as assistant Minister. In this, the

¹¹³ Memorandum outlining the background to the problem, issues facing the Ogiek of Chepkitale, the military intervention, historical background and their possible solution" presented to the Parliamentary Committee on Defense and Foreign Affairs on 19 June 2008 by the Ogiek Indigenous Peoples of Chepkitale

¹¹⁴ Independent Medico-Legal Unit, *Preliminary Report of Medico-Legal Investigation of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon "Operation Okoa Maisha"*, Nairobi: IMLU, 2008

¹¹⁵ International Rescue Committee, *Humanitarian Assessment Mt. Elgon District*, (Nairobi: IRC, 2008)

Mosop/Ndorobo enjoyed the support of prominent Nandi leaders, fronted by the late Bishop Alexander Kipsang Muge of the ACK Diocese of Eldoret.¹¹⁶

3.5 Colonial Rule: Laying the Foundation of Conflict

Land is at the heart of the conflict in Mt. Elgon. While there are several other contributing factors to the insecurity and displacement seen in the area since 1991, disputes over land have been constant. As is the case in much of Kenya, these land disputes have their roots in the colonial era, but current grievances centre on how those disputes have been managed and the politicization of the various attempts to resolve earlier displacements through resettlement schemes. Nevertheless, the history of land ownership is the key to understanding the conflict in Mt. Elgon region.¹¹⁷

Mount Elgon district and neighbouring Trans-Nzoia district lie close to the border with Uganda on the slopes of Mount Elgon, Kenya's second highest peak. The area is primarily inhabited by members of the Sabaot community, but other inhabitants include the Ogiek, Bukusu, Teso, Sebei, and various Kalenjin sub-groups. Many Sabaots were displaced from the arable areas of Trans-Nzoia district when the British colonial government appropriated their land for settler farms in the 1920s and 30s.¹¹⁸ The Sabaot were moved to Chepkitale and Chepyuk areas. In 1932 when the colonial administration set up the Kenya Land Commission, a group of Sabaot presented their grievances to them requesting the British to investigate land disputes.

Under the authority of the Carter Commission, British colonial authorities moved whole peoples from their original homes in Trans Nzoia without any regard to how and where they would settle. While some went into the forest and into the Moorland around the forest, others gravitated southwards to the area around Cheptais. They became variously the Mosop and the Soy. The Carter Commission of 1932 failed the Kony people in at least two fundamental ways. First, it moved the Mosop people into the Moorland without consideration that at the altitude of between 11 000 and 12 000

¹¹⁶ NCKK and Action Aid, *The report on the Government Response on conflict in Mt. Elgon, 1980s and 1990s*, Nairobi: NCKK, 1993.

¹¹⁷ Kenya Land Alliance, *Land Update*, volume 5, number 1, April-June 2007, for more information see www.kenyalandalliance.or.ke.

¹¹⁸ Oral interview, Respondent from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

feet above the sea level, the area was too cold for productive work of any significance. Secondly, while they were promised monetary compensation, this did not go beyond writing on paper. It was also to be argued that they had been moved to alternative land and that they should therefore forfeit any monetary claims.¹¹⁹

Even though the Sabaot people had longstanding land grievances, they were neglected in various talks that were meant to solve the African land problems. The Sabaot were not represented at the Lancaster House independence and constitutional talks. And yet land was a very key question in the talks. It was wrongly assumed that they were the same as the Maasai people, hence the name Elgon Maasai adopted.¹²⁰ Since Maasai leaders attended the talks, the British wrongly understood that the Elgon Maasai were also represented. Whatever the case, the Lancaster House talks did not address the plight of the dispossessed and the displaced. The Maasai leaders at the talks, including John Keen, Stanley Ole Oloiptip, Justus Ole Tipis and William Ole Ntimamah, did not, in case, sign the Lancaster House Constitutional agreement. Mt. Elgon people were of the view that they would not have signed either, as in the view of the educated elite from the community, the agreement left their people disinherited dispossessed and displaced.¹²¹

The British acknowledged their case and discussed a compensation package, but it was never implemented.¹²² In 1968 the independent Kenyan government compounded the problem by reducing the area available for the expanding population at Chepkitale by designating the area as a game reserve, and forcing the inhabitants to leave. This was done without any consultation or compensation. The surrounding area was made a forest reserve and was thus also unavailable for settlement and grazing. Inhabitants complained, and in 1971 the government initiated a resettlement program for the

¹¹⁹ International Rescue Committee, *Kenya Humanitarian Assessment Mount Elgon District, 2008* and Human Rights Watch, *All the Men Have Gone " War Crimes in Kenya's Mt. Elgon Conflict 2008*

¹²⁰ Oral interview, with Patrick Nyoki, Resident of Kopsiro and Student at University of Nairobi, 10/5/2012

¹²¹ Memorandum outlining the background to the problem, issues facing the Ogiek of Chepkitale, the military intervention, historical background and their possible solution" presented to the Parliamentary Committee on Defense and Foreign Affairs on 19 June 2008 by the Ogiek Indigenous Peoples of Chepkitale

¹²² *Ibid*

displaced at the other location, Chepyuk. Unfortunately, some of the land that was supposed to come from the designated parts of the forest reserve had already been illegally settled by families who had moved to Chepyuk in the original displacement, and who were themselves also facing land pressure. In effect, the government was trying to force the inhabitants of two villages into the area occupied by one.¹²³

Conflicts arose between the intended owners who are members of the Mosop clan and the existing inhabitants who are the members of the Soi clan. The decision polarized the relations between the displaced who had originally moved to Chepyuk and those who originally had gone to Chepkitale. The Mosop who had gone up the mountain and the Soi who settled on the slopes started conflicting. Moreover, the resettlement exercise was placed in the hands of the provincial administration such as the area chiefs, local land officials, councillors and members of parliament, many of whom were accused of corrupt practices in the allocation of land.¹²⁴

The government evicted people originating from both areas from various locations that had been designated parts of the settlement scheme, and made a second attempt to allocate the land, known as Chepyuk II in 1989. This was equally controversial. People from Chepkitale who did not receive their allocation tried twice, in 1979 and 1988, to return to Chepkitale, but were forcefully repulsed by the police since the area was now a game reserve. Representatives of both groups made petitions to the government. In 1993 the government of President Daniel arap Moi annulled the Chepyuk settlement scheme completely and ordered the creation of a third scheme, Chepyuk III. By then the population had increased even further and people had been living for more than a generation on land whose status had not been formalized.¹²⁵ Because of controversy and complications, phase three was never fully implemented and remained an apparently dormant issue throughout the 1990s. However the issue had not been resolved and anger was growing.

¹²³ Kenya National Human Rights Commission, "Mountain of Terror," May 15, 2008, p.14

¹²⁴ Onyinkwa Onyakundi Mashariki Media Company Monday, 18 May 2009

¹²⁵ Ministry of Planning and National development "Mt. Elgon Development plan, 2005-2010 Effective management for Sustainable Economic growth and poverty Reduction," government printer.2002.p.5

3.6 Sabaot and Bukusu Relations

The conflict in Mt. Elgon District has been characterised by the long struggle by the Sabaot against the historical injustices occasioned by the disinheritance of their ancestral land in the wider Trans-Nzoia region by the colonial government without any form of compensation by successive governments. Although the Sabaot are Kalenjins, they were situated in the Bungoma County in the former Western Province and not with the Kalenjin which they share similar cultural ties and practices. Other Kalenjin groups were administratively placed in the Rift valley, the Sabaot were administratively grouped together with the groups with whom they did not share common ties.¹²⁶ Bungoma County is dominated by the Bukusu who are the majority in numbers, with the Sabaot being a minority.

The placement of the Sabaot in Bungoma which is dominated by the Bukusu was not a problem as such. The problems between the Bukusu and the Sabaot began during the resettlement programme in the Trans-Nzoia County immediately after colonialism. The Bukusu with national leadership with people like the late Masinde Muliro who could negotiate on their behalf while the Sabaot lacked such calibre of leadership. Therefore, the Bukusu got a bigger share of land allocation than the Sabaot despite Sabaot's claim on Trans-Nzoia as their ancestral land. Coupled with this, was the claims of discrimination by the Sabaot in terms of development. The Sabaot claimed that, most of the development in the Bungoma County was directed to the Bukusu dominated areas. They cite examples of opening up maize buying centres in Kaptola, Kwiroro, Kibingei and Kigul which were along the boundary but on the Bukusu side despite the fact that the maize was being brought from Mount Elgon.¹²⁷

This made the Sabaots to transport the maize from far distances using donkeys carts.. In addition, the grading and tarmacking of roads was done on the Bukusu dominated side which explains why there is no tarmac road in Mount Elgon. The Sabaot therefore felt that the Bukusu were deliberately marginalizing them on ethnic lines. Due to the feeling of marginalization, the Sabaot demanded to have an administrative district established for them. Initially, they demanded that the district be carved from

¹²⁶ Simiyu R. R., *Militianisation of Resource Conflicts: The Case of Land-based Conflict in the Mount Elgon Region of Western Kenya*, Pretoria: ISS, 2008

¹²⁷ KNCHR, *The Mountain of Terror – a Report on the Investigations of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon*, May 2008

parts of Bungoma District and parts of Trans-Nzoia District. In this way, the Sabaot felt that an administrative district would rectify the imbalances and grant them a chance to be in control of their resources and affairs. The Mount Elgon District was as a result created in 1993 from Bungoma District since a hiving off from Trans-Nzoia would require a constitutional amendment to alter the provincial boundaries.¹²⁸

The ethnic relations between the Sabaot and non-Sabaots in Mount Elgon district became strained. The Sabaot community started harbouring an idea of getting rid of the foreigners and reclaiming their land in the District especially the Bukusu who are seen as economic competitors in terms of access to land. This has therefore accounted for the clashes and aggression against the Bukusu as evidenced in the 1992 elections linked clashes and the 2006-2008 conflict. This ethnic rivalry has been evident during the general elections where each of the communities has taken different political affiliations thus creating antagonism. For example, the Bukusu in 1992 were mainly supporters of FORD Kenya while the Sabaot were supporters of KANU. In 2007, the Bukusu were supporters of PNU while the Sabaot were supporters of ODM party. Such political antagonism has aggravated the ethnic tension which has resulted into violence.¹²⁹

3.7 Soy and Mosop Relations

Although as indicated above, the Soy and the Mosop are of same ancestry hence they share a lot in terms of cultural practices, their lifestyle settlement patterns as well as sharing of resources have contributed to conflict among themselves. There has been rivalry and conflict among the different factions of the Sabaot community. This has contributed to the ethnic dimension of the Mount Elgon conflict. Both the Mosop and Soy lay claims and accusations that the other is favoured by government in the land allocation. This was evident during the clan conflict witnessed in Mount Elgon. The Mosop were dissatisfied with the move to include the Soy in the Chepyuk settlement

¹²⁸ Kwali, B., "Mt. Elgon Killings: Fingers Point at Army and Rebels", Daily Nation, August 25, 2008, <http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/463582/-/view/printVersion/-/vel4ce/-/index.html>, Accessed on:

11 March 2009

¹²⁹ PEACENET-Kenya, *Mt. Elgon Conflict Study*, Unpublished, 2008

scheme which, according to them was meant to be a compensation for giving up their inhabitancy in Chepkitale.¹³⁰

Equally, the Mosop claimed that there was no equality in terms of political benefits. For example they cited that they had only one councillor, one chief and four assistant chiefs in a district with an MP, eleven councillors, sixteen chiefs and forty two assistant chiefs.¹³¹ It is for this reason that there was a common proposal by the Mosop that Mount Elgon District be divided into two districts with one covering Cheptais and Kopsiro Divisions and the other Kaptama and Kapsokwony Divisions. In this regard, the Mosop preferred to occupy the Kaptama- Kapsokwony side of district. In this way, the Mosop feel that they would stand a better chance of managing their own affairs not dominated by the Soy. In addition, the Mosop felt underrepresented in the land allocation committees as well as sidelined in the delegations that were petitioning the then President Moi for land allocation.¹³² On the other hand, the Soy were dissatisfied with the government's plan to include the Mosop in Chepyuk Phase III since, according to the Soy people, Chepyuk Phase III was allocated to the Soy. In addition, the Soy felt that the Mosop benefited a great deal in Chepyuk Phase I and II and so should have no claim in Phase III.¹³³

3.8 Creation of the Chepyuk Settlement Scheme

The possibility of resettling the Mosop, who had been displaced in colonial times, in a more hospitable environment with their Soy counterparts was mooted as far back as 1965. From the government perspective, the initiative was guided by other equally compelling reasons, including protecting the Mosop against violent incursions from communities across the border in Uganda. In the period 1979-1983, former soldiers of toppled Ugandan president Idi Amin fled to Mount Elgon forest and persistently raided the Mosop and stole their cattle. The remoteness and inaccessibility of Chepkitale also made it difficult for the government to provide services to the Mosop.

