



Interuniversity Institute of Social Development and Peace

INTERNATIONAL MASTER AND DOCTORATE
IN PEACE, CONFLICT AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



MASTER'S DEGREE FINAL PROJECT

Implementing Conflict Transformation & Mediation
Measures in the PAMANA Project to address the Natural
Resource Scarcity Tensions among Northern Ugandan
Refugee Settlement Communities.

Student: Liat Elisabeth Pracht

Supervisor: Sofía Herrero Rico

Tutor: Sofía Herrero Rico

Castellón, June, 2024



UNIVERSITAT JAUME I
Avda. Sos Baynat, s/n
12071 - Castellón (Spain)
Tel. +34 964 729 380
Fax: +34 964 729 385
www.epd.uji.es | epd@uji.es



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List of Abbreviations

CDC	Community Development Centre
CES	Central Equatoria
FDG	Focus Group Discussions
HDP	Human Development Peace nexus
IDP	Internal Displaces People
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NR	Natural Resource
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PAMANA	Building Peace Through Sustainable Access to and Management of Natural Resources in West Nile and Central Equatoria
PEA	Political Economy Approach
PSEA	Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
WN	West Nile

1. Abstract

This thesis is founded on the proposal of developing conflict transformative methodologies and activities which are adapted and developed in close collaboration with the local communities in Northern Uganda. Therefore, it was analysed and studied how mediation and dialogue workshops can be implemented in the Human Development Peace (HDP) nexus of the PAMANA Project (Building Peace Through Sustainable Access to and Management of Natural Resources in West Nile and Central Equatoria), as part of their staff members, to mitigate the increasing conflicts over natural resources (NR) between stakeholders in the refugee settlements of Northern Uganda. In the last two and a half years, Uganda reported 1.4 million refugees, making the country the third-largest refugee-hosting nation in the world. The results are meso and micro-level conflicts over access to and control over NR and problems associated with poor natural resource management. To further understand the structural framework, the PAMANA Project conducted a baseline survey and focus group discussions to provide qualitative and quantitative information about the pressure on Natural Resources and conflicts around access to and management of NR. Based on that data, it will be highlighted how contextualized conflict transformation approaches, training, and mediation processes can and have been implemented among the communities. This will be done in detail since the main findings of this study show that no conflict transformation approaches among the stakeholders have been used so far. As a result, the study encourages more contextualized, inclusive, and long-term conflict transformation approaches in the refugee settlements, helping the community members apply peace dialogues to resolve their ongoing conflicts.

2. Introduction

All interpersonal relationships, communities, organizations, societies, and nations face disagreements or conflicts at some point. It is why it's key to reframe the common understanding of conflict as something negative, aberrant, or dysfunctional towards an opportunity, which, when mutually agreeable methods for cooperative problem solving have been applied, can lead to transformative progress (Moore, 2014).

This becomes even more crucial when addressing communities facing war, traumas, internal displacement, and cross-border migration, such as the South Sudanese and Congolese refugees fleeing war and structural violence. These communities have lived under armed

conflict for decades, being stigmatized, creating mistrust and hatred, and even being raised with the perception that violence is the only tool for affronting conflicts. It is why the PAMANA Project, implemented by Caritas Switzerland and supported by the Community Development Centre (CDC), is eager to tackle the increasing conflicts over natural resources (NR) by applying the Human Development Peace (HDP) nexus. Specifically, this thesis will focus on how conflict transformative methodologies can be applied in the context and how the mediation process was established in close cooperation with the communities aiming to empower them to handle conflicts through peaceful means even after the project is finalized. To do that, the first section of this paper will provide a general overview of the donors, structures, goals, principles, and core values of the PAMANA Project. Therefore it is important to emphasize the core element which sets the whole foundation for the project, the HDP nexus. This approach is defined by three guiding principles; humanitarian assistance, development support, and peacebuilding, setting the different action spectrums within the project. However, this paper will mainly address the peacebuilding approach, focusing on the improved ability of target groups and beneficiaries to manage Natural Resource Management (NRM) conflicts without violence.

With a clear understanding of what the PAMANA project stands for, the second section will introduce the fundament that enabled the project to create conflict-sensitive approaches, the Baseline Survey, including the conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KII). With the help of these tools, the data needed to further carry out a context and conflict analysis was gathered. The process of collecting this data will be presented in detail, allowing transition to analysing the context in which the refugee settlement community members are embedded. In response, the historical, structural, and cultural context of Uganda and South Sudan will be drawn out, which background will help to proceed with the technical and methodological conflict analysis framework. The conflict analysis framework aims to identify and understand; - ongoing conflicts, tensions, fault lines, and their causes, - current dynamics in the context that affect these conflicts (positively or negatively), - actors involved in the conflict, and actors working towards the peaceful transformation of conflicts, as well as these actors' positions, interests and needs (from a humanitarian, development and peacebuilding perspective), - factors contributing to development towards peace, - gender dynamics and power relations concerning gender and how they are related or been affected by NRM. Thanks to the data provided by the baseline survey, it was possible to identify that the community's natural resources mostly rely on are; forests, land, animals, and water. This is why the conflict analysis will focus on each of these natural resources to uncover the reasons

for their scarcity and how it's destabilising the communities, becoming triggers for conflict. It will include direct contributions of the community members about their situation, challenges they are facing, and conflicts that have been currently going on.

All of these insights will have equipped the reader to understand on which fundamentals the conciliation strategies have been built on. Therefore, the different conciliation strategies will be highlighted, setting the core focus on why the conflict transformation approach will be addressed instead of conflict resolution. But which tools are applicable and most suitable for this complex context? Community mediation and peace dialogues are tools that can be applied in most scenarios if the methodology is conflict-sensitive and context-plus community-oriented. Therefore, the following section will intensely focus on; the mediation definition, its purpose, goals, ground rules, strategies, needed skills, and how conflicts concerning NR such as; land, forestry, water, and agriculture can be addressed through community mediation. It will be highlighted how the PAMANA project integrated the community and all the involved stakeholders in the design of the agenda following the conflict-sensitive HDP nexus approach. It offers early insights into the outcomes and positive responses of the community of the premediation phase. The finalization of a whole community mediation process is very long and could even take more than a year. In this regard, this thesis will just introduce the beginning of the facilitation process and conclude with the improvements achieved through community dialogues.

In that sense, and as Ronald Reagan very well said, "Peace is not the absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means," so let's get inspired by how these communities will transform their conflicts via peaceful means.

3. General Objective of the PAMANA Project

Since this thesis is based on the work that the PAMANA project is carrying out, the objectives and values that the project follows will be highlighted. It will serve as a guideline throughout the thesis, thereby introducing one of its main pillars, the peacebuilding approach. First, a broad overview of PAMANA's structure will be provided to understand the project well, followed by its objectives, strategies, and key guidelines.

PAMANA is a project funded by Austrian Development Agency cooperating with Caritas Switzerland and its local partners; Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD), Community Development Center (CDC), and Organic Farming Advisory Organisation (OFAO), located in both South Sudan and Uganda. In that collaboration context, this thesis

will focus on the work that CDC is carrying out within the project. CDC is carrying out the peacebuilding components across WN and CES, including; peace dialogues, capacity building, and conflict resolution training in social and cultural NRM. Therefore, it will also be the main topic of this thesis to analyse and establish methodologies that can be applied to resolve the different types of conflicts, supporting a safe and stable community. Concretely, the focus will lie on mediation processes among the refugee settlement stakeholders involved in communal conflicts (Austrian Development Agency , 2021).

Being aware of the challenging situation which communities in WN and CES are facing, the core aim of PAMANA is to target the urgent needs of the most vulnerable groups in the host, refugee, and internally displaced person communities (with a specific emphasis on women), as well as to guarantee sustainable livelihoods to promote peace, stability, and gender equality. The project engages in livelihood assistance, information exchange, and conflict prevention techniques to achieve that medium and long-term change. Cooperation with international and local organisations aims to link international policies with grassroots initiatives to reduce violence and demand for natural resources in West Nile and Central Equatoria. Therefore, the target group encompasses local government structures, religious and traditional institutions, civil society organisations, and private sector actors. In total, the project targets 5,000 direct beneficiaries and 27,000 indirect beneficiaries while applying (Austrian Development Agency , 2021).

Moreover, the Human Development Peace (HDP) Nexus Strategy is the key element that shapes the whole project. It refers to the interconnections between the humanitarian, development, and peace sectors. Mainly it includes efforts in different disciplines to collaborate to satisfy people's needs better, minimise risks and vulnerabilities, and strive toward long-term peace (Nguya & Siddiqui, 2020). Since the well-being and the satisfaction of the communal needs are the heart of the HDP nexus, extensive contact and interaction with the local stakeholders are essential to grasp the context and issues that need to be addressed. In PAMANA's case, this context is rapidly fragile and embedded in a violent environment, needing a flexible approach that allows the set outcome/outputs to evolve. The HDP approach offers this flexibility by being an adaptative method, making it easy to be implemented in PAMANA. During the project's conception phase, it was therefore very critical to address and agree upon how each component complements each other, how context analysis and adaptations will flow into the project, and how these will be managed amongst partners. Finalising the context and conflict analysis, PAMANA defined the Impact, Outcome, and Outputs based on the fundamentals of the HDP nexus approach. The project understands that

emergency needs are frequently symptoms of underlying problems that render individuals and society vulnerable in the first place and that a more effective and inclusive response must do more to address these fundamental causes. Therefore, while addressing the aim to highlight how climate change, NR scarcity, and the current NRM is affecting the community and increasing the communal conflicts, especially vulnerable collectives must be prioritised with special attention. Gender disparities and discrimination are important determinants of vulnerability. Inequality in economic and leadership engagement among women can stifle economic development and recovery. Furthermore, when crises endure, humanitarian needs persist, and the boundary between humanitarian, all development measures become increasingly blurred. Thus, gender considerations are critical to the nexus strategy to closing the widening inequality gaps (Austrian Development Agency , 2021). Accordingly, all of the PAMANAs outcomes are based on the three levels of the HDP approach. These outcomes are well defined, conflict-sensitive, and gender transformative so that they can be customised and fit the needs of the beneficiaries in the short term and over the long term.

The first level, emphasis on the humanitarian outcome, serves three functions:

1. Strengthen the capacity of the implementing partners on programming aspects specific to humanitarian interventions.
2. Meet the immediate needs of the beneficiaries in a conflict-sensitive and gender-responsive way.
3. Educating local structures on gender equality and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), particularly regarding access to assistance during times of crisis.

Followed by the development outcome on the second level, concentrating on the problems of target groups and beneficiaries' livelihoods and how their skills can be fostered and enhanced to achieve medium and long-term livelihood prospects through sustainable NRM practices that promote self-reliance and resilience and enable peaceful coexistence. In practice, that means:

1. Implementing partners will be trained on conflict-sensitive and gender-responsive NRM development activities that will further be implemented within the communities.
2. Strengthen local to confront and sustainably manage NR problems, as well as to encourage sustainable production and value addition.
3. Train local structures on gender equity and PSEA, especially concerning NR access and management.

Even though all HDP levels are interlinked, this work will especially stress the third level, the peacebuilding outcome. How can the target groups' and beneficiaries' abilities be improved to resolve NRM disputes without resorting to violence? After conducting a deep conflict analysis,

the PAMANA project will use inclusive activities and methodologies adapted to the context. The aim is to determine which of the factors are provoking tensions, offer possible solutions, and provide non-violent methodologies/tools to raise, discuss and resolve issues and conflicts, especially regarding NRM. It is expected that through providing a space for dialogue, stakeholders that have conflicting positions emphasise each other and find a mutual solution that adapts to the needs of all (Austrian Development Agency , 2021).

To effectively analyse the community's needs and successfully create peacebuilding procedures across groups, it is necessary first to understand their context. This involves studying the community's history, the present political and social atmosphere, and how different groups within the community interact with one another. It is also critical to recognise the potential for conflict within the community since this can influence how various groups see and interact with one another. The baseline survey comes into play here. A baseline survey can assist in gathering this information, which can then be used to guide future actions. As a result, PAMANA carried out a baseline survey. It collects the necessary information on the current local status quo, provides a framework for developing activities and techniques, and serves as a reference point for tracking the project's development.