¹³⁰ Memorandum made by Ogiek to the Western Province Provincial Commissioner

¹³¹ Western Kenya Human Rights Watch 2004

¹³² Simiyu R. R., *Militianisation of Resource Conflicts: The Case of Land-based Conflict in the Mount Elgon Region of Western Kenya*, Pretoria: ISS, 2008

¹³³ *Ibid*

Communication between Chepkitale and the other inhabited parts of the region was poor. Transport was by foot and donkeys because only footpaths existed through the forest.

There were no health facilities and the only school in the area, Kashok Primary School, had no trained teachers. However, the more important reason was that the entire Chepkitale region was a water catchment area that needed to be conserved, which the government proposed to do by establishing a game reserve that would also generate income from tourism. The creation of the game reserve in 1968 added some urgency to the resettlement plans. To begin with, the game reserve took up a substantial portion of the moorlands on which the Mosop grazed their animals and foraged, in the process provoking protests from the Mosop as well as precipitating environmental degradation due to overgrazing and overcrowding in the smaller remaining area. Hence a settlement scheme was established down-slope in Chepyuk in 1971 to which the Mosop would be relocated from Chepkitale trust land.

To create room for the settlement scheme, part of the forest reserve was earmarked for degazettement. This first resettlement phase (1971 to 1974) commonly referred to as Chepyuk I, which was implemented in the present Emia and Chepyuk locations of Kopsiro division, did not proceed without a hitch, however. To begin with, the Mosop, comprising 468 families and a total of about 3 900 members¹³⁴, were moved to Chepyuk before official degazettement of the forest and the process of land allocation and issuance of title deeds was not expedited.

As a result, persons who had not initially been targeted for resettlement, especially members of the Soy clan who had settled in the neighbourhood of the scheme after their displacement from Trans-Nzoia, also staked a claim to the land on the grounds that some of them had either surrendered their land for the establishment of infrastructure and public utilities or had remained landless as a result of colonial displacement. Some also claimed that because of their relatively small population, the Mosop leaders invited a section of their Soy counterparts to join them in a bid to effectively occupy the expansive Chepyuk territories as a way of keeping off any

¹³⁴ Western Kenya. Human Rights Watch 2004.

would-be 'intruders'. This may be interpreted to mean that the Mosop considered the Chepyuk area as a territory to which they and their Soy cousins had a right. In a way, therefore, their action was a protest against the government's decision to limit their land occupancy to only a small area. However, other sources claim that the inclusion of Soy families in the scheme was necessary in order to achieve a mandatory minimum of 600 families required to constitute a settlement scheme as provided for under the resettlement policy existing at the time. Apart from the Soy, members of neighboring communities – especially the Bukusu and Teso – also moved into the area. Some of them acquired land either by paying a purchase price in money or in exchange for providing labour to Mosop and Soy in clearing the forest. In both cases no formalised land ownership documentation was completed. Thus by the time degazettement took place in 1974 and official land allocation commenced, the forest had already been cleared, people had divided the land amongst themselves and settled there, while others had sold their plots.

In addition, there were more families in the area than had been targeted for resettlement. For instance, early in that year, the government evicted 80 families from Ramromwet forest area in Kapsokwony division and these families ended up in Chepyuk. This prompted the government to establish a committee to verify claims and identify the families to whom land was to be allocated, as a result of which some people missed out and others were evicted. In the end, some 650 Mosop families and 300 Soy families received land.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has tried to expose the history of the people of Mt. Elgon with the particular reference to the Sabaot clans. This is instrumental in understanding the root and proximate causes, as well as triggers of conflict in Mt. Elgon District. The chapter has demonstrated that the Mosop and the Soy are the same people. The findings equally demonstrate the fluidity of identity issues in Mt. Elgon. It is common place to regard the Nilotic-speaking (Kalenjin) groups in the District as one identity group the Sabaot. But an interaction with these groups in the District reveals that the protracted discord has made groups more identity conscious. As such, isolationist attitudes can be observed among the Mosop/Ndorobo who now seek to assert their individual identity and aspire to have a separate district and constituency. The isolationist

informs the causes of conflict between the Soy and the Mosop as is discussed in chapter three. All these factors need to be addressed while dealing with thorny Mount Elgon conflict.

CHAPTER FOUR

INVOLVEMENT OF THE YOUTH IN MOUNT ELGON CONFLICT

4.1: Introduction

This section provides an analysis of determinants of youth involvement in Mount Elgon conflict and factors that led to initiation of peace making and peace building. The chapter also tries to focus on the role(s) played by the youth in the conflict especially in the SLDF. The chapter will also substantiate on the extend to which the youth have been involved in peace Initiatives and peace building processes.

4.2 Reasons for youth involvement in Mt. Elgon conflict

The responses that the youth had to the conflict did not happen in isolation rather they were influenced by certain underlying factors. The survey I conducted confirms these factors. Overwhelmingly, respondents were in agreement that the land issue, politics, and poverty amongst the youth were the most important factors. Most of the youths recruited into (SLDF) were landless poor; primary school drop-outs and thus easier to manipulate.

4.2.1 Land Issue

The country's political history is in many ways intertwined with its land resources – land was at the core of Kenya's colonial conquest, and liberation wars were also fought over land – and the land question has continued to shape Kenya's political trajectory. One of the lasting legacies of colonialism is the alienation of large chunks of prime agricultural areas (and the deprivation of land rights thereon) from African communities which were then handed over to a relatively small number of white settlers under an arrangement predicated on property rights based on English law. The resulting skewed patterns of land distribution and, in particular, the disinheritance that left many Africans either landless or pushed onto unproductive marginal territories, in time became a central grievance in the liberation struggles.¹³⁵ In addition, the alienation of African land also led to the 'ethnicisation' of the land question as the

¹³⁵ Human Rights Watch 1993.

influx of the dispossessed populations into other communities' ancestral territories created anxieties among autochthonous communities,¹³⁶ who feared that migrants would stake claim to their ancestral lands once white settlers left, especially in areas where migrants provided labour and settled as squatters on white settler farms. This engendered tensions between the different groups, which sometimes degenerated into violent evictions of migrants in areas such as Rift Valley even before independence.¹³⁷

Land is central to Kenya's economy, society and politics. The country's economy has over the years been driven by land-related activities – notably agriculture – a trend that is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. Even the quest for industrialisation is premised on the growth of agro-based manufacturing.¹³⁸ As for the vast majority of the Kenyan rural population, land is the basic, and often only, economic resource from which they eke a livelihood and it is also around land that socio-cultural and spiritual relations among community members are defined and organized. For these reasons, most rural communities have become highly dependent on land and developed sentimental attachment to it, making access to, and ownership, use and control of the land resource – what has come to constitute the land question – arguably the most emotive and politicised issue in contemporary Kenya. The ever-growing population also exerts increasing pressure on what is already a scarce resource, against a backdrop of growing environmental awareness and sensitivity, which, grounded in the logic of sustainable exploitation of resources and environmental conservation, requires that population migration into certain ecological sites be controlled.

In Mount Elgon the heart cause of the conflict is the land issue. Land in this district has become a source of inter-clan tension. It is particularly portentous in the Chepyuk area of the Mount Elgon district. This area has been affected by conflict over access to arable land.

¹³⁶ Kanyinga, K 1998. Struggles of access to land: the 'squatter question' in Coastal Kenya. CDR

¹³⁷ Robert Romborah Simiyu Militianisation of resource conflicts The case of land-based conflict in the Mount Elgon region of Western Kenya Monograph No 152, October 2008

¹³⁸ Odhiambo, M C 2002. Advocating for land policy reforms in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania: NGO lessons and prospects. Paper prepared for the second workshop of the Pan-African Programme on Land and Resource Rights held in Lagos, Nigeria, on 15–16 July.

After the 2005 Referendum, the third phase of chepyuk settlement was finally implemented. The number of those to be allocated land had risen to 7500 and against the available acreage of about 3350 acres. It was agreed that, each was to get two and half acres. However, the number was very high and some had to be left out. The available land was enough for only 1732 people. The *Ogiek* and the Soy were to share on equal basis i.e. 866 by 866 people. The exercise was marred by massive irregularities. As a result some bona fide members missed allocation of land. Their names were missing from the 1732 people listed for land allocation.

Discontent developed amongst a group of people, particularly on the realization that the vetting process was not going to be restarted afresh.

In 2006, when the latest conflict erupted, those who felt aggrieved during the previous allocations felt compelled to fight for their economic rights. As such, the conflict in Mt. Elgon District was by and large a result of real and perceived dispossession or denial of economic rights and livelihood in the form of land. This coupled with politicisation of social and ethnic diversity hence contributed to conflict in the region. In addition, this was a vulnerability factor making the youth to join groups like SLDF as a way of making a livelihood.

4.2.2 Politics

A report on human rights abuses in Mt Elgon revealed that area Member of Parliament, Fred Kapondi, won the seat after rivals were threatened with death by the Sabaot Land Defence Force. Young people especially men were forced to join SLDF in favour of Mr. Kapondi. However, Mr Kapondi's electoral tactics were not unique. The report added that in the past 15 years, all legislators from the constituency had used armed militias to get to parliament. Persistent refusal by two SLDF leaders, Matakwei (deputy leader and top military commander) and John Kanai (political spokesman), to disclose the identity of the real leader of the militia fanned speculation that some powerful people, including the newly elected area MP whom the SLDF had fiercely supported in the elections, may have been behind its operations and were providing financing. Others were said to include councilors (among them Makoit and Warsama), former MPs and local professionals, although all of them repeatedly denied any involvement in the SLDF. These politicians are said to have been the

fueling force encouraging the youth to join SLDF with promises of jobs and land after the 2007 elections.

Wilberforce Kisiero, the MP for the former ruling party KANU between 1982 and 1997 was widely cited as one of the proponents of violence in the district. He was implicated in the state sponsored clashes of 1991-93, and named in the Akiwumi report, the parliamentary investigation into the political violence of the 1990s.¹³⁹

John Serut, the MP from 2002 to 2007, and Fred Kapondi, the current MP elected in 2007, were accused by local residents and human rights organizations of working to recruit, train, and finance militia who intimidated opponents in the 1997, 2002, and 2007 elections.¹⁴⁰

Having initially worked together (Kapondi was formerly KANU party chairman in the district), by the time of the 2007 General Elections, Serut and Kapondi had fallen out, according to residents. After that, the SLDF began to target supporters of Serut, including Serut himself. An area chief explained that because Serut supported the Chepyuk III settlement scheme against the wishes of most within the SLDF, Kapondi got a chance to run the boys, and this gave him the political powerbase he needed to win the election.