On that premise, the following subsections will highlight the various stages, mechanisms, and techniques used in the baseline survey to analyse the environment and factors that lead to conflict. Being the baseline survey the essential utilised tool, it will be emphasised on the research/analysis that has been completed, including a context analysis plus conflict analysis framework. By the end of this chapter, the reader will have a clear comprehension of the key findings of the survey, allowing the thesis to proceed with the project implementation and the incorporation of mediation and peace dialogue methodologies between the community members.

4. PAMANA Baseline Survey

A Baseline Survey is the first step of a project, and as Krzysztof states, “without a baseline, it is not impossible to assess the impact of a project.” (Krzysztof, 2011) But what does it mean to carry out a baseline survey, and what does it involve?

At its core, a baseline survey is a tool that helps researchers gather information on the state among different variables in the systematic investigation, understand the status quo, and identify priority areas for the research. In specific ways, it helps to identify the present state of affairs and which goals should be achieved through the project. Simply expressed, it assesses

change and progress by measuring important circumstances (indicators) prior to the start of a project (Forumplus Blog , 2022). Since the survey acts as a monitoring tool to see if the project successfully achieves its objectives, the baseline survey must be done before its implementation. Accordingly, during the inception phase, PAMANA conducted its baseline survey based on the HDP approach to I) Identify the prevailing circumstances of Bidi Bidi and Rhino Camp members, sustained by data on the needs and circumstances which people are currently facing, to further design conflict sensitive and gender transformative peacebuilding activities. II) Establish the baseline values and provide qualitative and quantitative information on objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs), including logframe Impact and Outcome indicators. III) Provide contextual information about the project's relevant thematic areas, including pressure on Natural Resources (NR) as well as conflicts around access to and management of NR in the project area through interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KII). Information is key for accurate and effective monitoring of the project's progress and generating transferable learning for the consortium and a wider audience, including local authorities and other policymakers.

To achieve the proposed outcomes, various approaches and methodologies have been applied to gather valuable data for the research, including:

1. **A desk review, using a political economy approach (PEA):** It aims to understand the socio-economic context, history, policy processes, power relationships, and networks of the PAMANA project area. This holistic, contextual analysis is an important component of the HDP nexus approach. PEA was used to understand the root causes of conflicts around access to and management of NR in the project area, to identify key challenges regarding NRM, and the areas NRM conflicts arise. It was also used to question received wisdom and underlying assumptions about the project areas. The PEA to conflict over NR can be best understood in relation to approaches that still currently dominate the literature on how to address the challenges of NRM. In part due to its dependence on natural resources and weather-related events, rural livelihood activities are often approached with tools of the natural sciences. Such an approach sees the challenge primarily in quantitative terms, in terms of dwindling supplies of productive land, for example. In contrast, the PEA denaturalises and politicises the question of natural resource conflict. It moves beyond the view that technical fixes will address challenges of NRM to look at the question of agency, to look at the NR actors,

the power relationships between actors, and the institutional framework within which actors operate and through which they interact.

2. **Fieldwork was conducted in eight settlements** (two in South Sudan and two in Uganda), using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, which involves researchers and participants working together to understand and improve a problematic situation. It focuses on social change that supports democracy and opposes inequality, with the goal of ‘liberating’ individuals so that they are more conscious of their circumstances and may take action. It employs a variety of methodologies, both qualitative and quantitative. To map the natural resource usage and communities, two participatory mapping exercises were conducted:

- *Natural Resource Mapping Exercises*: A participatory mapping exercise to map areas of natural resource use and areas of past, present, and potential future conflict was carried out in each study settlement. This involved members of the Implementing partner team working with key informants selected from the communities to draw a map of the land around the community and identify areas where conflicts over natural resources occur.

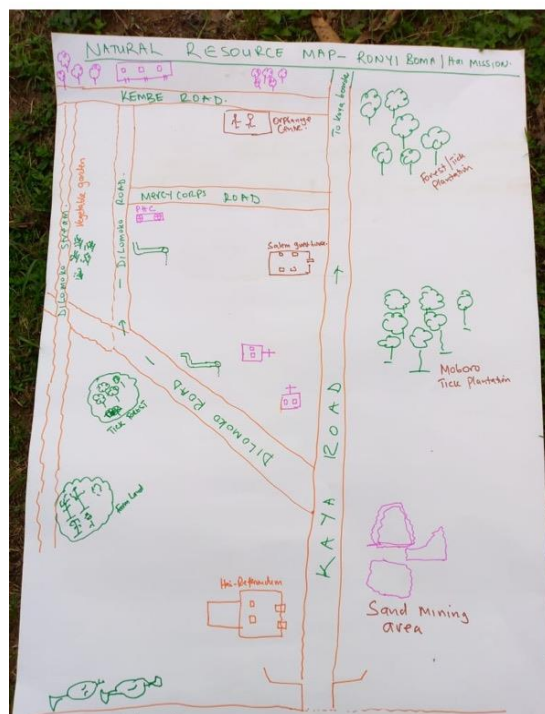


Figure 1: Natural Resource Map - Ronyi Boma (Austrian Development Agency, 2021)

- *Community mapping exercises* (with key informants) were used to map individual houses and households within them, to identify different household types (by migration status), then to select individuals from each beneficiary

group in each sample settlement (see Table II below). Key social features (access roads, footpaths, public amenities, and meeting places), as well as other infrastructure, such as health centres, and schools, were also mapped.

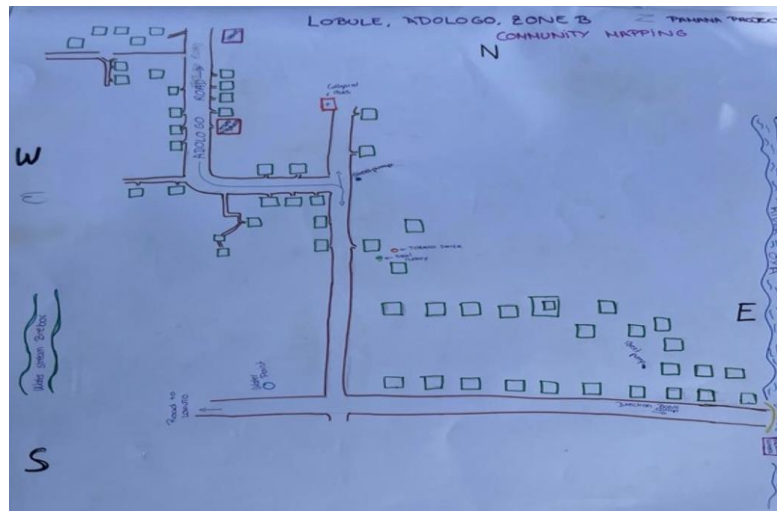


Figure 2: Community Mapping, Lobule (Austrian Development Agency, 2021)

The Community Map, produced through the Community Mapping Exercise, was used as a sampling frame to select a total of 30 people from 30 households in each study settlement, differentiated by socio-economic status (including adult women and men, male and female youth, male and female people with disabilities, male and female elderly), as laid out in Table II.

Key informant interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also held with relevant stakeholders. Table I below provides details of the KIIs carried out. Participants for the FGDs in study settlements were purposively selected through discussions with IP at the start of the project. They consisted of 3 -12 participants and included: representatives of youth and women groups, farmer associations, agricultural cooperatives, and Boda Boda associations. Where necessary, separate discussions were held with men and women as well as hosts and refugees to allow the different views to be collected. Table I provides details of the FGDs were carried out with groups of men and women within sample settlements.

Respondent category	Respondent Unit, Uganda	Respondent Unit, South Sudan
Central Government Structures	OPM, UNHCR, Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda Police.	Minister of Gender; Ministry of Agriculture,

Local Government Structures	District and local representatives of OPM, Uganda Police, Local government officials (District Environment and Natural Resources Officers, District Production Officers, Local Council representatives, etc).	County and Payam government officials; Police officers
Religious and traditional institutions	Cultural leaders (traditional chiefs), Religious leaders, Opinion leaders and Youth leaders.	Peace mediators; Traditional leaders; Religious Leaders; Youth leaders in the church, Church youth groups
Civil Society Organisations	Mothers' Union; Refugee-led civil society networks; District civil society forums, Environmental Clubs; Peace Clubs; Refugee welfare councils Non-Governmental Organizations, Community Based Organizations	Mother's Union, Yei Civil Society Forum; Peace Clubs; BOMA Peace Committee; Women Associations
Private Sector Organizations	Business Community, Media Houses/radio stations.	Farmers Groups Cooperatives, Agriculture focused trade unions; Boba Boda association, Radio Stations

Table 1: Key Informant Interviews, by Country (Austrian Development Agency , 2021)

- A *Household questionnaire* was used to carry out interviews in the eight selected settlements. It was developed by the Baseline Survey Team. The questionnaire benefitted from inputs and comments from Caritas on indicators as well as the Implementing Partners. It comprises several thematic sections; it collected information on: I) socio-demographic characteristics of households; resilience, in terms of the following domains: housing; food, education, health care, health status, safety, household income, and consumption; financial/in-kind resources, assistance, debt, savings, social capital, everyday peace indicators, and interview assessment. It included questions from the Self Reliance Index, which aims to capture progress towards self-reliance. A total of 126 Households were surveyed (65 in Uganda and 61 in South Sudan) in the six selected settlements, with a selection of households with different types of project beneficiaries differentiated by residency status (host, refugee, IDP, returnee), gender (men and women), age (youths 18-35, adults 36-64, elderly 65 and older) and people with disabilities, as shown in Table II below (Austrian Development Agency , 2021).

Uganda	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	
	children (0-17)	children (0-17)	Elderly (65+)	Elderly (65+)	Adult (36-64)	Adult (36-64)	Youth (18-35)	Youth (18-35)	children (0-17)	children (0-17)	Elderly (65+)	Elderly (65+)	Adult (36-64)	Adult (36-64)	Youth (18-35)	Youth (18-35)	Total
		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD	
Refugee/asylum seeker	0	0	2	1	3	1	6	1	2	0	5	1	7	1	8	0	33
Host	2	2	4	0	5	1	2	0	1	1	6	1	6	2	6	0	32
Total N	2	2	6	1	8	2	8	1	3	1	11	2	13	3	14	0	65
South Sudan	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	
	children (0-17)	children (0-17)	Elderly (65+)	Elderly (65+)	Adult (36-64)	Adult (36-64)	Youth (18-35)	Youth (18-35)	children (0-17)	children (0-17)	Elderly (65+)	Elderly (65+)	Adult (36-64)	Adult (36-64)	Youth (18-35)	Youth (18-35)	Total
		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD		PWD	
Host	1	0	9	0	9	0	3	1	0	0	6	0	9	1	3	0	40
<i>Total Sample Size (N) = 126 households</i>																	
IDP	0	0	7	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	14
Returnee <i>(Austrian Development Agency, 2021)</i>	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	7
Total N	1	0	17	0	14	0	6	1	0	0	7	1	12	1	4	0	61

Table 2: Socio-Economic Categories for Household (HH) Questionnaire and Respective Sample Sizes by Country, Gender, Age and Disability Status (Austrian Development Agency, 2021)

Having identified the households in the settlements that should participate in the survey, the Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs) were established based on Impact and Outcome level, along with the key questions and sources of information. Table III presents the questions posed in the discussions, taking into account that they were phrased in an appropriate language for the respondents and that all collected data were disaggregated by sex, age, disability status, and residency status (host, refugee, and IDP households/individuals).

Baseline survey questions	Related Logframe Indicators	Relevant sources of information for baseline surveys and future surveys
<p>Impact 1: Conflict over & pressure on natural resources is significantly reduced in WN & CES through building local capacities for supporting the most vulnerable groups amongst the host, refugee and IDP communities (with special focus on women), meeting their immediate needs and securing sustainable livelihoods in ways that promote peace, stability and gender equality.</p>		
<p>What are the transforming structures and processes that you have encountered over the last 5-10 years?</p> <p>What are the key shocks and trends that you have experienced over the last 5-10 years relating to NRM activities in the communities?</p>	<p>OVI: Success stories on qualitative effects that the project had for beneficiaries in the areas of basic needs and graduation (humanitarian), livelihoods and natural resource management (development), gender equity and conflict resolution (peacebuilding).</p>	<p>Literature review using Political Economy Analysis (PEA).</p> <p>Individual interviews, FGDs with NGOs, local stakeholders and beneficiaries. Observations from field workers.</p>
<p>Do the project beneficiaries currently experience conflict? If so, please explain the different types of conflict and for each estimate the number of incidents that have been experienced over the last year. How were these conflicts dealt with?</p>	<p>Target at end of the project: 30% decrease in number of local conflicts reported.</p>	<p>Literature review using PEA.</p> <p>Security reports (e.g. INSO, NGO Forum, UN).</p> <p>FGDs with NGOs, local stakeholders and beneficiaries.</p> <p>Household surveys.</p> <p>Key informant interviews with local government officials and NGO staff.</p>
<p>Do women and girls experience sexual violence?</p>	<p>Target at end of the project: 30% decrease in the proportion of women and girls subjected to sexual violence.</p>	<p>Literature review using PEA.</p> <p>Reports on sexual abuse.</p>

Baseline survey questions	Related Logframe Indicators	Relevant sources of information for baseline surveys and future surveys
<p>If so, please estimate the level of sexual violence women and girls are subjected to.</p> <p>Has any action been taken to address sexual violence against women and girls?</p>		<p>FGDs with women beneficiaries and relevant local stakeholders.</p> <p>Household surveys.</p> <p>Key informant interviews with local government officials and NGO staff.</p>
<p>What are the key material, subjective and relational dimensions of self-sufficiency for different socio-economic groups?</p> <p>What are the related indicators that can be used to monitor changes in self-sufficiency?</p> <p>Ask specific questions related to the indicators of self-sufficiency identified (e.g., ability to self-produce food, financial self-sufficiency, food security)</p> <p>Ask respondents to assign themselves (and/or project beneficiaries) on a scale of one to five in terms of material, subjective and relational self-sufficiency.</p>	<p>OVI: CACH Standard Indicator 3: Number of host, refugee, IDP and returnee population who report an increase in self-sufficiency (disaggregated by sex, age, migrants, local communities).</p>	<p>Literature review using PEA</p> <p>FGDs with beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Household surveys.</p> <p>Key informant interviews with local government officials and NGO staff.</p>
<p>Do beneficiary groups have the ability to sell agricultural produce (encompassing access to markets, transport and yields)?</p> <p>Ask respondents to assign themselves (and/or project beneficiaries) on a scale of one to five in terms of ability to sell agricultural produce.</p>	<p>CACH Standard Indicator 1.1a: Number of people (d/m/f) who could increase their income in agricultural value chains.</p>	<p>Literature review using PEA.</p> <p>FGDs and household surveys.</p> <p>Key informant interviews with local government officials and NGO staff.</p>
<p>Outcome 1: Humanitarian: The immediate needs of the most vulnerable groups amongst the host, refugee and IDP communities (with a special focus on women) are better met due to conflict-sensitive and gender responsive humanitarian assistance.</p>		
<p>What type of humanitarian assistance has been provided (if any) to date? If yes, has this been provided in a gender-</p>	<p>OVI: Humanitarian assistance was provided by the implementing partners and/or</p>	<p>Literature review PEA.</p> <p>FGDs and household surveys.</p>

Baseline survey questions	Related Logframe Indicators	Relevant sources of information for baseline surveys and future surveys
responsive and conflict-sensitive way? Please explain.	local structures in a gender-responsive and conflict-sensitive way.	
Ask specific questions related to the indicators of self-sufficiency identified (see above).	Target by end of project: 30% increase in the proportion of people who are able to meet their immediate needs.	Literature review using PEA. FGDs and household surveys.
Outcome 2: Development: Local capacities are developed and strengthened to create opportunities for medium and long-term livelihoods based on sustainable NRM practices that foster self-reliance and resilience and enable peaceful co-existence.		
<p>Are there existing local structures that support and/or constrain livelihoods? If so, what are they?</p> <p>Are there existing structures that promote and/or hinder the restoration, conservation and sustainable management of local environment (ecosystems) and ecosystem services? If so, what are they?</p> <p>Ask respondents to assign themselves (and/or project beneficiaries) on a scale of one to five in terms of material, subjective and relational self-sufficiency.</p>	<p>OVI: Local structures take action to support (agricultural) livelihoods in a gender-responsive and conflict-sensitive ways.</p> <p>OVI: Local structures support actions that promote the restoration, conservation and sustainable management of supporting ecosystems.</p> <p>Target at end of project: 30% increase in proportion of people who report an increase in self sufficiency</p>	Literature review using PEA. FGDs and household surveys.
Outcome 3: Peacebuilding: Understanding of conflict causes, especially in regard to NRM, is increased and the capacities of target groups and beneficiaries are strengthened to facilitate dialogue and manage tensions to promote sustainable NRM and climate change adaptation in peace-conducive and gender-responsive ways.		
What are the causes of conflict, especially those related to NRM? Are local people/local structures involved in discussions on NRM conflicts and how to manage them? If so, are they able to influence discussions? If so, in what way do they influence discussions? Are they	OVI: Context analysis.	Literature review using PEA. FGDs and household surveys.

Baseline survey questions	Related Logframe Indicators	Relevant sources of information for baseline surveys and future surveys
able to manage tensions to promote sustainable NRM? Ask respondents to rank their ability on a scale of one to five to: a) influence discussions and b) successfully manage tensions to promote NRM		

Table 3: Baseline Survey Matrix of Questions, Related Indicators and Sources of Information (Austrian Development Agency, 2021)

As stated above, it requires a prior context and conflict analysis so that the activities are conflict-sensitive and gender transformative, and the established indicators and approaches helped to review people's backgrounds, context, current circumstances, and traumas to create conflict-sensitive programs. Therefore, the paper will continue addressing the context, further transitioning to the analysis of the conflict. This foundation will enable the paper to move forward and establish customised conciliation strategies.

4.1 PAMANA Project Context

“Without context, a piece of information is just a dot.” (Ventura, 2017) Each context addresses multiple forms and types of conflicts that require unique mediation approaches. To elaborate on an effective and transcendental mediation design, the conflict's underlying cause, how natural resources interact with other conflict-instigating factors, and the larger political economy must be analysed. (UNDP & UNEP, 2015) The PAMANA project faces difficult and rapidly changing circumstances requiring adaptability and the aptitude to take action-based comprehension in depth. Consequently, the effort to “get it right” is especially important given the enormous potential cost of mistakes—they may even cost lives. Therefore, it is important to prioritize learning from both one’s own efforts and from others’ experiences. According to recent research, the NGOs which were most suited to handle security issues were those that had a solid analysis of the context (Verkoren, 2010).

As introduced in the last chapter, the PAMANA project is based on the HDP nexus approach and therefore requires conflict sensitivity. Conflict sensitivity means that an organization comprehends; (I) the context in which it operates, (II) the interplay between its

intervention and the context, and (III) acts accordingly to prevent negative consequences and maximise positive ones. The awareness about the impact that organizations can have is crucial, as by not acting conflict sensitively, unintended negative consequences could emerge, which can exacerbate tensions and lead to violence. Since each context is unique, there is no single formula for conflict sensitivity. Each project needs to develop its own approach based on an understanding of the context in which it operates and the nature of its work. It is a continuous process, since fragile environments have constantly changing contexts. As presented in Figure 1, it is a cycle and a multi-layered process in which PAMANA monitored/evaluated the context, planned the project, implemented the pilot programs, re-evaluated, plan again, and implemented a modified program, constantly observing and adapting to diverse the changing context dynamics and actors (Diddams, 2011).

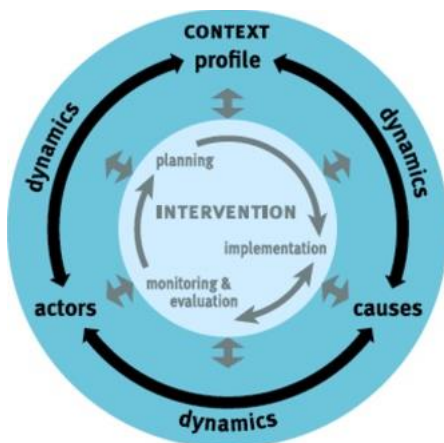


Figure 3: Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development (Diddams, 2011)

To outline the context in which PAMANA is operating, this chapter will start pointing out the historical background and current political and social situation, which are the core of most issues. East Africa is a complex region, including a multitude of conflicts, from those that have regional effects to those that have local impacts on local dynamics. Access to and control over natural resources (NR), as well as issues related to inadequate natural resource management (NRM), are some of the major causes of these meso- and micro-level disputes. Extreme climatic patterns that promote erratic droughts and floods that also are poorly managed due to poor governance are aggravated by wars, further threatening to destabilise the region. As a direct consequence, living standards drop, making people feel uneasy and intimidated by competitors for scarce employment, housing, and other resources. Together, these three factors—poor NRM, erratic and harsh weather, and bad governance—have caused extensive

migration flows and displacement in the area, creating conflicts that haven't been addressed so far (Austrian Development Agency, 2021).

To gain a coherent understanding of the ongoing tensions, the following chapters will connect the history, recent causes, and internal composition - the various parties, the nature of their involvement, their perspectives, positions, and motivations, and the differing relationships between them in terms of power, allegiance, and interest - and the current conflict's evolution and dynamics of South Sudan's conflict, as well as the role that Uganda is playing to affront and reply to the humanitarian emergencies (Francis, 2002).

4.1.1 South Sudan

“If there is no support for the south Sudanese, there will be a country without population.” (Concern Worldwide U.S, 2021) To understand how the youngest country in the world, which intended to become a hopeful nation, is instead gripped by a severe humanitarian crisis eight years after its independence, this chapter takes a look at the thresholds, leading almost a whole nation to flee the country (Mercy Corps, 2019). This analysis is especially important for this paper since most of the population living in Ugandans refugee camps originate from South Sudan, becoming key stakeholders in the conflict context.

The chapter takes us through South Sudanese history and the influences that have shaped the youngest nation in the world to undergo a ten-year war. Starting from clan-based acephalous societies and precolonial regimes, through almost six decades of colonial rule under the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, and two prolonged civil wars in the 20th century and its recent peace negotiations will be examined, achieving a brought understanding of the current situation. Several components of the conflict are historical, while others are cultural, and yet others are economic. All of that has progressed to the psychological level.

Sudan was named after “bilad-al-Sudan,” a terminology adopted by medieval Arab historians, geographers, and travelers to imply “the land of the blacks.” A country that, from the beginning, was divided into several states showed some regional variations; however, it was characterized by nomadic, clan-based communities and decentralized social structures. Throughout history, numerous centralised governments and kingdoms exercised jurisdiction over these clan-based societies, while the hinterlands supplied labour, food, and money. Slavery was also key for political power and trade alliances. Therefore, residents of neighbouring acephalous communities or neighbouring states were enslaved. The historian

Johnson, as a response, traces some of Sudan's civil wars back to the governance patterns at the end of the 19th century. By then, Muslims and Arabs were almost possessing a monopoly over access to economic activities, holding power over communities in the periphery and controlling the essential slave trade. However, it wasn't until the colonial period that identity became a conflict issue. The colonial period increased the uneven levels of investment, infrastructure, social services, and inequalities between the north and the south (Matthews, 2005).