A neighbour of Kapondi told how he was repeatedly harassed by SLDF 'boys' who had a training camp on Kapondi's land. Another chief described Kapondi leading a recruitment drive in his area for young men to join the SLDF in 2006. Kapondi was arrested in April 2007 and charged with robbery with violence in Webuye court, a non-bailable offense. He was nominated as the ODM candidate while in custody and acquitted on December 13, 2007, just days before the election¹⁴¹.

¹³⁹ Nairobi chronicle July 30, 2008.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid

¹⁴¹ Ibid

4.2.3 Poverty

Poverty is another factor that was identified to have compelled the youth in Mount Elgon to join the SLDF. This coupled with high unemployment levels mean that youths were mostly idle and easy to be misled or pick up any engagement that can take advantage of their idle energies. Poverty on the other hand creates a feeling of helplessness and the youth were eager to do anything that they imagined could change their position - including violence. Also the youth do not seem to have full sense of control over their life resulting in their weaker capability of analyzing and coping with what they have had to face in Mt. Elgon.

4.2.4 Coercion

Many youth are said to have joined the SLDF by force. Young people especially men were forced to join SLDF in favour of Mr. Kapondi.¹⁴² Virtually all males over the age of 10 were targeted, for recruitment by the SLDF. The SLDF employed the Kony style of recruiting the youth and punishing heavily those who disobeyed the rule. At the beginning each family was required to surrender at least one young man to facilitate the activities of SLDF. Those who failed to do so were fined by between KShs30 000 and 50 000 or several cows in lieu of the money. When this seemed not to work efficiently, young men were forced to join sometimes through abduction. Those who went seek refuge in neighboring towns to avoid recruitment were where possible followed, abducted and even killed. One of the people interviewed had the following to say:

I was caught by the members of the SLDF and beaten thoroughly for not surrendering one of my sons into the group. My neighbor was hacked to death for allegations that he was discouraging people from joining the SLDF.¹⁴³

Matakwei abducted the youth who joined the ranks of the militia becoming vicious killers, torturers and the most feared and dreaded gang in the western region of Kenya.

¹⁴² KNCHR 2008

¹⁴³ Phillip Kamarang' on Interview conducted on 25th August 2011 at Kapkeke Toywondet sub-Location.

4.2.5 Self Survival

Peters, Richards and Vlassenroot contend that many young people in civil wars such as Sierra Leone and Mozambique were not abducted or forced to fight but decided to do so for reasons that they imply are fairly reasonable. They assert that some young people may view soldiering as a means of survival, joining a movement, and seeking less arduous work.¹⁴⁴ To some degree, some youth appear to have profited from the experience of soldiering. Moreover, the rebel groups provided their soldiers with food when their own Government would not.¹⁴⁵ In Mount Elgon the case was not different; some of the interviewees confessed that being in the SLDF to some extent provided physical and food security. One could be assured of food and security.

One of the people interviewed had the following to say:

*Being at home was more risky because you were wrongly perceived to be a traitor. In such case you are abducted and taken into the forest for punishment which could either be receiving seventy strokes of the cane; mutilation of body parts or being killed. My neighbor muriaria was abducted and never returned to date.*¹⁴⁶

4.3 Why the Youth?

In man's civilization down the Historical road map it is evident that the youth have always dominated conflicts and wars. This is not a new phenomenon to Mount Elgon area. But the question is, why the youth?

In war situations resource use is deviated to war and not to the infrastructure necessary for health, education and other sectors being vital for the development of young people. At the same time war and violence enable young people as well as others to acquire wealth. This is not only valid in the so called "new wars" in Africa but also in the violent non-war contexts of Rio Janeiro, South Africa or Central America.

¹⁴⁴ Peters, Krijn, Paul Richards, and Koen Vlassenroot. What Happens to Youth During and After Wars? A Preliminary Review of Literature on Africa and Assessment on the Debate. ROWOO Working Paper (October). 2003p.14

¹⁴⁵ Peters, Krijn, Paul Richards, and Koen Vlassenroot. What Happens to Youth During and After Wars? A Preliminary Review of Literature on Africa and Assessment on the Debate. ROWOO Working Paper (October). 2003p.14

¹⁴⁶ Moses Kimai. Interviewed at chebin in Cheptonon sub-location on 25th August at 3:P.M

The massive destruction and change of the social fabric due to widespread violence and war affects young people in an even higher degree than other sectors of society.

The concrete forms and directions violence takes and the forms of justification or legitimation depend to a high degree on the societal context and the relationship between youth and other organized actors. Young people have not only been Instrumentalised and subordinated by other interests in many interstate and internal wars but also in the context of organized violence.¹⁴⁷The youth in Mount Elgon are not an exception and like all the youth elsewhere they became central players in all conflicts in the region; SLDF inclusive. All Kalenjis; the sabaots of Mout Elgon included relied on the young adults to provide defence for their community. After male youths were circumcised, they were secluded for lengthy periods during which they were instructed in the skills necessary for adulthood. Afterward, they would begin a phase of warriorhood during which they acted as the military force of the tribe. Elders provided guidance and wisdom. Today, age-sets have lost their military function, but still provide bonds between men of the same set. Female age-sets have lost much of their importance.¹⁴⁸

4.4 : The role played by the youth in Mt. Elgon conflict

The youth played a major role in the conflict and their responses to events and pressures has had a big influence on how things unfolded during the clashes. They formed the bulk of the militia (SLDF), and it can also be said that as members of the militia they committed most of the atrocities. A Key informant who was a victim to the violence bewailed the actions of the youth and suggested that a lot of attention should be given to them to help them heal from the effects associated with the atrocities they committed willingly or unwillingly.

¹⁴⁷ Sabine Kurtenbach (INEF, University Duisburg-Essen) Youth in conflict and peace-building – between protection and neglect Paper presented at the ISA conference in San Francisco 26-29th March 2008

¹⁴⁸ Chesaina, C. *Oral Literature of the Kalenjin*. Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya, 1991.

4.4.1 Combatants

Matakwei abducted the youth who joined the ranks of the militia becoming vicious killers, torturers and the most feared and dreaded gang in the western region of Kenya. It is now evident that SLDF enforced all rules of the jungle to instil fear into the citizenry of Mt. Elgon. They abducted, dragged their victims like slaves and led them to the butchery for slaughter. They maimed, tied their victims on trees, stabbing them with knives and pangas, they slaughtered human beings like chicken .They buried many in mass graves and mutilated many bodies beyond recognition.¹⁴⁹

Out the 120 people who were interviewed, 70 people agreed that the main role played by the youth in mount Elgon conflict and especially in SLD was the role of combatants. Armed with small arms and light weapons, they terrorized, abducted, killed and mutilated their targeted victims.

4.4.2 Spies

In any war in the History of man Intelligence information on the opponent has always played a vital role in either success or defeat. Information on planned moves, new tactics and whereabouts of the enemy is very important. During war the least unsuspected people especially women and children are used as spies to gather intelligence information about their enemy. In Mount Elgon the SLDF all these groups; including women, children, the youth and even old men were used as spies.

Our focus here is on the youth and their role in spying for the SLDF. Both young men and women were used for this purpose. Young women were mainly preferred to the young men because they were least suspected. They could be send to the nearest market centers and towns to spy on the whereabouts of targeted people for eventual attacks.¹⁵⁰ These women mobilized people to support SLDF financially by subscribing a monthly amount of money. Where voluntary subscription failed people(especially working class) were forced to do so failure to which they automatically became targets of the SLDF.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ David King'a on Interview conducted on 25th August 2011. At Toroso area in Cheptais.

¹⁵⁰ Metrine Chemnjor; Oral Interview conducted on 3rd August; Toywondet Kopsiro Division

¹⁵¹ Eulogy read during the burial of a victim October 2007; Chebukwabi Location ;Bungoma District.

The spies also played a role of charging phones for the SLDF in the nearest urban centers to facilitate communication among the gang members in an effort to coordinate its activities.¹⁵² They also charged phones for the militia members because most of them were being searched by the police and could therefore not appear in public. The spies on the other hand mobilized collection of food to feed members of the SLDF Who spent most of their time in the forest. They gathered harvested grains especially maize and carried it using donkeys into the forest. Animals were also raided to supplement food reserves for those coordinating activities of the SLDF in the forest.¹⁵³ The spies bought drugs and other medical necessities for treating their injured and ailing members .

Out of the 120 people who were Interviewed 2 said that the sabaot youth did not actively participated in the SLDF. This forms 1.6% of the total people interviewed. This carries some truth in that not all the sabaot youth took an active role in the SLDF. Some parents strongly forbid their children from joining the group and could not have accounted for the participation of other youths in the conflict. However, this can also be said to be a way of protecting their own children fro victimization.

4.5 Involvement of the Youth in peacemaking and peace building in Mt. Elgon

Over the years youth in Mt. Elgon have been marginalized from all spheres of social and economic life leading to a strong sense of social distance. Thus the youth are a demographic majority that sees itself as a minority. In the public domain youth are mostly depicted as either active security threats or passive victims of trauma.¹⁵⁴ Youth are not accepted as community level decision makers and problems are solved by elders, and therefore have little power to influence decisions in the community and most of the time, they are manipulated and negatively used by people with ulterior motives.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Metrine Chemnjor; Oral Interview conducted on 3rd August; Toywondet Kopsiro Division

¹⁵³ Metrine Chemnjor; Oral Interview conducted on 3rd August; Toywondet Kopsiro Division

¹⁵⁴ Peace & rights programme Annual report 2010 p.7

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

There exists a generational disconnect with the older generation more rigid and purporting to speak for the younger generation. To understand the extent to which the youth have been involved in peace making and peace building, let us focus on the various groups that have attempted to restore and rebuild peace in Mount Elgon and the extent to which they involve the youth.

4.5.1 The Church

Out of the 120 people who were interviewed, 40 said that the church has played the biggest role in trying to restore and rebuild peace in Mount Elgon area. This translates to 40 % of the total people interviewed. Churches were organizing interdenominational seminars and conferences in an effort to bring together youth from the conflicting clans. This promoted tolerance among the youth from different clans of the Sabaot community and inculcated the need for peace in youth development.¹⁵⁶

The church also organized peace conferences which involved the Chepkitale and the Soy representatives. One of such conferences was organized by the Free Pentecostal Fellowship of Kenya (FPFK) at Mabanga Agricultural Training Center from 26th -28th April 2011.¹⁵⁷ (See Photograph in Appendix II). The Mabanga conference was a convening meeting following positive mediated dialogue meetings between the different Sabaot sub-tribes in 2010 and early 2011. This conference however did not take into account the need to involve the youth. It involved community elders, political leaders, religious leaders, government officials and other stakeholders held a conference aimed at resolving conflicts and unlocking peace for the six Sabaot sub-tribes.¹⁵⁸ The elders made the following declaration: *Now we the representatives of the entire six dialects of the Sabaot community declare the cessation of hostilities among ourselves.*¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Justine Tobos; Interview conducted on 20th August, Kaboywo; Kaptama Division.

¹⁵⁷ The Peace Rights Voice: A News Letter of the Free Pentecostal Fellowship of Kenya-Peace and Rights Programme Issue no.4 June 2011

¹⁵⁸ Ibid

¹⁵⁹ Ibid

The role played by the church can not be disputed. But, how effective would the leaders be in preaching this message of peace to the whole sabaot community? It is worthy noting that the two Oloibons Sangula(chepkitale) and Songoiywo (Soy) were missing in action. Were the SLDF leaders taken into account? Peace without involving the main actors- the SLDF combatants would; in my own view lead to negative Peace.