Sudan's colonial history is marked by two major colonial regimes: Turko-Egyptian domination (1821-1882) and the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1899-1956), intrinsically shaping the conflict dynamics in the country. Kebede argues that "Sudan's North-South conflict owes its genesis to the colonial past." (Kebede, 1997) During the Turko-Egyptian domination, the hatred between the northern and southern communities rapidly grew. The implementation of new fundamental dynamics in; the colonial administrative structure, establishment of indirect rule, religion and slave trade increased the breach between the north and the south. In fact, it was the southern population that was exposed to the slave trade, destabilizing their economy and their communities. Metz highlights that annually thousands of South Sudanese, mostly Dinkas, were sold to Arabs, Europeans, and Egyptians during the Turko-Egyptian domination (Metz, 1991). The perfect setting for a domino effect and instilling prejudices, stereotypes, hatred, and mistrust. In 1881, after 60 years of Turko-Egyptian domination, Muhammad Ahmad ibin Abdallah took over the regime with stronger policies, abolishing civic education and civil laws, perpetuating the slave trade, and consequently intensifying the hostilities between Sudanese. On top of that, and what has been considered by many scholars as a key part of the complex North/South Sudan conflict, the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium reigned from 1899-1956. The implemented new devised and executed policies exacerbated and extended Sudan's regional, ethnic, and religious cleavages, resulting in catastrophic strife (Vhumbunu, 2018).

From a geostrategic perspective, the British aspired to a united Sudan to maintain control of the Nile Waters and the strategic Suez Canal - a key trade route to India and the Far East, as well as to ensure stability to exploit Sudan's abundant natural resources such as gold, chrome ore, iron ore, copper, mica, silver, tungsten, zinc, and hydro-power and agriculture potential along the Nile Rivers. However, in reality, the Condominium policies were not pro-unity. As a result, the shaykhs presided over villages, tribes, and districts, while tribal chiefs were in charge of local area administration in the south, leading to tribalism as ethnic groups began to see themselves as separate nationalities, exclusively owning, and thus preventing

“outsiders” from accessing, local resources such as land, water, and grazing pastures. Moreover, In the 1920s and 1930s, immigration restrictions, trade legislation, language policy, and administrative rules negatively affected national unity and cohesiveness, establishing two distinct administrative administrations for the south.

Consequently, when Britain granted independence to Sudan in 1958, the northern elite faced two different and conflicting identities and interests between the north and the south. Also known as the “fragmentation initiative,” the aim was to avoid contact between the north and the south in pursuit of three primary colonial goals: (a) restraining the growth and impact of Arab and Muslim influence southwards; (b) preparing the southern area for ultimate inclusion into the British East Africa Federation/Union; and (c) controlling the resources along the Nile. In a nutshell, the British administration failed to improve the relationship between the north and the south. Instead of embracing variety as a source of strength, colonial policy statements and law in Sudan generated the Afro-Arab, Muslim-Christian, and north-south dichotomies. Given this context, developing a shared national consciousness in Sudan would be an impossible task for post-colonial governments seeking to address grievances such as ethnic hostility, religious intolerance, political subjectivities, regional inequalities, injustices, social identity, racial animosity, racial divisions, marginalisation, and resentments. Consequently, when Britain granted independence to Sudan in 1956, the country wasn’t at all prepared for a smooth handover. The northern elite, which formed the basis of the nationalist movement, had failed to define a broadly based national identity, while the southerners were ill-prepared to defend their own interests (Vhumbunu, 2018). Johnson notes, “There was thus widespread discontent in the South as a result of the outcome of the 1954 elections and the Sudanization process. The rapid increase of Northerners in the South as administrators, senior officers in the army and police, teachers in government schools and as merchants increased Southern fears of Northern domination and colonization.” (Johnson, 2011) This resulted in the army mutiny in August 1955, when the Equatoria brigade/corps revolted, triggering Sudan's First Civil War.

The First Civil War in Sudan lasted from 1955-1972, including different historical periods; Immediate Post-Independence Rule (1956-1958), General Ibrahim Abboud Military Rule (1958-1964), Addis Ababa Accord/Agreement on the problem of Sudan (1972), Jaffar Nimeiri Regime (1964-1985). What must be highlighted during that period is that Southerners continued to outnumber northerners in the National Assembly; therefore, they were outvoted whenever the question of federalism was raised. As a result, the government rejected the 1957 Constitutional Committee's recommendation for a federal state of South Sudan, missionary

schools were nationalised in 1957, the south was Arabized and Islamized, budget allocation was skewed in favour of the north, and budget allocations to southern projects were reduced. A modus operandi that continued after Ibrahim Abboud carried out a military coup on 17 November 1958 and reigned up to October 1964. It is undeniable that, like his predecessors, he fostered a system that entrenched divides, hostility, and violence. For example, in Southern Sudan, Islamization and Arabization policies were maintained to extend Arab identity, Arabic language, the idea of Arab cultural supremacy, and Arab dominance into the southern boundary to politically unite Sudan via language and religion. (Sharkey, 2003)

The minister of internal affairs said, “Sudan is an Arab country, and whoever does not feel Arab should quit” (Kebbede, 1997) plus, all political parties were banned, and several southern politicians were arrested.

Maybe the most prosperous period was during the regime of Jaffar Nimeiri Regime (1964-1985), making considerable efforts to address southern issues. Even though little progress was made in resolving the problems of southerners in practice, credit should also be given to Nimeiri's leadership for pursuing peace negotiations of 1972 between the north and the south after recognising that the violence had taken countless lives, depleted national resources, and stifled economic progress. The Addis Abeba Agreement's most important provisions included the recognition of the south as a self-governing region, secured southerners' rights to fundamental human rights, religion, equal opportunity in education, employment, trade, and profession, as well as regulations controlling revenue management and the makeup of the national army (Vhumbunu, 2018).

As stated by Badal, the agreement managed to take “some of the heat out of the North-South conflict, allowing belligerent parties many opportunities to re-examine their attitudes toward each other.” (Badal, 1976) Undoubtedly, the accord restored Sudanese some calm for ten years before the onset of another war (the Second Civil War) from 1982 to 2005. But what were the key factors and decisions that Nimeiri's Government took that culminated in the 21 years-long Second Civil War?

Most scholars talk about two main triggers, (a) the introduction of Sharia law for the whole of Sudan and (b) the attempted establishment of the north-south boundary due to the discovery of large oil reserves by US-based Chevron Corporation. The imposition of Sharia law violated Sudan's 1973 secular constitution, declaring Arabic as the “exclusive official language of the entire country,” breaching Article 6 of the Addis Ababa Agreement, which stated that English was to be the “principal language for the Southern Region.” According to Kebbede, the imposition of Sharia laws was “the final rebuke to the Southern people,”

(Kebbede, 1997) since those who opposed were imprisoned and/or executed. As a result, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), which was renamed from the SSLM in 1983, started rebellions. The main goal was to build a "New Sudan" with a reformed and plural political structure. According to its manifesto, it wanted "to avoid Sudan's inevitable disintegration by offering a proper solution to nationality and religion concerns within the context of a unified Sudan and establishing a new cultural order inside a new Sudan." (Basha, 2006) Consequently, On April 6, 1985, a military coup overthrew Nimeiri, clearing the stage for civilian governments led by Al-Jazuli Dafallah, followed by a military coup in 1989, putting Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir and his National Islamic Front (NIF) Party in power. This, however, was just another failed attempt to restore peace and stability in Sudan, including Attempts throughout the civil war to bring southern rebel leaders and the Sudanese government together for peace negotiations. It should be noted that the southerners' viewpoints, which were mostly led by the SPLA, were shifting and at times diverging, and therefore the battle was marked by factionalism, ethnicism, conflicts, and splinters. The UN blames the "immense complexities of the war and the lack of political will" for hindering an early end of the conflict. But, understanding the context, neither of the national, regional, or international parties involved in the Sudanese conflict has made amendments to find common ground; rather, each followed their own interests and objectives. It can be stated that the peace talks and mediation process conducted, led by former US President Jimmy Carter, between the Government of Sudan's President Bashir and the SPLM/John A's Garang tumbled backward, concluding in the continuation of civil war. Several mediation processes came along, mainly facilitated by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). However, each party involved was representing a motivation and objective, meaning that they engaged because of interest. The Sudanese government represented northern interests in peace and security, oil, resources, Islamic law, and power (political and socioeconomic), whereas southern political movements desired peace, self-government, religious freedom, recognition, economic growth/development, oil, resources, equality, and representation in government. IGAD, the AU, and the UN, on the other hand, were motivated by a desire for peace, regional security, legitimacy, trade relations, countering terrorist threats, regional development, power, and border control, whereas the US, EU, and China were interested in thwarting terrorist cells in Sudan, ensuring regional influence, border control, trade relations, and securing oil/resources. (Schafer, 2007) A very challenging process since any kind of success requires the parties to be prepared and ready to compromise. Finally, on January 9, 2005, the IGAD mediations achieved that the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A signed six of the CPA's six Protocols,

including maybe the most important one, the Protocol of Machakos, stating that after the 6-year interim period, the southerners would have a vote to decide whether they would secede from Sudan or stay a part of a unified Sudan. Formally it ended two decades of terrible civil conflict and raised expectations for long-term peace. Practically, however, the power conflicts remained, and in July 2011, 98,83 voted for separation, and only 1,1% voted for unity, declaring South Sudan's independence on July 9, 2011. (Vhumbunu, 2018) Unfortunately, the hard-won joy was short-lived. Being a new country does not rid South Sudan of the burden of history: Sudan's civil war lasted over two decades, resulting in significant loss of life, devastation, and displacement throughout the area. This came on top of the region's more than 50 years of conflict and instability, as well as massive development needs (Concern Worldwide U.S, 2021). In fact, South Sudan's nation-building never really started. Sudan People's Liberation Movement, the main political party that prompted the country's independence, was fragmented and striving for power instead of working together for the cause of rebuilding their country. It didn't take long until political infighting escalated into street violence in Juba in December 2013, when South Sudan's president accused his vice president of plotting a coup. Fighting immediately spread to Bor and then to Bentiu, between two factions of government soldiers loyal to each other. Violence spread like wildfire over the nascent nation, displacing 413,000 citizens in just the first month of conflict. Tens of thousands of civilians fled, seeking refuge support at the United Nations facilities, which were later converted into improvised displacement camps.

The conflict has persisted, escalating into a horrific civil war that has affected the whole country (Mercy Corps, 2019). What follows are once again several peace treaties that have been signed during the course of the war, the latest recent in September 2018; however, they have all been breached. While in the last two years, the documented conflict occurrences have dropped since the current agreement, dating August 2022, is becoming even more challenging due to the severe inflation, flooding, increasing worldwide fuel costs, the devaluation of the South Sudanese Pound (SSP), trade barriers, and seasonal variables have all contributed to food and gasoline price increases in South Sudan. Moreover, subnational and localised violence persisted in several sections of the country, disrupting the movement of commodities and people along major supply lines and increasing displacements, with 2.2 million people internally displaced (World Food Programme, 2022). As by numbers, in late 2021, South Sudan's protracted crisis has resulted in: 8.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, 2.3 million South Sudanese refugees, 1.7 million internally displaced people, 34,000 people living in displacement in the protection of civilian (POC) sites, 1.4 million children suffering

from malnutrition and 483,000 women suffering from malnutrition (Mercy Corps, 2019). A crisis that has resulted in one of the world's largest and fastest increasing refugee crises, and as to current indications, without hope of improvement. A significant part of South Sudanese who were able to escape the country and its conflict fled to Uganda. According to Uganda's Ministry of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, by 2021, 950,000 South Sudanese refugees had been registered in Uganda (Middle East Monitor, 2022). It is, therefore, no surprise that South Sudanese and the international community are losing hope. Nevertheless, thanks to different initiatives, movements, and projects such as PAMANA, there might be light at the end of the tunnel. Through engaging and promoting local peace-building initiatives, communal dialogues, and calling out to continue building on previous accomplishments and embracing a multiplicity of ideas that work, small steps can be achieved at the local level which can redeem some of the hostilities (Akech, 2022).

4.1.2 Uganda

Realizing South Sudan's complex web of historical events and the various players obstructing each other, up to the current untenable situation, it will now be examined how the repercussions of the conflict have impacted Uganda and what efforts have been taken to provide humanitarian help. As a result, a brief historical background on Uganda's setting will be given, providing the necessary insight into the relationship that South Sudan and Uganda had over time and how it shaped the existing legal frameworks and the humanitarian assistance offered. Furthermore, this section will present a comprehensive overview of the situation and conditions in which Ugandans and South Sudanese are currently living, providing the necessary objective image to transition to the examination of existing conflicts in Ugandan refugee camps.

Ugandans' geographical location, bordering Sudan on the north and Congo on its north-western, was the subject of the long history of forced migration. The history of Uganda welcoming South Sudanese refugees goes way back to the 1940s, in fact hosting Polish refugees. However, it wasn't until 1955 that Uganda started its rigorous involvement in the refugee crisis lived due to the ongoing war in Sudan, hosting approximately 78,000 Southern Sudanese refugees. Since then, Uganda has hosted thousands of refugees from Burundi, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. However, the bulk of refugees in Uganda are natives of neighbouring countries,

namely Rwanda, Congo, and Sudan. However, what has positively shaped and nurtured the relationship between the neighbouring countries is the mutual support during several crises. Uganda was also supported by its neighbours during the expelling of the Ugandan Asian community in 1972 and the 14-year Kony (LRA) war in 1986 (Mulumba, 2014). The reason for the Ugandan Asian community to be expelled was their domination of trade and industry, owning 90% of the country's businesses and accounting for the same share of Ugandan tax revenue. President Idi Amin labeled them a "self-segregating community of bloodsuckers that had sabotaged the economy and encouraged corruption," and within days of his speech, Amin signed a proclamation requiring all South Asians to leave the nation within 90 days. He stated that the old colonial powers encouraged an estimated 80,000 South Asians to settle in Uganda and that they were, therefore, Britain's duty. Before the November deadline, around 28,500 Ugandan Asians migrated to the United Kingdom (Nasar, 2022). Nevertheless, the main support was offered during The northern Uganda war (1986–2006). One of Uganda's most brutal and devastating wars in its history, mainly between the government and a rebel organisation known as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The conflict's origins were multifaceted, but it was essentially a continuation of Uganda's history of political instability and colonial-era marginalisation of the northern region. Historically, Uganda's economic wealth was focused in the south, while military might was concentrated in the north. When Museveni, a southerner, became president of Uganda in 1986, Joseph Kony chose to unite and mobilise the remains of various unsuccessful northern rebel factions to become the LRA. The LRA claimed to represent northerners' problems; its immediate goal appeared to be the overthrow of the government. Because the LRA's choice to fight was unpopular, the LRA did not have much backing from northerners; as a result, they were compelled to terrorise and assault residents in order to gather food supplies and capture forced recruits. The LRA was cruel and believed to possess spiritual powers; Kony, a self-proclaimed prophet, claimed to receive military orders from God. Although the war began in 1986, violence was rather low-key until the mid-1990s in the Acholi sub-region, when additional LRA forces re-entered Uganda from Sudan. That re-entry was related to the Sudanese government's assistance for the LRA in retaliation to Uganda's support for Sudanese rebels, as well as Museveni's election as President of Uganda in early 1996. Both incidents energised the rebels, and assaults, abductions, and murders skyrocketed in 1996. Due to the brutality up to 2005, 1.8 million people were displaced, many fleeing to Sudan (Mugizi & Matsumoto, 2020).

The strong connection and influx between the countries has favoured their understanding, and to date, almost all Ugandans living in the northern border region have either

been refugees themselves or have sheltered refugees at some time in their life (Kaiser, 2006). Sudanese have resided in a variety of transit camps, settlements, and non-settlement places due to security conditions, government policies, personal circumstances, and the availability of assistance.

In 2006 the Refugee Act and 2010, the Refugee Regulations were signed, which gave refugees the right to move, work and enjoy access to social services. The international media reacted by acknowledging Uganda as “one of the best places in the world to be a refugee.” (BBC NEWS, 2016) Experts in response warned that “what happens, in reality, is not as exemplary as has been reported in the media.” (Titeca & Schiltz, 2017) But what does it really mean to be a refugee in Uganda? To date, Uganda has the largest refugee population in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), with over one million refugees, the majority of them are from South Sudan, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. From Figure 2, it can be drawn out that the vast majority of migrants arrived between 2014 and 2020 and have stagnated since then.

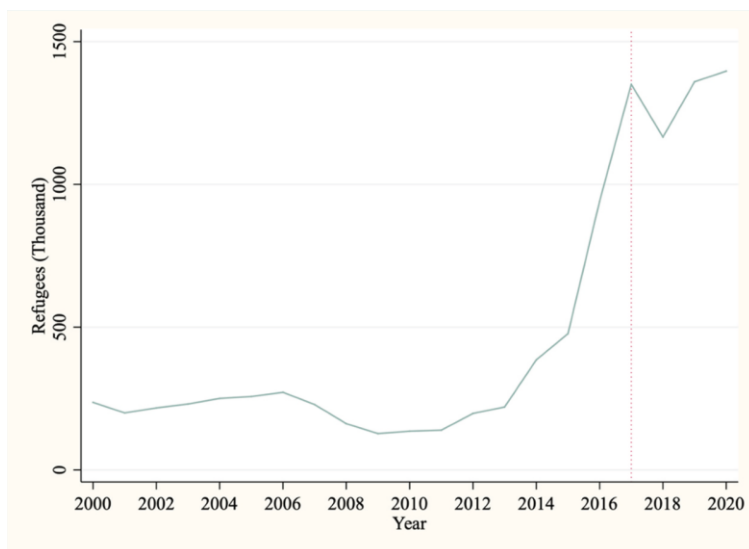


Figure 4: Refugee inflows in Uganda (2000-2020) (d’Errico, Marco; Mariani, Rama Dasi; Pietrelli, Rebecca; Rosati, Furio Camillo;, 2022)

The process of official settlements is carried out by national and international agencies. As for the refugee allocation, UNHCR, in collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), manages the different settlements. UNHCR, therefore, received the refugees and registered them to determine their ethnic and socioeconomic background as well as the type of help they require. By arrival, in addition to vital non-food supplies, the refugees are assigned a plot and provided an initial shelter kit for constructing a temporary structure. The land on which

the refugees have settled is customary land, which has been freely loaned by the host population for the duration of the refugees' presence. Nevertheless, these 20-square meter plots are insufficient for both habitation and farming, and because the food assistance they get is insufficient, the refugees enter into informal arrangements with the host to rent a piece of land for a set amount of time (d'Errico, Marco; Mariani, Rama Dasi; Pietrelli, Rebecca; Rosati, Furio Camillo;, 2022). In the case of South Sudanese refugees, they are assigned to settlements such as Bidi Bidi and Rhino Camp, mainly concentrating in the Northern region. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, it is also the northern region that has suffered the most under the LRA war and is continuously being characterized by conditions of structural underdevelopment. Taking that into account and acknowledging that due to the influx of South Sudanese refugees, the district population has doubled, it isn't surprising that natural vegetation is disappearing, increasing the environmental and social hazards such as soil erosion, flooding, and biodiversity leading to conflicts with the host communities on issues of land, sharing water points, school facilities and toilets... are looming (VANCLUYSEN & INGELAERE, 2020).

Consequently, even though the Ugandan community is well known for their hospitality, these shortages lead to hatred and stereotypes, considering refugees as intruders who “steal” their resources.

After this brief introduction to some of the emerging conflicts at Bidi Bidi and Rhino Camp, the following section will focus on establishing a conflict analysis framework, key and fundamental for a sustainable mediation process among stakeholders.

4.2 Conflict Analysis Framework

Before fully examining and engaging with the Conflict Analysis Framework, what does it actually mean to be involved in a conflict? Or how do we define conflict?

The word “conflict” is derived from the Latin word “*conflicere*” which means “to strike together.” Conflict is thus generally defined as a clash of interests between two or more parties. It can take many different forms, from verbal arguments and disagreement to physical violence. Conflict can also be internal within a person. Darwin, for example, understood it as “the competitive struggle for existence” and “the survival of the fittest.” He wrote that “all nature is at war, one organism with another, or with external nature. Seeing the contented face of nature, this may at first be well doubted; but reflection will inevitably prove it is too true.” (Moore, 2014) By that, he means that the face of nature may be compared to a face that has

seen all of the expression changes throughout its life, from smiles to melancholy, from passion to indifference, highlighting that conflict is intrinsically natural and necessary, challenging social constructs and promoting a positive change. For the same reason, all living beings in their natural condition must be subjected to intense competition to improve and overcome other challenges. According to Bariyo, conflicts “foster creative solutions” and “facilitate personal and social change.” (Bariyo, 2007) As per Gidron et al. 2002, social disputes are required for the stability of a democratic society in several aspects. Oppressed groups instigate conflict to inspire social change (Gidron, et al., 2002). Meanwhile, in social science, conflict is typically defined as a fight between two or more parties over resources, territory, or power. And indeed, conflict might “become violent,” nevertheless, and as often colloquially understood, conflict and violence aren’t synonyms. A rhetorical distinction is critical. While conflict is a controversy, disagreement, or opposition, violence is defined as the physical force used to cause harm, damage, or abuse and is strictly negative. Concretely, while conflict is a necessary and normal part of social life, violence is not. Violence is always destructive and is never an acceptable or constructive way to resolve conflict. Moreover, it is also very important when implementing a project to acknowledge that conflicts are inherently political. Whether conflicts, disagreements, or controversies, all aim to challenge the power of resources, ideology, or aims. Parties seek a change towards new socio-political horizons, with new resources and authority and justice represented in new ways. Surprisingly, many of the target groups decontextualize the political nature of the conflict. A big mistake since they understand conflict as a natural disaster, an unpredictability beyond anyone’s control. And unfortunately, these groups occasionally, but not always, recognise the distinction made between “violence” and “conflict.”

In that sense, it is the peacebuilders’ and PAMANA’s role to identify and analyse the conflicts/disagreements within communities and use the chance to address the emerging challenges using nonviolent techniques and provide lasting solutions before it turns into violence. A difficult undertaking for all organisations and projects, taking into account the myriad of factors that contribute to conflict. The tool that is used to identify the dynamics of a conflict is the conflict analysis framework (Diddams, 2011).

In distinction to the context analysis, and even though a conflict exists within a context and is influenced by it, the conflict has its own important dynamics. A conflict analysis framework is a systematic way that helps to understand the dynamics of a conflict and how they can be addressed by developing effective development cooperation and humanitarian assistance in areas affected by violent conflicts and insecurity, offering a solid foundation for evaluating the

efficacy of conflict-sensitive interventions, and to promote peace and security (Sida, 2006). Therefore, this section will transition from analysing the broader situation, including economic, social, historical, and social factors, to studying the causes, actors, and dynamics of the emerging conflict in Northern Ugandans refugee camps due to NR scarcity (GPPAC, 2022).

In fact, conflict analysis is just as crucial for peacemakers as a doctor making a diagnosis on a patient before deciding how to proceed with therapy. However, social and political disputes are far more complicated than a single patient's diagnosis since they involve several players, organisations, concerns, and other aspects. Nonetheless, conflict analysis assists organisations attempting to handle conflict in determining how to promote good changes in the situation to lessen the likelihood of violence and/or transform the conflict to allow for growth and social justice. In the case of the PAMANA project, the growing influx of migrants arriving is understood as a threat, and people often assert that it is the main cause of conflict among the communities. Migrants may well be an important aspect of the broader context, but how does it generate conflict? It is necessary to examine the issues and dynamics around migration, policies, cultures, privilege, interests, accessibility to natural resources, climate change, privilege, and interests and to discover which factors contribute to the potential for violent conflict and how. In other words, it is not the migration itself that causes the conflict, but the failed management of emerging issues through time (GPPAC, 2022).

As a result, the variables that drive communal disputes will be thoroughly examined in the next subsections, outlining how these problems influence the conditions and livelihoods of the population residing in the Bidi Bidi and Rhino Camp settlements. This will be done with the help of academic information and the collected data in the baseline survey.