4.5.2 Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Several Non-Governmental organizations have participated mediating peace processes in Mount Elgon region. One of these NGOs is The Peace Net Kenya. Peace Net Kenya organized training on advocacy for the ex-Sabaot Land Defense Forces (SLDF) members (see photograph on appendix II) to get them better advocate for their issues using non-violent means. In a session convened at one of the Mt Elgon Divisions; Cheptais in mid July 2010 the former combatants in the Mt Elgon were exposed to advocacy skills and challenged to employ them in resolving their issues instead of resorting to guerrilla warfare.

The former combatants were introduced to advocacy work which involves investigating issues and problems, gathering evidence and identifying recommended solutions or courses of actions. Some of the activities under advocacy introduced to the ex-combatants include Lobbying, Public awareness, campaigning and Activism for change in policies that are not helpful. Advocacy issues that were raised during their presentations include; landlessness, poverty, access to funding opportunities like Youth funds, deforestation, lack of access to education, inaccessibility of the region due to poor road infrastructure, environmental degradation and seeking justice for the victims of past human rights violations.¹⁶⁰ PeaceNet Kenya Fully dealt with the youth (former SLDF) members Training them on alternative ways of dealing with conflict other than taking arms.

¹⁶⁰ PeaceNet Kenya July 2010.

Photograph 1



Former SLDF combatants and PeaceNet Kenya team group photo after the advocacy training Mt Elgon Divisions; Cheptais.

Source: Peace Net Kenya

Another NGO is ACT(Act Change Together) Act! is a Kenyan NGO whose mission is to enable citizens and communities in Kenya and neighboring countries to live a life of dignity by strengthening individuals and organizations to be effective agents of positive change. Act! is committed and passionate about driving social change and development among the grass root communities. Abdel believes that the problems affecting communities such as poverty, illiteracy, conflict and under-development can be resolved by communities themselves. This can only happen if they are provided with capacity, resources and encouraged to take leadership. The Act! team has set an excellent pace for community participatory development in the region; a standard for other organizations to beat in community work in the Mt.Elgon. The bottom up approach to development has received thumbs up from the community in Kopsiro and they have strongly recommended that other organizations planning to work in Mt. Elgon should adopt a similar approach. Act! has also provided a platform for community members themselves to be at the forefront of formulating solutions for their problems through a community consultative and participatory processes.¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ ACT!(Act Change transform) 2011

NGOs have worked closely with Community based Organizations in their effort of initiating and sustaining peace in Mount Elgon. These include: Kenyan Civil Society Strengthening Program (KCSSP) a Peace project funded by USAID through Pact; Mt. Elgon Peace Initiative (MEPI), Vijana Umoja Pamoja (VUP) and AMANI. Their work involves ensuring community participation and following up on environmental compliance in the implementation of development for peace projects as well supporting partners in executing peace building and advocacy projects.¹⁶²

4.5.3 Community Elders

As stated earlier, in Mount Elgon the youth are not accepted as community level decision makers and problems are solved by elders, and therefore have little power to influence decisions in the community and most of the time, they are manipulated and negatively used by people with ulterior motives. This is clearly manifested during the Kaptama peace Rally in which a council of was inaugurated with representatives from each of the six Sabaot clans. Resolution – of the Mabanga Conference set out for the establishment of a supreme council of elders to give guidance on the cultural, developmental and political matters affecting the community. Pursuant to this resolution the Sabaot Supreme Council of elders with representation from seven elders from each of the six dialects was established. The peace rally provided a perfect platform for the inauguration of the supreme council. The inauguration ceremony was led by chairman of the Kalenjin Council of Elders), Major John A. Seii.¹⁶³ The only thing former SLDF members were allowed to do was to publicly denounce their activities through seven representatives.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Peace Rights Programme 2011

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

Photograph 2



Asection of participants of Mabanga Peace conference April 2011.

4.5.4 Learning Institutions

Learning institutions especially secondary and primary schools Started peace clubs as a forum to preach for peace to the students in an effort to promote tolerance among students from different sabaot clans. These peace clubs started in the schools to promote peace among school going children. Some patrons are teachers trained in supporting the children's needs. They have plans of starting Village Parliaments which target civic education to engage communication structure in dialogue. Those expected to participate in these debates include the Provincial Administration, Security and the community.¹⁶⁵

Schools like Toroso and Cheptais High school had such peace clubs which passed over their message through songs, dances and drama.¹⁶⁶(see Photograph in Appendix II). IN some schools these clubs organized for tournaments in with other schools aimed at promoting interaction among the youth hence Tolerance.

¹⁶⁵ Mwangi Karanja; Chanuka peace programme 2012

¹⁶⁶ Maurice Taiwo; Oral Interview 28th August 2011; Toroso, Cheptais Division.

Photograph 3

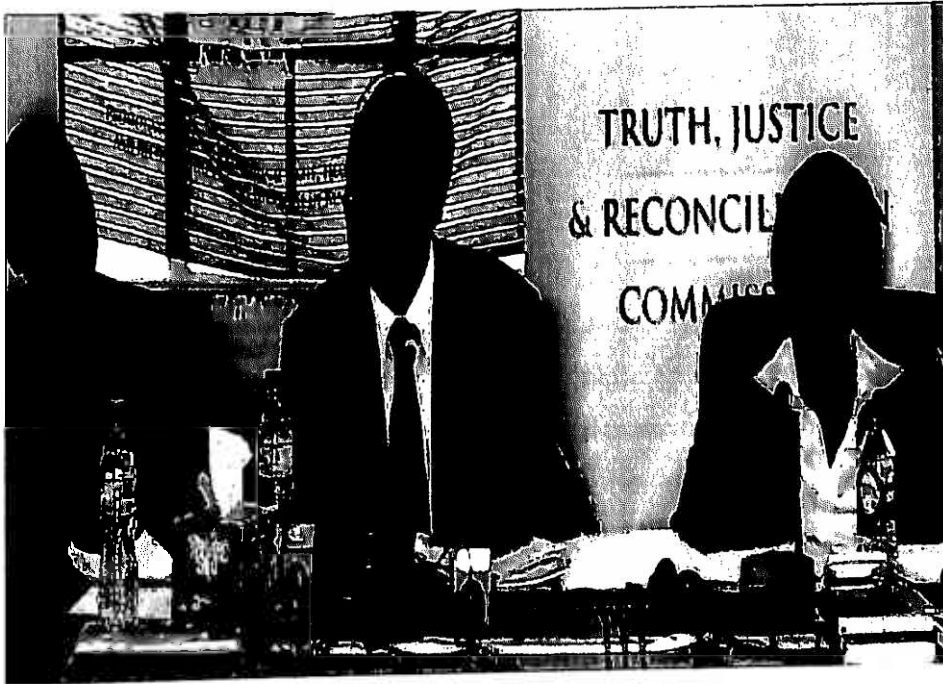


Peace club Students performing a dance

4.5.5 Government

The government has put in place the Truth ,Justice, and Reconciliation Committee which moves to different part of the country preaching the gospel of peace and reconciliation. In Bungoma county where Mount Elgon District falls The TJRC sitting were held in Bunngoma town; the county Headquarters. The TJRC recommendations are yet to be released but they might be general on peace in the county.

Photograph 4



Former Mt. Elgon MP John Serut as giving his statement before the TJRC in Bungoma. [Photo/Trix Luvindi/WestFm]

4.5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has assessed the role of the youth in mount Elgon conflict. It has shed light on reasons why the youth join conflict in Mount Elgon; the role they play and the extent to which different groups have involved the youth in peace making and peace making processes. This chapter points out that there are several factors influencing the youth to join conflict in Mount Elgon. The main reason is the issue of land which has become a scarce economic resource in the region because of increased number of the local population.

Others include poverty, coercion to join conflict and some join to meet selfish survival tactics. All these; if addressed can reduce cases of conflict in the region. Once they join conflict some play the role of combatants while others act as spies.

Findings in this chapter show that there is no group involving the youth fully in peace making and peace building processes. The church, NGOs and learning institutions have involved the youth especially in peace building processes but to a very small extent. Efforts should be made by all all stake holders to fully engage the youth in peace making and peace building processes.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE IMPACT OF MOUNT ELGON CONFLICT

5.1 Introduction

War is perhaps the most distinctive, dramatic, documented, and studied phenomenon in the social sciences in the modern world. The consequences of Mt. Elgon war remain one of the most problematic concepts that still haunt the local people. In order to better understand the problem of warfare from a systemic perspective, so that systemic conflict management and prevention strategies may be better designed, implemented, and evaluated, it is necessary to document the effects of Mt. Elgon war on the society. Mt. Elgon region has been characterized mainly by protracted conflict surrounding land distribution which has posed full range of effects of episodes of warfare on individuals, local societies, regional communities, and the country at large. This chapter outlines the effects of war on the people of Mt. Elgon. The chapter presents an elaboration and update of ideas on the effects of war. The first section explains the impact of warfare or warfare magnitude and the societal impact of warfare.

The conventional measures used to capture the magnitude of warfare involve the quantitative analysis which includes an event count or identifying individual actors in a particular war. Also it involves analysis of the duration or a time span usually measured in months or years that the war took, and some form of casualty count directly associated with fighting among organized combatant groups. These involve battle deaths, battle-related deaths and total deaths. While the identification of an event, the relevant actors, and the specification of event duration are by far the least controversial measures applied to the study of effects of war these attributes are not immune to measurement errors.

These issues involve the categorization of warfare events according to actors, actor types, and relational status such as distinguishing inter-state events from intra-state or systemic events and ethnic wars from revolutionary wars. These distinctions inject meanings to the analysis of effects of war away from generalizations concerning warfare's effects on societies toward more particular, specialized foci on means,

methods, and the changing nature of relationships.¹⁶⁷ What is of particular concern in this regard is the measurement of the magnitude of a warfare event namely the death count. Estimates of warfare death counts vary wildly as these counts are often purely speculative and always political. Death counts are the least accurate and least reliable measure of the impact of warfare. The intensive analysis of warfare based, in whole or in part, on this measure is fundamentally important. The deaths measurement is most often little more than a rough estimate of the intensity, duration, and course of warfare based on observations and evaluations of the event with only the most rudimentary, comparative perspective. And, the death of combatants, while important to military-strategic analysis, is arguably the least problematic and least enduring effect of warfare for the larger societies consumed by these events.¹⁶⁸

By far, the overwhelming majority of the victims of warfare are those directly and indirectly affected by the far reaching ravages of warfare, short of outrageous death. War ends abruptly for the dead but gains immortality in the disturbed minds of the survivors. From this argument, it is evident that accounting of the dead distorts war's impact on societal systems, violates statistical assumptions, and does a grave injustice to the full, humanistic analysis of war.¹⁶⁹ Attempts to quantify the full range of event-related casualties among combatants and non-combatants are very important indicators of the effects of war on society, but that does not mean that the whole impact lies in that.

The main objective of this chapter therefore is to give insight into the full spectrum of warfare's ravages comes from accounts of warfare during the Mt. Elgon war. War has both direct and indirect effects on the living as well as the dead, injuries to human agents and damage to social structures may not be remedied for many years after the actual battles have ceased, some effects are even considered generational as they

¹⁶⁷ Gurr, Ted Robert, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethno-political Conflicts*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993.

¹⁶⁸ Gurr, Ted Robert, Monty G. Marshall, and Deepa Khosla, *Peace and Conflict 2001: A Global Survey of Armed Conflicts, Self-Determination Movements, and Democracy*. College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, 2000

¹⁶⁹ Gantzel, Klaus Jürgen, "War in the Post-World War II World: Some Empirical Trends and a Theoretical Approach." In David Turton, ed., *War and Ethnicity: Global Connections and Local Violence*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press; San Marino: Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Social Stress, 1997.

cannot be fully remedied for the individuals so afflicted.¹⁷⁰ This study has examined and attempted to quantify a much wider range of the effects of the Mt. Elgon war on the society and its systems by calculating the true cost of Mt. Elgon conflict by examining a broader range of war externalities and applying cost-benefit analysis to understand the war events.