4.2.1 Natural Resource Conflict

The term “natural resources” refers to natural resources such as oil, minerals, forests, water, and fertile land, which can be utilised for economic benefit. These resources are typically vital sources of wealth and power, income and essential for countries and communities around the globe affecting the livelihoods of millions of people (UNDP & UNEP, 2015). A fact supported by the household survey, which reveals that farming is the primary source of income for both refugees (30%) and hosts (91%), as presented in Table 4.

Uganda		Male								Female								Total		
		children (0-17)	children (0-17)	Elderly (65+)	Elderly (65+)	Adult (36-64)	Adult (36-64)	Youth (18-35)	Youth (18-35)	children (0-17)	children (0-17)	Elderly (65+)	Elderly (65+)	Adult (36-64)	Adult (36-64)	Youth (18-35)	Youth (18-35)		Tot.	
		PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD	PWD		N	
Refugee/asylum seeker	None	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6%
	Farming	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	4	1	1	0	10	30%	
	Livestock	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3%	
	Business	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	5	0	11	33%	
	Labouring	0	0	1	1	2	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	9	27%	
Host community	None	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3%	
	Farming	2	2	3	0	4	0	2	0	1	1	6	1	5	2	6	0	29	91%	
	Labouring	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	6%	

Table 4: Uganda: Most important source of income for the household as a whole over last year by Beneficiary Households, Residency Status, Gender, Age, PWD

As a result, when these resources are mismanaged, dispersed, or controlled in an unjust or uneven manner, natural resources may be a major source of conflict or instability. Another common factor that contributes to tensions that can lead to violent conflict, or feed into and aggravate pre-existing conflict dynamics, is when businesses or projects are being undertaken without adequate awareness of the context and communities. Furthermore, demographic change and environmental degradation are increasing the competition over already scarce resources like land and water, and climate change threatens to exacerbate this rivalry. It is unsurprising, then, that many experts and governments anticipate natural resources to become crucial drivers for the emerging number of disputes, with potentially significant repercussions for international, regional, and national peace and security. Outlining once again the need and additional attention to the development of systems that minimise and resolve natural resource disputes (UNDP & UNEP, 2015).

In the case of WN, where the Bidi Bidi and Rhino Camp settlements are located, enormous human pressure on natural resources is evident. Originally, the region had a mix of grassland, wood savannah, open and closed woods, and forest. However, the vast expanse of land has been cleared for homesteads and cultivation. Summed up with the alarming effects of climate change, environmental degradation has alarmingly speeded up with severe consequences. Climate change has manifested itself in long dry spells, reduced rainfall amounts, unreliable rainfall, and a shift in farming seasons from two seasons to only one season. Devastating changes for communities and households who rely exclusively on natural resources to satisfy their fundamental requirements (including hosts, refugees, IDPs, and returnees). Given that their income is almost entirely dependent on farming, as shown in table 4, and that they depend on various natural resources such as trees for firewood for cooking, wood for constructing homes, water boreholes/rivers, thatching grass for roofing, and farmland for survival, it is no surprise that tensions are rising (Duguma, et al., 2019).

On this account, each natural resource conflict catalysator will be emphasised to provide a comprehensive and detailed picture of how and why the environment is changing, as well as how communities are affected by changes in forests, land, and water.

4.2.1.1 Conflict over Forest

The Republic of Uganda is an African tropical region located on the East African plateau between latitude 4° 12' North and latitude 29° 34' East and 35° West (Food and Agricultural Organization, 2004). Due to its topical climate, Uganda has a wide range of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, providing optimal conditions for rich biodiversity (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2009). As stated by United Nations Development Programme in 2017, Uganda is among the top ten countries in terms of biodiversity, with forests and woods covering 18% of the total area or around 3.6 million hectares (United Nations Development Programme, 2017).

Simultaneously, Ugandan forests have an important function as a supply of firewood for rural communities and raw materials for a variety of enterprises. Because electricity and gas are not accessible by most members, around 78% of Uganda's population relies on firewood (and 18% on charcoal) for cooking, and timber is used as a raw material in both the building and furniture industries (Ministry of Water and Environment, 2016). Considering the significant relevance that forests assume in the Ugandan economy, with an estimated total economic value, including marketable and non-marketable values, of 300 million US dollars and a contribution of 282 4 million to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it is surprising that no comprehensive measures for sustainable NRM and anti-deforestation are being implemented (Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment, 2003). For instance, while 105 countries signed an agreement to end and reverse deforestation by 2030 during the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, a pledge backed up by nearly \$19.2 billion in public and private funds, Uganda, despite its increasing deforestation rate, did not sign this commitment. According to data from the online forest tracking blog Global Forest Watch, the country lost 297 km² of forest in 2001, but by 2020, the amount had more than quadrupled (736 km² of forest lost in a single year) (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2021).

In the context of Northern Uganda, the World Bank's land cover change analysis shows that tree cover loss and degradation rose dramatically with the influx of refugees. Between 2010 and 2022, Uganda received 1,394,104 refugees (World Bank, 2022). With severe consequences for the environment and deforestation.

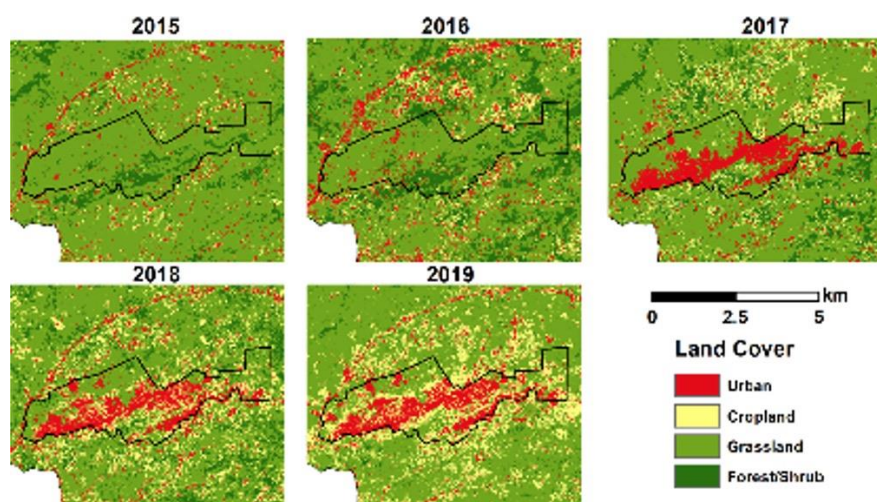


Figure 5: Landcover maps of the urbanisation in Bidi Bidi refugee settlement 2015-2019 (Nakalembe, et al., 2022)

As clearly pictured in Figure 5, the urbanization that took place between 2015 and 2019 is immense. For instance, it indicates significant growth in construction in 2017, followed by rapid growth in cropland in 2018 and 2019, implying that urban areas, with their new infrastructures, dwellings, and agriculture, have expanded dramatically, whereas forests/shrubs and grassland have been forced to disappear (Nakalembe, et al., 2022). In absolute terms, it led to a total tree cover loss of 1,919 ha and degradation covering 5,664 ha (in woodland and bushland, including the areas of the settlements themselves) within a 5 km buffer zone from settlement borders between 2010 and 2013. Degradation and tree cover loss have been steadily increasing since then, with an estimated 34,122 ha. loss and 29604 ha of degradation from 2014 and 2018. So there was an average increase of 14% degradation and loss in woodland, bushland, and cropland within 5km of the settlement boundaries and additional loss and degradation in an extended 15km buffer which could also reflect ongoing degradation by host communities, rather than refugee-related impacts (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The World Bank, The Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2019). A joint UN-World Bank assessment issued in October 2019 cautioned that “competition for available resources could become a source of tension between refugees and host communities.” According to Thijs Van Laer, programme director of the International Refugee Rights Initiative, deforestation has a serious effect on both the environment and the peaceful coexistence between host and refugee communities, often leading to violence. He states, “refugees have complained about being abused by Ugandans who reject the sharing of these resources,” adding that “sharing of natural resources is often one of the main concerns raised by both refugees and Ugandans living close to the refugee settlements.” He concluded by saying, “If nothing is being done, this will seriously put to the test the considerable hospitality

that Ugandans living in refugee-hosting areas have been showing in recent years,” underlining the urgency of the situation (The Guardian, 2019).

But what are the reasons for such alarming deforestation rates, which jeopardise an entire region's social stability?

1. Increased Demand of Firewood

Acknowledging the increased influx of refugees in Northern Uganda between 2016-2022 inevitably increased the consumption of firewood. Conforming to the UNHCR’s Refugee Response Plan for Uganda, “refugees and hosts are mostly dependent on natural resources to meet their basic needs for cooking energy, materials for shelter and agricultural land,” and “some also generate income by selling biomass and non-wood forest products.” (The Kingston Whig Standard, 2019) Its more, the situation analysis carried out by Biomass Energy Strategy Uganda (BEST) quantified an overdependence on tree biomass, underlining that the required tree biomass in 2013 would be 44 million tonnes, while the existing tree resources could only sustainably deliver 26 million tonnes. A biomass product use linked to 90% of households, comprising both charcoal and firewood (Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development & UNDP, 2013).

Thereby, firewood (62%) and charcoal (36%) are still the commonest sources of fuel for cooking in host and refugee settlements (Food and Agriculture Organisation, Office of Primeminister, 2018). According to Fred Oja, the district forest officer, 15 percent of the forest cover has been destroyed as a result of increased demand for charcoal and wood fuel driven by the influx of refugees (Monitor, 2022). In fact, community members depend on the average daily use of firewood by refugees of 1.6kg per person, whereas host communities consume 2.1 kg (about 30% more than refugees). Based on the refugee population in April 2019, the total cooking fuel requirement in the 14 settlements studied is 345,000 metric tonnes of wood per year (dry weight) – in other words, a single immigrant takes down around 20 trees every year. This represents nearly four times the amount of tree growth within the settlements and the 5km buffer zone, which might result in an 8% yearly biomass loss. A biomass loss contributes not only contributes to the degradation of forests and woodlands but also to farmland, soils, and water resources (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The World Bank and The Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2019).

Moreover, as previously remarked, the rapid urban growth in the last ten years required natural resources for the development of the infrastructure. Part of that infrastructure is the

houses that refugees need to build their new homes when settling in the camps. These traditional houses require wood poles, mud bricks, and thatching grasses for their construction, having an important impact on the environment. As Figure 6 demonstrates, these actions promote the persistent decrease of natural vegetation (grassland and forest/shrubs) and a rise in urban and agricultural classes.

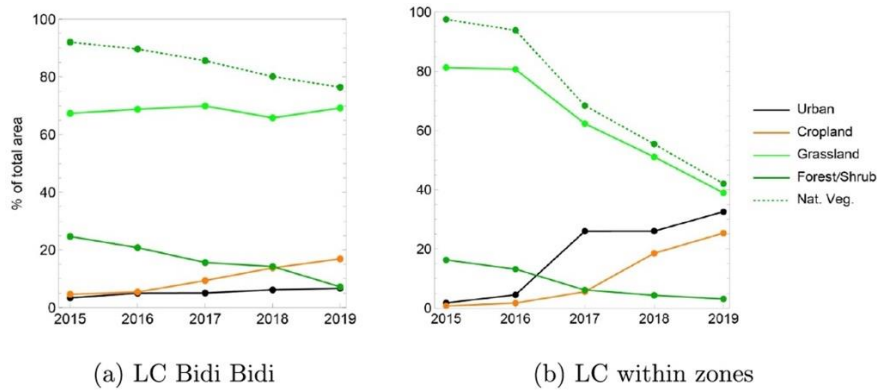


Figure 6: Decrease of natural vegetation at Bidi Bidi settlement between 2015-2019 (Nakalembe, et al., 2022)

An estimated 0.9 m³ of wood is used to construct household structures, plus mud or mud bricks. And while poles and thatching grasses are raw materials, burned bricks are extremely energy inefficient due to their firewood and charcoal consumption. 20 trees are required to generate the equivalent of 5 modest houses made of burnt bricks (Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development & UNDP, 2013). A conflicting situation since the demand for firewood thatching grass has become so high, that supply can't meet the needs due to deforestation and disturbance of natural ecosystems, leading to exorbitant prices (Grosrenaud, et al., 2021).