In this study I have examined the negative impact of war on various aspects of societal development, civil and political rights, and the economy of affected people of Mt. Elgon and involved third parties. The study examined five general, categorical effects on societal parties: Internal displacement costs, direct economic costs and economic opportunity costs, military costs and instability costs. The study achieved through provoking rather than systematic analysis which assisted to make strong contributions by revealing the importance of expanding the scope of inquiry and revealing the enormity and complexity of comprehensive cost accounting in assessing the rationality of societal warfar

5.2 Loss of Lives

The conflict in Mt. Elgon left many people dead. Although the actual number of deaths as a result of the 2006-2008 conflict in Mt. Elgon is yet to be established, but according to the Human Rights Watch, approximately 600 people were killed by SLDF.¹⁷¹ The exact number is not known because some people were ether kidnapped by the militia or disappeared into the forest leaving no trace of their whereabouts. The greatest and most painful tragedy in the Mt. Elgon District is the loss of human life. The raiding by members of the SLDF militia was accompanied by indiscriminate killing of women, children and the elderly. In one incident, which gripped Chemondi Village, SLDF fighters killed 20 people and dumped their bodies in a pit on the slopes of the mountain among them were children and their mothers. The death tolls severely affected all the communities involved in the conflict.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Cranna, Michael, ed., *The True Cost of Conflict*, New York: The New Press, 1994

¹⁷¹ International Rescue Committee, *Humanitarian Assessment Mt. Elgon District*, (Nairobi: IRC, 2008

¹⁷² Oral interview,

As a result, the number of widows and orphans surged in the district. According to the Human Rights Watch Report there are about 289 widows in Kopsiro Division alone. All these widows have children who have been orphaned as a result of the conflict.¹⁷³ Direct deaths of both combatant and non-combatant, indirect deaths such as those caused by or from collateral fire, induced famines and droughts, epidemics, medical shortages, direct injuries both physical and psychological, permanent and temporary, indirect injuries caused by crime and victimization, experiential trauma, grief, diminished health and capabilities, increased insecurity, sexual crimes and intimidation such as rape, prostitution, child molestation and gender domination.¹⁷⁴

All this are effects caused by the Mt. Elgon conflict as noted by a resident from Huruma Village of Chepkurkur that;

"I reside in Huruma, Chepkururu but I am currently in Chwele. I left Chepkururu after the slaughtering of my husband. On the 11th of August 2007, my husband had gone to herd our cattle at around 5.00pm when the SLDF captured him. It was my small boy who had accompanied him that informed me about it. At Chwele I have been staying with a man who deserted me when I got pregnant. I sell onions at Chwele and stay in a rented house."¹⁷⁵

There were others who were maimed, had their ears chopped or tortured as a way of punishing them. These attacks were accompanied by war crimes as many women were raped and sexually abused. Equally many young married men who did not join SLDF fled the Mt. Elgon conflict region and left their wives behind to take care of the homes. The study indicated that there were high percentages of reports of rape of women by the SLDF militants. Some of the women were gang raped by members of SLDF for several hours.¹⁷⁶ Raping of both men and women was a routine by SLDF militants during this conflict period was like a normal thing. After being raped, they were scared to report these incidents to police. They were also warned against visiting

¹⁷³ Independent Medico-Legal Unit, *Preliminary Report of Medico-Legal Investigation of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon "Operation Okoa Maisha"*, Nairobi: IMLU, 2008, and Human Rights Watch 2008

¹⁷⁴ Daily Nation, Monday, August 13, 2007

¹⁷⁵ Jones Chemondi, Oral interview 29th August 2011, from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

¹⁷⁶ Respondent number 27 from Huruma Chepkurkur (name withheld for security reasons but available upon request) Interview conducted on 29th August 2011.

hospital for treatment. Gang raping had a negative effect on the members of the Sabaot people because they are related by blood.¹⁷⁷

The conflict also affected the relationships within the Sabaot groups. As started above, the Sabaot people are related as cousins, yet they engaged in acts of rape against each other. The cordial and peaceful staying together as neighbours changed drastically due to this conflict. Those who joined SLDF developed the culture of violence and inhuman acts against their blood cousins.¹⁷⁸ In its response to quell the conflict, the government deployed its security personnel in the area. The security agencies were to act as a symbol of hope but that was not to be the case. The culture of violence in Mt. Elgon took another angle by the entry of the government's security wing. Since the military did not have a clear method of identifying the members of SLDF, the Kenya Army ended up torturing almost every young person they came across.¹⁷⁹ The government security agents conducted arbitrary arrests. As indicated in the cases of the findings as illustrated in the survivors' experiences, arrests were arbitrary conducted as early as from midnight. There were extreme cases where people were bundled out of their houses at midnight by the police and military officers in uniform. When asked to identify themselves, they (officers) would turn violent as indicated by a respondent from Kapsika that;

“On the 12th of March at 9.30 am I was cultivating my land at Kapsika area when I saw an air force plane that was accompanied by three other helicopter gunships. After some time the plane landed while the helicopter continued circling. I then saw the soldiers coming and were heading towards my home and I could identify them as the military. I tried to identify myself but they rebuked me and they did not identify themselves. They then ordered me, P.M. and S.M. to stand and head towards Burukenwa market. Upon crossing the stream I was ordered to kneel down. Other people were brought and we proceeded to the market. We were then ordered to lie on our bellies and a police lorry came and we were forced to board. From there we were taken to Kapkota Military base. There I was interrogated by two

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

¹⁷⁸ Human Rights Watch: All the Men Have Gone” War Crimes in Kenya’s Mt. Elgon Conflict July 2008.p.23.

¹⁷⁹ Jones Chemondi, Oral interview 29th , from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

senior army officers, an army major and a Lt. Colonel. They immediately framed me as being a trainer for the Sabaoi Land Defense Force. The D.C.I.O. Mbaruk came and I was ordered to lie down on my belly and I was being flogged by a nyahunyo by 4 soldiers. All along they wanted me to produce a firearm and this session lasted 3 hours. I had been stripped of my shirt. We were forced into different postures and forced to bend and all this time we were being beaten. We were forced to open our mouths and the officers would pour water into our mouths and at 5 pm we were given dry biscuits. We were then all blindfolded with masking tape of different colours for 30 minutes and then they started the psychological torture.¹⁸⁰

Another respondent narrated how the police treated them as illustrated below;

“On the 11th of May, 2008 we were attacked by the police officers. They said that they were the Kenya Police. I was with two children and they were pushed under the bed. They asked me where my husband was and I told them that he was dead. They took me and my new born baby and they made us walk for a long distance, about three kilometres. I started bleeding as I had just given birth. One of the officers noticed that I was bleeding heavily, he then kicked me on the back and ordered me to go back home. Some of the officers were also in army uniform. I have never sought treatment. I have a constant problem with my back and the bleeding keeps on coming back. That’s all I have to say.”¹⁸¹

This was shared by another respondent from Cheptais who elaborated as started below;

“It was 6 a.m., the soldiers banged on the door. They took me and others to the market place and made us lie down on the road while some of them beat us and others went to collect more men. Then they took us to Kapkota. There were many people there, maybe 1,000 it was all the men of Cheptais. There were many soldiers, kicking, beating with sticks. They made us lie down, they walked on top of us. Then they made us walk past a Land Rover with black windows. Those inside were the ones condemning or releasing us. The guilty ones had to stand in the ‘red’ line, the innocent ones, like me, went to the ‘blue’ line”¹⁸²

As indicated in findings as illustrated in the experience cases, the arrests took various forms of physical violence while in some instances, police officers deceived the survivors to accompany them to a place where they would be given a card exempting them from being members of SLDF militants, only to turn on them with accusation of being members of this outlawed group. Many survivors were arrested in their houses,

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*

¹⁸¹ John Kinja; Oral Interview; 29th Augst 2011; Toroso; Cheptais Division.

¹⁸² Human Rights Watch: All the Men Have Gone” War Crimes in Kenya’s Mt. Elgon Conflict July 2008.p.23.

others while in their farms, at shopping centres, market places, schools and while in public service vehicles at bus stops. As indicated from an investigative report presented by the Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU) (Aug. 2008), areas most affected were Cheptais, Bungosi, Sansa, Burkenwo, Meriko, Chesikati and Kamarang all in Mt. Elgon region. Those arrested from public service vehicles were singled out on account of their tribes as indicated in their identity cards, and then branded as escapees from Mt. Elgon region.¹⁸³

In line with deaths are population dislocations as people were looking for safer areas due to insecurity. The population dislocations were accompanied by its consequences such as increased cost of life. Strain in cost of living caused traumas, inefficiencies, and indirect effects associated with the displacement, whether for personal-safety, logistic, predatory, retaliatory, or strategic policy considerations, of large numbers of domiciled people, either within the parameters of the affected society. The internally displaced persons were forcibly relocated, or sequestered persons or across in the name of asylum-seekers and emigrants.¹⁸⁴

5.3 Economic Impact

One of the enduring beliefs of modern times is that war and its associated military spending has created both negative and positive economic outcomes. The positive outcomes contrast with the widespread public acknowledgement and understanding of the human cost of war. The aim of this section is to highlight the various macroeconomic effects of government policies and spending on the Kenyan economy over the period of Mt. Elgon conflict. It specifically examines how the conflict affected both the local people and the government at large.¹⁸⁵

To analyze the effects of this conflict period on Kenyan economy, changes in a number of macroeconomic indicators have been analyzed both during and after each conflict period. They include; destruction of shelter and destruction of livelihoods.

¹⁸³ Independent Medico-Legal Unit, *Preliminary Report of Medico-Legal Investigation of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon "Operation Okoa Maisha"*, Nairobi: IMLU, 2008

¹⁸⁴ KNCHR, *The Mountain of Terror: A Report on the Investigations of Torture by the Military at Mt. Elgon*, May 2008

¹⁸⁵ Scott, Penny. *From Conflict to Collaboration: People and Forests at Mount Elgon, Uganda*, IUCN. ISBN, 1998, p. 9

According to International Rescue Committee (IRC) report, houses were destroyed or burnt by SLDF. Due to loss of livelihood and income, those who lost shelter were not able to reconstruct them despite their willingness to return to their homes. Experience shared by the victims during this research corroborated this report. The victims stated that the SLDF fighters ransacked their houses and took all valuables and torched houses in their presence.¹⁸⁶

Similarly, the conflict and violence in Mount Elgon disrupted the agricultural activities in the District as people fled from their homes for fear of their lives. Businesses were destroyed by the militia during the conflict leaving the people with no financial option which could assist them to rebuild those businesses. The locals lost their heads of cattle to the SLDF. As compared to the year 2005, most of the residents in Mount Elgon had less than five heads of cattle. Sabaots like other kalenjins had big herds of cattle ranging from fifty to one hundred before the SLDF menace which worsened in 2005.¹⁸⁷ Following mass displacement of people farms were left unattended to. This was a big blow to the economy of Mount Elgon having in mind the fact that agriculture forms the economic back bone of this region. As a result, some of the parents were forced to send their young girls to towns within the province to work as house helps, putting them at the risk of sexual exploitation and child trafficking.¹⁸⁸ These are negative indicators that the Mount Elgon conflict had over the local people.

This section assesses the macroeconomic impact of the Mt. Elgon war on Kenyan economy spanning the three years of war and after. Seven macroeconomic indicators have been assessed to determine how they have changed during the conflict periods. These are the GDP, public debt and levels of taxation, consumption as a percent of GDP, inflation, average stock market valuations and income distribution. In the first place the war in Mt. Elgon led to increased military spending on the side of the Kenyan government. The increased military spending generated some positive

¹⁸⁶ Ministry of Planning and National development "Mt. Elgon Development plan, 2005-2010 Effective management for Sustainable Economic growth and poverty Reduction," government printer.2002.p.5

¹⁸⁷ Oral interview, Respondent number 24, Sasur in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon

¹⁸⁸ Ibid

economic benefits through the creation of employment and additional economic growth as well as contributing to technological developments. For instance during and after the war, the Kenyan military engaged in constructing the infrastructure namely roads, bridges and markets to enable the locals to market their products.¹⁸⁹

This can provide a multiplier effect which then flows on to other industries. These are some of the acknowledged positive benefits of increased government spending on military outlays.

However, in acknowledging these benefits, one must also examine counterfactuals, where consideration must be given to the opportunity cost and unintended consequences of military spending on the Mt. Elgon conflict. By examining the state of the economy at the period of war, it can be seen that the positive effects of increased military spending were outweighed by longer term unintended negative macroeconomic consequences. While the stimulatory effect of military outlays is evidently associated with boosts in economic growth, adverse effects showed up either immediately or soon after, through higher inflation, budget deficits, high taxes and reductions in consumption or investment.¹⁹⁰ Rectifying these effects has required subsequent painful adjustments which are neither efficient nor desirable.

When an economy has excess capacity and unemployment, it is possible that increasing military spending can provide an important stimulus. However, if there are budget constraints, as there were in Kenya at the time of war, the excessive military spending in Mt. Elgon displaced more productive non-military outlays in other areas such as investments in high-tech industries, education, or infrastructure.¹⁹¹ The crowding out effects of disproportionate government spending on military functions in Mt. Elgon affected service delivery or infrastructure development, ultimately affecting long-term growth rates.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Madrick, J. (2008). "Is War Good for the Economy?" Retrieved August 12, 2010, from Huffington Post: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeff-madrick/is-war-good-for-the-econo_h_84886.html

¹⁹⁰ Stiglitz, J. and Blimes, L., *Estimating the costs of war: Methodological issues*, Oxford: Oxford Handbook of the Economics of Peace and Conflict, 2011

¹⁹¹ Higgs, R. *Depression, War, and Cold War: Studies in Political Economy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006

¹⁹² Stiglitz, J. (2003). "The myth of the war economy", Retrieved August 12, 2010, from The Guardian: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2003/jan/22/iraq.economy>

While military and defense spending was important in providing security for the locals of Mt. Elgon and the nation at large as well as helping to support and protect the people, like other forms of government expenditure, it should be analyzed for its efficiency and whether it fulfilled its primary objective. Kenya spend a lot of money in deployment and maintaining the military in Mt. Elgon. The fact that these investments generated jobs, economic growth and sometimes resulted in valuable spin-off technologies is not doubted.¹⁹³ However, the key question that needs to be addressed in order to understand if military spending was cost-effective is whether it achieved its primary purpose of improving national security as opposed to secondary objectives which was in the provision of jobs or the development of institutions that support Mt. Elgon local peoples' lives.

The reason to why this study takes the above argument is simply because other forms of spending charged with the primary purpose of providing a solution to the inter-communal conflicts in the country such as good policies towards land grievances, employment or to conduct research on development and causes of conflict are likely to be more efficient in achieving peace in Mt. Elgon than spending targeted at national security forces deployment. This has been reinforced in various studies, which show, when comparing the direct multiplier effects of military spending to other forms of government spending, it is not as productive in economic terms as spending in infrastructure, education, or even as tax cuts to increase household consumption.¹⁹⁴

This analysis does not seek to place value judgments on the efficacy or justification for any particular conflict but to highlight the macroeconomic effects of war spending.¹⁹⁵ Security of Mount Elgon people is not only dependent on an adequate military capability but also on economic stability. During this research, the Mount Elgon locals stated that, economic conditions are highly interconnected with the institutions that support peaceful environments. It is for this reason the economic

¹⁹³ Higgs, R. *Depression, War, and Cold War: Studies in Political Economy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006

¹⁹⁴ Brauer, J., and Tepper-Marlin, J. *Defining Peace Industries and Calculating the Potential size of Peace Gross World Product by Country and Economic Sector*, Sydney: Institute for Economics and Peace, 2009.

¹⁹⁵ Edelstein, Michael, "War and the American Economy in the Twentieth Century," pp. 329-405 in S.L. Engerman and R.E. Galiman, eds. *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, Vol. III., The Twentieth Century, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 329-405

implications of war should be considered, as the economic foundations of society do help determine its security.¹⁹⁶

The Mt. Elgon war made life to be extremely hard for the locals in the region. It was difficult for households to purchase goods such as food, cooking fat, washing soaps and other necessities because the goods could not reach the area. People were forced to conserve food and produce as much of their own food as possible because food items were generally scarce. From the outcome of the war it was evident that the Kenyan economy experienced several years of depression growth. The huge size of the military operation in Mt. Elgon war led to a largely debt-dependent financing method which resulted in rise in foreign debt.¹⁹⁷

In terms of goods market movements, the supply of agricultural products fell and continued to fall after the conflict because farmers who had been displaced did not return immediately. Material well-being was affected by the war leading to tax increases, new price and wage controls which constrained private sector consumption and investment. Similarly, the investment component failed to keep up with its pre-war trend. During the period of 2007 to 2010 it was more or less flat, showing no growth at all in the investment in Mt. Elgon region. The subdued consumer spending can be partly explained by the financing of the wars that also contributed to the stagnant investment during the period.¹⁹⁸

The increasing tensions between the Mosop and the Soy clans have seen maintenance of military build-up in Kapkota Military Base. The size of military spending, while large in absolute terms, was however relatively smaller than the preceding spending during the war. Military expenditure as a percentage of GDP reached its peak and takes about half the size of non-military expenditure which has also been reduced.

¹⁹⁶ Cosgrove-Mather, B. (2009), Poll: Worries Over War And Economy, February 11, CBS News, viewed 1 October 2011., <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/02/13/opinion/polls/main540574.shtml>.

¹⁹⁷ Baker, D. (2007), The Economic Impact of the Iraq War and Higher Military Spending, Centre for Economic and Policy Research, viewed 1 October 2011, http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/military_spending_2007_05.pdf Central Bank of Iceland (2012) Why price stability?, accessed on 3 January, 2012. <http://www.sedlabanki.is/?PageID=195>

¹⁹⁸ Garrett-Peltier, H. and Pollin, R. (2009), The U.S. Employment Effects of Military and Domestic Spending Priorities: An Updated Analysis, Political Economy Research Group (PERI), University of Massachusetts, viewed 1 October 2011, http://www.peri.umass.edu/fileadmin/pdf/published_study/spending_priorities_PERI.pdf.

The dominant economic narrative at the start of this period was how much money was being pumped into the military. In spite of the growing budget deficit, military expenditure has remained well above pre-war period. Significantly, the war in Mt. Elgon played a direct role in increasing the cost of living not only in Mt. Elgon but in the entire country.

Although mostly seen from the negative angle, military spending, like other forms of government spending, can be an important source of economic demand during times of low confidence and downturn.¹⁹⁹ It can lead to the development of new technologies, generate new industries and create sources of demand and employment. However, analysis of the macroeconomic components of GDP during the Mt. Elgon war show heightened military spending had several adverse macroeconomic effects on Kenya. These occurred as a direct consequence of the funding requirements of increased military spending. The Kenyan government paid for this war either through debt, taxation or inflation.²⁰⁰ In each case, taxpayers have been burdened, and private sector consumption and investment have been constrained as a result. Other negative effects include larger budget deficits, higher taxes, and growth above trend leading to inflation pressure. These effects have run concurrent via lagging effects into the future. Regardless of the way a war is financed, the overall macroeconomic effect on the economy tends to be negative.²⁰¹

5.4 Social Impact

The Mount Elgon conflict had a negative impact on the societal networks. The war damaged and distorted the fragile fabric of inter-personal associations and the disintegration of relationships and identities based on amity, trust, exchange, mutual benefit, comity, reciprocity, and deferred gratification and relationships which are necessary for the proper and effective functioning of normative systems of the society.

¹⁹⁹ Edelstein, Michael, "War and the American Economy in the Twentieth Century," pp. 329-405 in S.L. Engerman and R.E. Gallman, eds. *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, Vol. III., *The Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 329-405

²⁰⁰ Brauer, J., & Tepper-Marlin, J. *Defining Peace Industries and Calculating the Potential size of Peace Gross World Product by Country and Economic Sector*, Sydney: Institute for Economics and Peace, 2009.

²⁰¹ Oral interview, Patrick Nyoki, Kaptama Division Mt. Elgon, 12/8/2012

The conflict destroyed the social cooperation, cohesion, coherence, and coordination in politico-legal, economic, professional, and socio-cultural sub-systems of the Sabao people.²⁰²

Similarly the war in Mt. Elgon contributed to the degradation of the environment. Any war comes with direct and indirect damage and destruction to general ecosystem. Both the SLDF and the Kenya Army used or released explosives which had a corrosive, and de-vegetative chemical compounds and mechanical devices that affected utilization of agricultural resources, foul surface and subterranean water resources. The weapons also polluted the atmosphere, disseminated toxic substances and hidden explosive devices, and destroyed wildlife and habitats in Mt. Elgon.²⁰³

The war in Mount Elgon also led to damage to the infrastructure and resource diversion. The war had direct damage, destruction, and overconsumption of material and mechanical infrastructure, resources, and surpluses such as production facilities, storage, transport networks, vehicles, water supplies, croplands, food and medical supplies. While the indirect damage to the society's resource and infrastructure bases (opportunity costs) through the official diversion of resources and funding to the war effort and away from infrastructure construction and maintenance and the provision of social services and unofficial diversions to illicit trade in tangible, transportable commodities such as drugs, labour and sex, weapons, art and treasures are not.²⁰⁴

All the above negative effects of the Mt. Elgon conflict diminished quality of life and non-reciprocal resource transfer. Tangible and intangible losses (both short- and long-term) associated with general deterioration in the immediate, aesthetic quality of life, access to basic needs, and future prospects in affected societies. This led to humanitarian crises, capital outflows in the form of brain drain, capital flight, devaluation and unequal terms of exchange. This resulted into lack of investment and exchange hence losses in human potential due to lowered self-esteem and lowered

²⁰² Kenya National Bureau of Statistics *Basic Report: Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey - 2005/06* (August 2007)

²⁰³ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics *Geographical dimensions of the well being in Kenya: Who and where are they?* Volume II, A constituency Level Profile (2003)

²⁰⁴ Kenya Red Cross Society, *Mount Elgon Clashes Status Report*, 4th April, 2007

expectations, self-destructive behaviours, alienation and introversion, and within-group factionalization and victimization.²⁰⁵