2. Climate Change

Despite Uganda's tropical climate and consistent rainfall patterns, climate change has shifted the seasons and exacerbated the situation in WN. Climate change has manifested itself by; increased temperatures, long droughts, lower rainfall volumes, unreliable rainfall, and shifted the farming seasons from two to only one. The first season used to have more rain; however, now it is generally only the second season that gets decent rain. Circumstances have also started to have an impact on forest areas. Whereas drought and floods increase erosion of soil destroying vast parts of the forests, pests also thrive during dry seasons. Termites are the most widespread insect damaging Ugandan forests, rapidly destroying enormous sections of forests. Additionally, community crops such as maize, rice, and cassava are being harmed by the dramatic climate changes. As a result, community members frequently start planting in

protected forest areas where erosion is less likely. Yet, fires remain the most serious threat to forestry plantations due to numerous reasons: (I) Governmental institutions lack firefighting trucks and skilled personnel to combat this kind of event, and long-lasting dry seasons, probably caused by climate change, let dry matter accumulate on the ground and promote the rapid spread of fire. (II) Cattle herding tribes deliberately initiate fires to renew mature pastures and destroy the habitat of the tsetse fly, responsible for the trypanosomiasis illness. (III) Hostile communities set fires because plantation companies refused to allow them the cultivation of crops in licensed areas (Herbert & Idris, 2018).

3. Illegal Cutting of Trees

Illegal pit sawing and firewood cutting, as well as charcoal burning, are other drivers of forest degradation. Due to the current conditions of growing demand for wood and land shortages, settlement people are forced to penetrate protected forest areas to meet their daily needs. Clearing savanna woods and forest resources for firewood, cattle grazing, and agricultural lands (Ministry of Water and Environment, 2016). Actions that pose a significant risk and are heavily supervised by government forces. For instance, if it is discovered, these community members are severely penalised, and the planted crops are destroyed. On the other hand, however, timber dealers, “mafias,” are known to abuse and illegally extract natural resources.

Equipped with the knowledge about which activities and environmental constraints are causing deforestation, it can now be transitioned to the analysis of emerging conflicts linked to deforestation.

Through the baseline survey, key informant interviews (KII), and focus group discussions (FGDs), it was found that access to wood is one of the issues creating competition among refugee–host community relations. Considering the scarcity of natural resources, the fact that humanitarian organisations do not provide cooking fuel or roofing material to refugees, and the lack of designated locations where refugees can collect resources, refugees are forced to negotiate with the host community on a daily basis for access to gather firewood and biomass in the surrounding land, as a result of lacking formal land rights granted to the refugees, exposing them to a constant risk of violence, assault, and extortion on an already traumatised population. Consequently, landowners frequently impose their own restrictions on the activities that refugees are permitted to engage in. For example, one landowner said: “Even though they had given the land to refugees, the land is only for settlement and agriculture. Any other activities, like bricklaying, on his land, must first get permission.” This has also been a problem

when NGOs provided seedlings since host community members have frequently protested about refugees planting fruit trees on ‘their’ land without consulting them, while refugees said: “the land is already given to us, and the trees will remain for him.” Some interlocutors even went so far as to say that the land granted to refugees was exclusively for settlement, not agriculture, violating the government policy that grants land for both settlement and agricultural activity in order to foster self-sufficiency. A trigger for hostilities, tensions, and perceptions of insecurity since host communities often deny refugees access to the resources. While there have been ongoing efforts to mitigate the situation, it appears that the problem will remain unresolved unless the land is properly allocated for firewood collecting and/or cooking fuel is delivered to the refugees (Refugee Rights, 2019).

Refugees are still perceived as “temporary immigrants” who cause a massive burden on their natural resources and do not respect the land or care about sustainability. Some members of the host community label the refugees as “insensitive.” Emphasising once again the evident linkages between natural resource concerns on the one hand and host community discontent with unmet expectations and land scarcity on the other. In fact, when confronted with the issue of environmental deterioration, members immediately respond angrily (ACCORD, 2019). A leader highlighted: “The refugees are too many and are increasing. Because grass harvesting and tree cutting have depleted our resources. We don’t mind sharing, but look at our place now. We are going to create a desert”. Further, a refugee said that a Ugandan member of the host community told him: “You refugees, you are being brought here. All services are being provided for you, even food. Why do you cut natural resources? UNHCR should provide you with that.” (Refugee Rights, 2019) So it isn’t a surprise when host representatives stress that unresolved issues between the host communities and the OPM over land use have produced a backlash against the refugee presence within the host communities. Putting refugee communities in a tough situation. Most villages have an agreement that refugees are not permitted to chop certain trees or any trees at all and that they should request the host community’s permission before taking any resource, which is not always followed. Because of limited availability, many refugees pay for firewood or grass in cash or in kind (typically with their food rations). Those who do not have the means, on the other hand, are frequently obliged to steal from the host community’s properties. A host community member said: “The relations between us, the host community, and the refugees are poor because the refugees steal and cut our wood and grass without requesting permission.” (Refugee Rights, 2019) Nevertheless, on many occasions, Ugandans chase away refugees fetching resources. For instance, a 30-year-old refugee woman said: “They chased me when I had already cut grass, but they did not allow

us to take what we had already cut. The man was just scaring us so that we would run.” (Refugee Rights, 2019) Other times, refugees have been physically assaulted. Several refugees, mostly women, have been caught while cutting grass or trees and had some of their tools taken; however, they are typically freed shortly after. According to reports, some children have been beaten by members of the host community. Unfortunately, in certain situations, the violence goes to the extreme. For example, a refugee man was allegedly murdered for burning charcoal after cutting down trees without authorization. Yet, as women are primarily responsible for obtaining such resources, they are also disproportionately subjected to brutality. Several instances of sexual assault against women seeking help outside of the settlement have surfaced. According to interviews, refugee women are afraid of men in host communities due to gender-based violence. In one refugee settlement, for instance, a refugee lady claimed she was raped by a Ugandan man while getting firewood, which was corroborated by other witnesses, plus informed about numerous other occurrences of that sort. Because of hostile reactions by members of the host community, refugees now tend to move in groups to gather resources and are accused of being aggressive by members of the host community. A concern of a host community member stated: “They now move with men and women together. Their men provide protection to their women. So as one person, you can only sometimes stop them from removing wood or grass.” (ACCORD, 2019) Challenges verified by an OPM official, implying that agencies should explore new actions since they have been insufficient thus far and that the dispute between refugees and hosts over firewood would not end unless an alternative is found. Results provide a better understanding and identify a variety of chances for the PAMANA project to assist in persistent disputes through peaceful means, enhancing local communities' current livelihoods.

4.2.1.2 Conflict over Land Access

“Land is not a mere commodity, but an essential element for the realization of many human beings.” (OHCHR, 2022)

Land is defined as “the surface of the ground, the materials underneath, the air above, and all things that are fixed to the soil.” This term encompasses houses, structures, and other improvements, as well as natural resources placed above or under the soil. Land is a critical resource for livelihoods and is intrinsically linked to other natural resource sectors, particularly water. In this way, it is both a critical economic asset and closely correlated to issues of

community identity, history, culture, and livelihood. Land tenure is an important term in land issues. In general terms, it is the set of ties that exist between individuals and groups with respect to land and other resources. Land tenure systems control who has access to which land resources, for how long, and under what conditions. Land tenure is an important term in land issues. In general terms, it is the set of ties that exist between individuals and groups with respect to land and other resources. Lack of safe access to land or ambiguous land rights under any tenure structure can lead to marginalisation and poverty. Therefore it is critical to understand the land tenure structure underlying a natural resource dispute as it can give vital insights into the causes of land conflicts and potential solutions (UNDPA & UNEP, 2015).

Land is a basic requirement for all humans, which is why the ability to access land is a human right. This means that everyone, regardless of income or social class, has the right to access land. A right recognised by international law that encompasses the right to shelter, the right to food, and the right to water. However, while the right to access property may be subject to constraints such as zoning rules or the need to protect the environment, these restrictions must not interfere with the ability of individuals to exercise their fundamental rights. A right that is particularly important for marginalized groups, vulnerable communities, women, people living in poverty, and people who are displaced by conflict or natural disasters. Without the right to access land, refugees fleeing the conflict in South Sudan would be impossible to reconstruct their homes and livelihoods in Northern Uganda. Being a member of a vulnerable group exposes people to prejudice when they want to access land, preventing them from having the same possibilities as others to own or lease property and resulting in litigation. Disagreements are frequently the source of human rights abuses, confrontations, and violence. Importantly, the human rights components of land management are integrally connected to the majority of aspects of social development, peacebuilding, humanitarian aid, and catastrophe prevention and recovery. As a result, it is a fundamental right that all governments should defend (United Nations, 1948) (OHCHR, 2015). Nevertheless, concerns about global food security, climate change, growing urbanisation, and unsustainable resource use have all contributed to a renewed focus on how land is utilised, regulated, and managed; so far, no systematic study has been undertaken to deconstruct the application of international human rights standards to land management in order to protect and promote human rights. As a result, one of the goals of this section will be to facilitate understanding of the land issues that people in Northern Uganda experience from a human rights perspective. Housing, land, and property rights are relevant standards for refugees and displaced individuals that must be acknowledged,

and the need for safeguarding long-term peace, stability, economic development, and justice (OHCHR, 2015).

In fact, there are several articles published by the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa which emphasise the human right of access to land and will be used to compare the existing human rights guidelines with what is actually happening in refugee camps.

1. According to art. 9.2 and art 21 “States shall provide all displaced persons with adequate humanitarian assistance. Regarding housing, the State shall accord to refugees lawfully staying in their territory treatment as favourable as possible and, in any event, not less favourable than that accorded to aliens generally in the same circumstances.” (OHCHR, 2015)

Sadly, reality reveals a totally different scenario. The conditions in the northern Ugandan refugee camps where PAMANA conducted their surveys are precarious and irreconcilable with human rights standards on land access. These camps are located in a highly remote and inaccessible region, most of the land owned under customary tenure by indigenous communities and administered by customary structures, often clans and sub-clans. Since the Ugandan government and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) are in charge of camp administration, they also lease property from host (indigenous) groups and assign incoming refugees to them. However, while individuals and households are entitled to use certain plots, ownership remains with the community. A study carried out by UNHCR reveals that 0% of households have documentation proving ownership or legal occupancy of shelter (UNHCR, 2019). Making it clear that it is impossible for refugees to become self-reliant.

Early refugees from South Sudan were given plots of land to cultivate and build their homes which were as large as 100m x 100m, but as the numbers of refugees increased, plot sizes shrunk to 30m x 30m in some settlements. Since these plots are way too small, not fertile, or simply not suitable to grow crops that enable a family to survive to form its profits, many refugees have to rent land, dig or find other ways of income to sustain the family (Herbert & Idris, 2018). Consequently, of the 80% of households that reported using their shelter plot for cultivation, 91% stated an insufficiency of the land to provide food for the household. As a result, 13% of the households reported accessing land outside their shelter (UNHCR, 2019). In plain text, it means that refugees do not have direct land rights, but they are authorized to utilise the property for farming and other purposes. Actually, there are no specific laws or regulations at all regarding the land rights of refugees, giving the host community the freedom to control what refugees are allowed to do on their lands. As the Assistant Secretary of State for

Population, Refugees, and Migration, Eric P. Schwartz said: “In the case of Uganda, it’s not the United States, it’s not the United Nations, it’s not the Ugandan government, it’s the host communities, that are deciding the rules of the game.” Accordingly, several issues were reported about the restrictions related to the use of land. For example, the landowners demand a commission on commercial activities undertaken on the land, such as farming, brick making, and charcoal burning, including informal agreements between the refugees and landowners, including payment of rent and sharing of the agricultural produce. For instance, some refugees have commitments to give a specified percentage of the crop harvested as an in-kind payment for using the land. Refugees, in response, quoted that: “Land tenure period varies, and most agreements are verbal.” Most refugees avoid keeping livestock due to land shortages. Most landlords prefer that tenants cultivate non-perennial crops or plants with a short maturing period to avoid ‘locking’ of the land and ensure short-term land agreements with the users. Most of the agreements are short-term (1–3 years). Further, activities related to livestock are also very conflicting. Refugees are provided with minimal access to grazing areas in most settlements. The scarcity of land for grazing is a significant challenge for pastoralists. Therefore, most refugees only keep livestock such as pigs, goats, and poultry that do not require extensive grazing areas and avoid conflicts over stray animals destroying crops in the host communities or neighbourhoods.