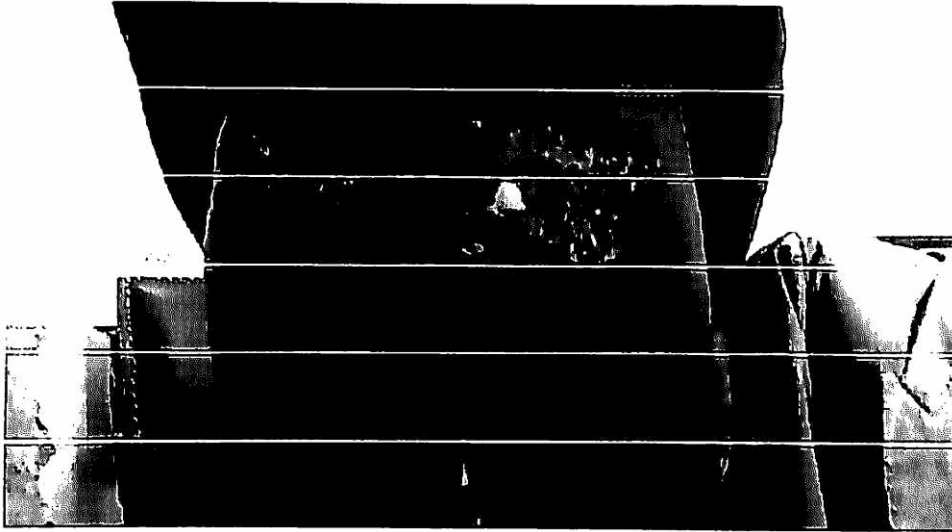
Continuous conflict in Mount Elgon has led to increased hatred between communities, further compounding the problem of development jealousies. This has made it difficult for the communities to share natural resources and common infrastructure like roads or jointly participate in development projects and trading activities. This problem is very acute between the members of the Mosop and the Soy clans. The obtaining hatred is further fuelled by an atmosphere of misinformation and rumours mongering regarding the threats that one community pose for the other. The tension, fear and strong hatred created by such misinformation further aggravates the already fluid situation; making any peace brokerage initiatives difficult.²⁰⁶

Experiences during the conflict left many people traumatized. Women were raped;and sometime gang- raped. Others were forced to rape one another under supervision of the SLDF militias. One woman gave an account of how she was raped by Government security personnel and contracted a very strange sexually Transmitted Infection.²⁰⁷ Some victims of the SLDF were hacked to death as their families watched helplessly. Others had parts of their bodies mutilated; these included chopping of the ears, lips, hands and other parts like buttocks(see photograph on the next page)

²⁰⁵ Kenya Red Cross Society, *Kenya: Mt. Elgon Clashes*, Information Bulletin No. 7/2007

²⁰⁶ Ng'ang'a Wanguhu, *Kenya's Ethnic Communities: Foundation of the Nation*, Nairobi: Gatundu Publishers, 2006

²⁰⁷ Jones Chemondi, Oral interview 29th , from Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division, Mount Elgon



Photograph 5

Photograph of a torture victim: David Lawendi Ngeyo (ID. NO.11221064)

Source: Kenya National Commission on Human Rights Report.

The conflict has had an adverse effect on education. Following increased insecurity in the region many schools were closed down. For instance in Kopsiro Division only Kapkateny, Terem and Chebich primary schools were operational. On the other hand, only Kapkateny High school was operational out of the seven High schools in the Division at the height SLDF operations.

5.5 Conclusion

Unfortunately, few of the effects listed above are systematically measured or consistently recorded outside the contemporary zone of peace. The measurement principle of effects of war on society is associated with the factors that include estimates of forces available or committed to the military personnel and expenditures, troop strength, territorial size of the area of operations, casualties, internally displaced persons or relocated persons. There are ten-point, categorical measurement scale of war magnitude and its impact on societal systems was developed and applied to major episodes of political violence for the period 2006-2007.

The total effects of warfare result from intensity over time and vary accordingly. For example, direct deaths may be inflated under conditions where combatants' lives are under-valued and refugee flows and humanitarian crises will be much higher under conditions of general poverty, the brutal victimization of civilians, and/or more transient or subsistence livelihoods. What is more important in determining the magnitudes of the impact of warfare on a society are the relational goals, available technologies, and relative means of the combatant groups.

The chapter has shown that, the combination and levels of effects vary from case to case, but levels across effects will usually coincide. That warfare is an inherently self-limiting event. That the war affects population and technical capabilities which determine the potential for warfare intensity while actual warfare's consumption and destruction of material infrastructure and human resources makes its continuation dependent on the continued production, procurement, or capture of sufficient quantities of essential war materials. The chapter came up with the following effects of the Mt. Elgon the first effect is the extermination and annihilation of human life. The war led to extensive, systematic, and indiscriminate destruction of human resources and/or physical infrastructure with persistent, adverse effects. The social identity itself is the target of destruction.

The war led to massive, mechanized destruction of human resources and physical infrastructure in a war of attrition, with intentional targeting of both combatant and non-combatant societal factors resulting in widespread destruction and long-term effects. Since whole societies are the target for destruction it led to population dislocations and deaths. Deaths went hand in hand with massive, mechanized destruction of human resources and physical infrastructure in a war of attrition with medium-term effects, non-combatants are not systematically targeted although great numbers are directly affected by violence. A big percent of societal production is consumed by the war effort.

The higher levels of government spending associated with war tends to generate some positive economic benefits in the short-term, specifically through increases in economic growth occurring during conflict spending booms. However, negative unintended consequences occur either concurrently with the war or develop as

residual effects afterwards thereby harming the economy over the longer term. The Mt. Elgon war was financed through debt and higher taxes hence by the end of the war, Kenyan gross debt had increased and tax revenue increased.

The conflict resulted in the communities in Mt. Elgon to lose entire livelihoods in the attacks. Property, food crops and cash were looted during attacks while houses and schools were destroyed. This translated into loss of livelihoods for many, resulting in increasing impoverishment of families which renders destitute amidst prolonged warfare which have eroded the household asset base of Sabaot communities in Mt. Elgon. There is an increasing number of destitute at trading centers who have resorted to begging for survival or dependence on relief food.²⁰⁸ Trade which once thrived in Mt. Elgon has sharply declined due to increasing insecurity. Markets have collapsed in trading centres due to fear of robberies and bandit attacks. The insecurity has therefore prohibited development initiatives from taking place or frustrated them. The already limited options for development are further reduced.²⁰⁹ The population movements and displacements are major constraints to development initiatives and business. Development actors claim that it has been difficult to implement development programmes in a climate of insecurity and high mobility. Project staff end up being targets of attacks and projects have either stalled or closed down as they are recalled.²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Sunday Nation, Op. Cit., and Saferworld, *Western Province: Mt. Elgon Scoping*, Unpublished, 2007

²⁰⁹ Ministry of Finance and Planning, *Mt. Elgon District Development Plan 2002 – 2008*, Nairobi: Government Printer, 2002

²¹⁰ NCKK, *Tackling Discord in Kenya: An Analysis of Recurrent Conflicts in Molo and Mt. Elgon Districts*, Unpublished, 2008

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study was aimed at examining and determining the active role played by the youth in Mt. Elgon violent conflict; and thereafter in peacemaking and peace building in this district.

Lack of employment could drive the youth to engage in such a conflict especially when resources are so scarce with only land to be looked at, for a source of livelihood. With this background information of the youth, they are vulnerable to getting involved in negative undertakings. This section will evaluate the objectives of the study and find out how they have been achieved by the findings.

6.2 Summary of findings

The first objective was set to determine reasons for the youth's involvement in the Mt. Elgon conflict. It is indicated in the finding that majority of the youth primarily joined Sabaot's Land Defense Force (SLDF) to fight for land. These findings determine land to be the heart of Mt. Elgon conflict. The findings also determine other factors like politics, poverty and coercion as having contributed to the rampant insecurity and displacement in this region. As in the case of most parts of Kenya since independence, most land disputes track their roots to the colonial era, Mt. Elgon conflict not being unexceptional. From the literature review, many Sabaots were displaced from Trans-Nzoia district when the colonial government appropriated their land for white settler farms in the 1920s and 1930s. They then moved to Chepkitale and Chepyuk in Mt. Elgon.

Though land is in the heart of Mt. Elgon conflict, politics has largely precipitated this conflict. The subsequent governments have done very little to solve the land conflict. This has been due to political interference through corruption. Appropriation of land by the government to the Sabaot families who moved to *Chepkitale* and *Chepyuk* was interfered with by politics. The vetting committee that was set by the government came under great pressure from political leaders not to allocate land to people perceived as posing political threat or non supporters at the time. A large number of

bona fide land beneficiaries missed allocation. They decided to join hands in the year 2006 and formed Sabao's Land Defense Force (SLDF) so as to disrupt land allotment and seek redress for alleged injustices in this event.

Research objective that seeks to determine factors that relate the youth's involvement in Sabao Land Defence Force (SLDF) and fueling of Mt. Elgon conflict has been successfully achieved through these findings.

However, by the time the Kenyan army was intervening to salvage the situation in Mount Elgon, the SLDF had lost focus on its objective. The conflict had degenerated to an extent that sabao clans had turned against each other. This, in my own opinion could be an indication that the sabao culture and traditions are getting eroded very fast. Some aspects of culture and Traditional practices that could be useful resolution of the Mount Elgon conflict like elder's councils, traditional dances, songs and folklore have faded away.

The second objective was set to examine the role played by the youth in propagating Mount Elgon conflict. Findings of this research indicate that the youth mainly played the role of combatants and spies. But, it seems the SLDF lacked proper co-ordination leading to lack of focus on their initial objective of seeking redress for their land issue. They were later, as indicated by the findings, manipulated by politicians to accomplish their political objectives by terrorizing their opponents' supporters. For this reason they turned against their own ; killing and terrorizing them. Whatever the case the second objective has been achieved.

The third objective was to explore ways in which the youth have been involved in peacemaking and peace building in Mt. Elgon region. The findings indicate that the youth played a role in peacemaking and peace building however minimal. The findings also indicate that for the three years since the SLDF militants were eradicated in 2008; the church is involving the youth in search for sustainable peace and peace building, while learning institutions have tried to involve the youth in peace making and peace building, provincial administration has played insignificant role in involving the youth. The community elders consider young people as people who should only receive directives from the elders. The findings point out lack of full

involvement of the youth on issues of peace making and peace building in Mount Elgon. The efforts provided by groups like the Church, local administrators, learning institutions, NGO's, human right activities and local community elders has not been sustainable because the youth themselves have never been involved fully. When the youth are involved in initiating peace and building peace, they will definitely own the process hence sustainability of the same. The dynamic role of youth suggests that, successful long term policies and programs directed at the youth will reduce their demographic destabilizing potential. Empowerment through inclusive proper investment and involvement of the youth in reconstruction process of Mount Elgon region will enable the next generation to support sustainable peace. Development of our society largely depends on its capacity to involve young women and men in designing and creating their future.

The third objective has been achieved through exploration of factors that can help in initiating peace and at the same time the research objective that seek to generate strategies on what may help in involving youth in sustainable peace making and peace building has been answered.

The study generated two working hypothesis. Both have been proved right that youth involvement in the Mount Elgon conflict was fueled land issues and that lack of sustainable peace in Mt. Elgon is attributed to non-involvement of the youth in peace making and peace building process.

This study was contextually set in Mount Elgon with the main goal of examining the active role played by the youth in the violent conflict. It also helped in generating strategies in which the youth could be involved in peace making and peace building in this region.

The issue of land has been determined to be in the heart of Mount Elgon conflict. It has also been determined that politics through corruption has precipitated this conflict. The government has done very little to solve the land issue apart from creating corrupt land vetting committee that was interfered with by politicians to allocate land parcels to people deemed as their supporters. The bona fide land beneficiaries had to miss allotments leading to the formation of Sabaot Land Defense Forces (SLDF) to fight for their rights. However with the new Constitution in place the land problem in

Mount Elgon will be dealt with in a better way because the county government will understand its local problems better hence solve them conclusively.

The study also established that majority of the youth in Mt. Elgon joined the Sabaot Land Defense Forces (SLDF) as militant combatants. This means, they took active role in the activities of Sabaot Land Defense Forces (SLDF) hence influencing the direction that was taken by the conflict.

The study established that a very small percentage of the youth was involved in peace making and peace building. Following this revelation, the study has recommended involvement of the youth on peace building issue to help in establishing sustainability of the same.

6.3 Recommendations:

1. Advocate for speedy and transparent resolution of land issues in Mt. Elgon.

As indicated in the finding of this study, the conflict in Mt. Elgon region is directly centered on land issue. It is due to flawed land allocation process among the Sabaot community. Unless the land issue is resolved, there would not be a sustainable peace in this region. There is a great need to embark on the program of intense advocacy and lobbying for the government to speedily and transparently resolve the land issue. All stakeholders including the youth should be involved in a transparent way. It is indicated from this study that, lack of transparency in land allocation process was one of the main reasons that led into eruption of the conflict. The government should make sure that all the beneficiaries in this process are fully vetted by members of the community and all stakeholders in order to create trust in the process.

2. Creation of peace networks through involvement of youth.

There is need to engage young people in peace building not only to create an alternative to violence, but also to harness their and energies and networks among different clans and other ethnic groups in Mt Elgon to promote peace in the region . Youth need to be facilitated to grow to their fullest potential in an environment devoid of conflict by, among other things, bringing young people from across dividing lines and do a dialogue process for their leadership and capacity building in peace building. A program should be developed to conduct trainings and education through workshops on peace building and conflict transformation. The workshops will

facilitate establishment of peace structures where youth are involved. Peace networks should be created to ensure sustainability of the peace structure. Peace network members should be led by committed youth leaders whose duty is to serve as contact persons, and peace mediators in their communities. Through these leaders, the network should hold regular meetings in each of the four divisions and once in a while hold workshops to review progress. This study identified lack of youth involvement on peacemaking and peace building to be one of the major reasons why sustainable peace could not be established in this region and therefore, this recommendation is highly appropriate to fill this gap.

3. Initiation of activities that enhance collaboration between different groups in Mt. Elgon region.

As indicated in the study findings, there is a need to initiate and enhance collaborative activities among various groups that should include the youth. The programs to be initiated should include cultural, social and economic activities like sports, agricultural field days, and free medical clinics with doctors and professionals from either communities assisting members of alleged opposing community, and tree planting days to enhance ecological and environmental benefits.

The collaborative activities should emphasize the inclusion of the youth. Such initiative has potential to help participants overcome negative attitude and stereotyped patterns of perception towards other parties to the conflict. The opportunity of coming together and do things collaboratively may not be a big event as such, however for people who have engaged in constant conflict, it could be quite significant contribution to the re-establishment of a normal life and the sustenance of a lasting peace.

4. Rehabilitation and reintegration of the ex-Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) militants/combatants in Mt. Elgon region.

At an individual level, those people who took part in Mt. Elgon conflict by either committing acts of violence, or promoting violent culture voluntarily or forcefully should be rehabilitated through counseling to overcome the psychological impact of their action and demilitarize their mindset. The conflict survivors should be trained in methods of non violent conflict resolution and be motivated to transform their attitude

and behavioral patterns. The influence will enable the youth to gain a better understanding of mechanism that promote violence and counteract them accordingly. The community members should also be educated through the creation of awareness on the importance of forgiveness. The ex-combatants should be forgiven so that they be reintegrated into the community. The rehabilitation should have income generating face to facilitate sustainable livelihood and peace. The youth should be trained on programs that include masonry, carpentry, agri-business, agriculture and business skills with start up capital.

5. Integration through formal education

Efforts be made to integrate the community through formal education. Subjects like History and Christian Religious Education should be emphasized in schools. This will help in instilling virtues and a sense of belonging among young people who are important in shaping the future. Young people will grow up know in the importance living together and sharing scarce resources to avoid conflict.

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APPENDIX I
SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON INVOLVEMENT OF THE YOUTH IN PEACE
MAKING AND PEACE BUILDING IN MT. ELGON**

Dear Respondent,

I am a student at the University of Nairobi conducting a study to find out to what extent the youth have participated in peace making and peace building processes in Mt. Elgon District.

I am kindly requesting you to complete the questionnaire by giving your honest response. Please complete it by writing in the spaces provided or putting a tick where required. Your identity will not be revealed. I look forward to your co-operation.

Thank you in advance.

Yours Faithfully,

Njoroge F. Mwangi.

The University of Nairobi.

P. O Box 30197- 00100. Nairobi. Kenya.

Mobile No. 0721426876.

E-mail: fnjoroge27@yahoo.com

Please read and answer the questions by ticking in the bracket(s) in front of the response items.

Some questions will require that you write down answers in the spaces provided.

SECTION A: DEMORGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

1. What is your age in years?

- a) 19 and below ()
- b) 20-29 ()
- c) 30-39 ()
- d) 40-49 ()
- e) 50 and above ()

2. What is your gender?

Male/Female.....

3. What is your marital status?

- a) Married ()
- d) Separated ()

b) Divorced ()

e) Widowed ()

c) Single ()

4. What is your employment status?

a) Permanent and pensionable ()

b) Contract ()

c) Temporary ()

d) Self employed ()

e) Unemployed ()

Any other(s); specify.....

.....

SECTION B: INFORMATION ON FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN CONFLICT IN MT. ELGON.

4. Indicate to what extent the following factors influence involvement of the youth in conflict in Mt. Elgon.

KEY: SI means strongly influence.

FI means fairly influences.

U means Undecided.

WI, means weakly influence

SDI, Means strongly doesn't influence

NO	Factor	SI	FI	U	WI	SDI
1	Poverty					
2	Drug and Alcohol influence					
3	Peer influence					
4	Coerced recruitment					
5	Political influence					
6	Involvement acts as a survival mechanism-one gets food and security.					
7	Self-decision for self interest					
8	Family background					
9	Permissiveness (freedom to do as one wishes)					
10	Land issue					

SECTION C: INFORMATION ON PARTICIPATION OF THE YOUTH IN PEACE MAKING AND PEACE BUILDING PROCESSES.

8. Indicate whether each of the following groups has involved the youth in peace talks in cases of conflict in Mt. Elgon:

KEY: SA-Strongly Agree

D-Disagree

A- Agree

SD-strongly disagree

U-Unaware

No	Group	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Provincial Administration					
2	Human Right Groups					
3	Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)					
4	Religious Groups (Churches)					
5	Council of Elders					
6	Learning institutions					

9. Rate on a scale of between 1-5 on whether the youth have been fully involved in peace negotiation committees in Mt. Elgon?(your answer should be a number between 1-5)

Key: Strongly Agree-1; Agree -2; Undecided-3; Disagree-4; Strongly Disagree-5.

.....

10. Suggest ways through which the youth can be involved in peace making and peace building in Mt. Elgon.....

.....

.....

11 In your own View how can youth involvement in peace making and peace building enhance positive peace in Mt. Elgon?

.....

.....

.....

.....

12. How can youth involvement in peace making and peace building be enhanced?

.....

.....

.....

.....

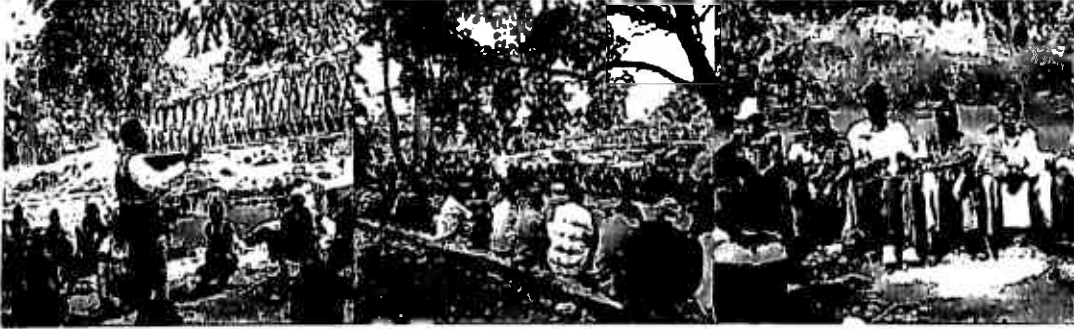
.....

.....

Thank you for your response.

APPENDIX II: PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 6



**Peace Building Event : Development for peace programme;
ACT(Act,change,Transform);USAID Sponsored programme.**

Photograph 7



**TJRC Commissioners at the Rapha Children's Home in Kimilili where they donated
basic commodities for the home. [Photo/Protus Simiyu/WestFm]**

APPENDIX III

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES (Some of the names are not real for security reasons)

1. Meshack Kimurwa; Huruma area in Chepkurkur Kopsiro Division.
2. Milka Chesakiit, Sasur in Cheptais Division.
3. Agnes Maywa; Huruma area in Chepkurkur Kopsiro Division.
4. Jones Chemondi, Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division
5. Phillip Kamarang' ;Kapkeke Toywondet sub-Location.
6. Moses Kimai. Cheptonon sub-location .
7. David King'a ;Toroso area in Cheptais.
8. Justine Tobos;;Kaboywo; Kaptama Division.
9. Maurice Taiwo; Toroso,Cheptais Division
10. Jones Chemondi, Kapsika Village in Cheptais Division.
11. John Kinja; Toroso; Cheptais Division.
12. Patrick Nyoki, Kaptama Division .
13. Sylvester Kirwa; Kimaswa Cheptais Division
14. Eliud maywa ; Kimaswa cheptais Division
15. Mama Saina; Chebkube;Cheptais Division
16. Susan Kwalia;Chekube;Cheptais Division
17. Arap Makau; Cbkube
18. Felitus Ngarich; Chebkube
19. Arangi Trufena; Sasur Cheptais division
20. William Kimut; Sasur
21. Jomo Arap Tinga:Sasur
22. Konoin James; Sasur

23. William Kwenden; Kangali; Cheptais Division
24. Mama Christine; Kang'ali
25. Rosafina Mang'et; Kang'ali
26. James Kimokoi; Tisi;Cheptais Division
27. Francis Moikut; Tisi
28. Sylvester Barsa;Tisi
29. Jane Chepkilis; Tisi
30. Agnes Komol ; Kapkota;Chetais Division
31. Juma Muindi: Kapkota
32. Kimeko Justus;Kapkota
33. Susan Kororia; Kapkota
34. Patrick Kibet; Mulatiwa; Cheptais Division
35. Chepsis Peter; Mulatiwa
36. Mary Tendet: Mulatiwa
37. Mboya Arap Naibei; Mulatiwa
38. Harriet Kipsin;Mulatiwa
39. David Chepkwess Chesikkai;Cheptais Division
40. William Sabila. Kutere ; Kopsiro Division
41. Jane Muswahili; Kutere
42. John Chepng'etich; Chelebei; Kopsiro
43. Truenna Chesakit: Chelebei
44. Chemobo James;Chelebei
45. Chebos Naimoi; Chelebei

46. Nimrod Muganda; Kipsigon
47. Rose Cheshari; Kipsigon
48. Benjamin; Kerich;Kipsigon
49. Susy Chamaimak; Kipsigon
50. Nickson saima; Masaek
51. Cherombos Kenneddy; Masaek
52. Emily Kinjo;Masaek
53. Daid Simotwo; Kabukwo.
54. Mama Ereso; Kabukwo
55. Kiptum James; Chepkurkur
56. Jane Simotwo;Chepkurkur
57. Ken Chesui; Cheptandan
58. Mary Sirwo;Cheptandan
59. Arap Tinga. Chepyuk
60. Jane Tulwo;Chepyuk
61. William Sikoria; Kapsogom
62. Henry Ngoma; Kapsogom
63. Susan Chesami; Kapsogom
64. Patrick Kiboi; Kaimugul
65. Chesaina Mang'et; Kaimugul
66. Jones Sichei; Cheptonon
67. John Ndiwa; Cheptonon
68. Ken Sabila ; Chebich