In addition, a refugee leader highlighted that “The OPM lobbies for land from the host communities. The land tenure system is communal or customary tenure. There are communities that want to give land when approached by the OPM, but others refuse. For example, there are areas that were previously settled by the refugees during the previous displacement, but when the refugees returned, they declined to offer their land. The land belongs to the people, and OPM must negotiate with the landowners... OPM often negotiates for land through the district authorities...” (Khasalamwa-Mwandha, 2021)

As a result, many refugees see themselves forced to sell their belongings, including livestock, to buy food. The constraints reported above demonstrate the dilemmas that refugees encounter in creating meaningful and sustainable livelihoods, wherefore refugees call for urgent actions to address the critical situation of land at Bidi Bidi settlement in northern Uganda (Khasalamwa-Mwandha, 2021).

2. Art. 4 further states, “Everyone has the right not to be forcibly evicted from his or her housing, land and property and shall be protected against arbitrary displacement.” (OHCHR, 2015)

Over the years, however, there have been many government decisions to relocate refugee newly-established settlements. In response, the affected communities highly protested as this once again puts them in a vulnerable position. In February 2017, for example, several thousand South Sudanese refugees in Uganda protested against relocation to the West Nile region. The justification for the relocation was the overpopulation in the previous settlements; nevertheless, refugees were concerned about the new site's distance from necessary facilities and the possibility of greater overcrowding. The administration responded by stating it is dedicated to ensuring that the new settlement is appropriately prepared to satisfy the requirements of the refugees. Tensions were further heightened when it decided to restrict its border to fresh arrivals from South Sudan. The Ugandan soldiers stopped a group of several hundred South Sudanese refugees from crossing the border in February, culminating in a multi-day standoff. An event that underscores the challenges that Uganda's government is having in controlling the influx of South Sudanese refugees, as well as the rising tensions between the two groups (UNDPA & UNEP, 2015).

Acknowledging that issues regarding land are highly emotional and contentious topics, it is no wonder that feelings of bitterness and insecurity are arising. Based on that background, the main conflicts will be stressed out.

Unmet Expectations

Most host community members offered their land freely and without monetary reward. Their propensity to do so was influenced by their earlier personal experiences with conflict and displacement. However, many certainly envisioned significant financial and development returns in exchange for providing land to migrants. Taking into account that, in any host community members live in extreme poverty, they feel abandoned by both the government and development organizations. A refugee observed that "they often complain that they have been here suffering, all this time, and that nothing was being done to help them." Their past relocation experience produced a sense of solidarity, but it also made them aware of some of the opportunities that could potentially result from refugee presence. And even though many members of the host community appreciate advantages such as; access to schools, health centres, water points, and markets that were established thanks to the refugee presence, for some, the negative effects overrule the improvements. Due to the arrival of refugees, a huge amount of natural resources such as; crops, livestock, trees, and grassland were destroyed during the settlement preparation process, wherefore the host community was promised

compensation and financial support. In each case, the assistance was either not received at all or was far less than promised. “Land was given out free of charge; however, they stated that compensation will be provided once the refugees have settled,” remarked a local elected chairman. Further, several respondents expressed concern that host community members were not receiving the 30% of services intended for them in development initiatives under the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) framework approach. These host communities evidently had high expectations for what this 30% would entail and were unaware that food distribution and other types of humanitarian help were not included in this agreement. Consequently, the host community often feels cheated and perceives that benefits are given exclusively to refugees. A host community member highlighted, “why are houses built for persons with special needs (PSN) in the refugee community while the same was not done for vulnerable people in the host communities?” Others argued that despite their food insecurity and offering their lands to host refugees, Ugandans are excluded from food distribution. Previously, some Ugandans residing near the settlements profited from food distribution by registering as refugees, but this has significantly decreased since a verification campaign in 2018, which was launched to address such erroneous Ugandan registrations as well as (other) corrupt activities (Refugee Rights, 2019). These inequalities, empty promises, and unrealised expectations create further resentment and negatively affect host-refugee relations. While the host community was initially welcoming, the events that followed exacerbated the host community's hatred against the "intruders."

Customary Nature of Land Rights

The Bidi Bidi communities are situated on Aringa community land, which is regulated by traditional laws. In general, community land is controlled by the clan that has a historical claim to the region. Under this system, each class has a designated “land chief” who speaks on behalf of the community on issues concerning common land. Because the land that formed the Bidi Bidi settlements was mostly unsettled, communal, and underutilised, some underlying issues over land usage rights between people or sub-clan borders have arisen as a result of the refugees’ presence. Several interviewees, for example, mentioned a border conflict between two sub-counties, which is also the basis of a boundary dispute between two sub-clans. Because the two sub-counties and their separate land chiefs cannot agree on who has the power to authorise development projects, the execution of relief programs, including the construction of a health facility, has been challenging (UNHCR, 2018).

Cultural Beliefs and Practices

The second problem concerns cultural links and traditions. The host community requested funding from OPM in order to perform land blessing ceremonies. It took a long time to find the money. When it was all set up, clan chiefs complained that there wasn't enough to buy the bull and other needs for the ceremonial rite. According to an Aringa clan land chief: "Sacrifice was required because that las was for hunting ground. Culturally here, when you hunt and get meat, that meat is eaten by the whole clan. Now that meat will be no more. Secondly, there are wild animals dangerous to human life. So the spirits need a blessing from landowners to appease spirits. Because spirit can come in the form of wild animals so that when these foreigners come, nothing will happen to them or else we will be blamed as the hosts." (UNHCR, 2018) Traditional practices are also performed to prevent refugees from cultivating land that has been assigned to them and relocating to the newly assigned plots that are several kilometers away from the communities, requiring a half-day hike simply to get there.

Land Cultivation

Many refugees, in order to avoid these half-day walks to the newly assigned plots, made side arrangements with host community members for farming land. These side arrangements primarily involve versions of informal share-cropping or other forms of informal rent. Nevertheless, numerous refugees claimed that they did not use the newly cultivated land because they were afraid of the host community, who had made it clear they had already given the refugees enough land. Many people reported receiving threats while working in the new land. When the problem was brought up with the OPM, one refugee stated: "They advised us to be closer to the host and become friends with them." Someone else reported she had neighbours who were allowed to farm on their land by the host community but were chased away after harvest season. Numerous different refugees claimed that the host community demanded money or a portion of their products as compensation. "All of us were assigned several plots for farming," one recalled. However, when we went farming, the host family refused. They said that this is where they raise their livestock. They explicitly said that "no one is crossing to host land. They are welcome to purchase from us if they want. But how can we buy?" While some host community and local officials questioned refugee claims that they were threatened if they did not grow on the given property, some land chiefs publicly confirmed that they did not allow refugees to cultivate the land (UNHCR, 2018).

4.2.1.3 *Conflict over Cattle Herding*

Conflicts over cattle herding are closely related to previously examined conflicts over land access. The issue of animals straying onto agricultural land is especially pertinent now since certain members of the host community are beginning to complain about a lack of land for grazing, hunting, and agriculture. Some claim that they can no longer take their animals to the watering holes where they used to go because they would have to traverse refugee land, perhaps destroying refugee crops. Others claim that “refugee animals intrude on our property and damage our crops.” Actually, both sides expressed concern over stray cattle destroying crops in communities. Some refugees said that they did not sow seeds given to them because they would be eaten or destroyed by stray livestock from the host community.

This has been especially problematic in settlements with numerous refugees from cattle-keeping groups who moved their animals from South Sudan to Uganda without authorization, forcing many host communities to file complaints to the OPM. Angry host groups murdered numerous cows that had ruined their crops in one refugee community. In other circumstances, livestock has been “arrested” until the owner makes arrangements for compensation for agricultural damage. This might exacerbate migrants’ discontent since they consider the monetary compensation requested is exorbitant. According to a local official, “this has caused conflict and confusion among the refugees, who believe that the host community is stealing their animals and fraudulently extorting money from them.” Both sides have made charges of animal theft. Refugees have gone in groups on occasion to collect their detained animals. In a context that is already conflict-vulnerable, this situation further sparks violence inside some refugee camps.

Furthermore, numerous international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have started delivering small animals to refugees without being conflict-sensitive and taking into account which problems that they may cause. In fact, the OPM merely provided refugees with a plot of land for habitation. These incoherences make it normal that host communities are angry, saying “we gave land for people, and not for animals, and now they are damaging our local farms.” Moreover, a host community leader complained that international NGOs “gave too many animals to refugees, while the locals didn’t get any.” (Refugee Rights, 2019)

4.2.1.4 *Conflict over Water*

Water insecurity is emerging all over the world as the population expands, economies grow, and climate change starts drastically affecting the hydrological cycle. In Uganda, the growing water insecurity combined with other societal stressors culminates in conflict or exacerbates migration (Gleick, et al., 2020).

Proceeding with the analysis of the conflict situation in northern Ugandan refugee camps, the range of security challenges concerning freshwater resources will be examined. Therefore, and to offer a comprehensive introduction to the factors and triggers that lead to conflict over water, first, the key related terms related will be defined:

1. Water Security

Security as a term has different meanings and connotations to different communities and highly depends on the context we are addressing. In relation to the context in which this thesis is focusing, *water security* will be defined as a population's ability to: safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socioeconomic development; protect against water pollution and water-related disasters; and preserve ecosystems, which are essential for clean water availability and other ecosystem services (Gleick & Iceland, 2018).

2. Water Stress

Water stress is calculated by comparing total water demands to the renewable surface and groundwater supply. Higher levels suggest enhanced customer competition. Values ranging from 40% to 80% indicate “high” water stress. Values greater than 80% imply “very high” water stress (Hofste, et al., 2019).

3. Water Scarcity

Malin Falkenmark et al. (1989) created water scarcity metrics that reveal that areas with rainfall of 500 to 1,000 cubic meters per person per year ($m^3/p/yr$) suffer chronic water scarcity, and regions with less than 500 $m^3/p/yr$ face fundamental constraints to human development and well-being (Falkenmark, et al., 1989). Unfortunately, water scarcity is becoming a major challenge to humanity, increasing the risks and incidences around the world. Also, nonviolent water insecurity appears to be developing as a result of persistent drought, causing rural livelihood losses and destabilising migration (Gleick, et al., 2020). Therefore, water scarcity has become one of the most serious risks to human existence and well-being. Wutich and Brewer, therefore, developed the resource scarcity theoretical framework, which connects

understanding of vulnerabilities to, and consequences of, water insecurity. For instance, water insecurity is influenced by socioeconomic variables such as poverty and access to education, as well as social issues such as unequal gender norms, which is why ecological approaches alone are insufficient to explain community vulnerability or resilience to resource insecurity. Situations that impact already vulnerable communities, such as the refugeeed in Uganda, increase the levels of depression. In many studies, it was found that resource insecurity (water) and well-being among refugees, particularly among refugee adolescents and youth, were connected with depression among the refugee community in Uganda (Logie, et al., 2021).

As a result, water has become a conflict trigger or root cause when there is a disagreement over control of water or water systems, or where economic or physical access to water, or lack of water, triggers violence. As Figure 7 very clearly demonstrates, the incidences of violence associated with water resources and water systems have drastically increased in the last decade.

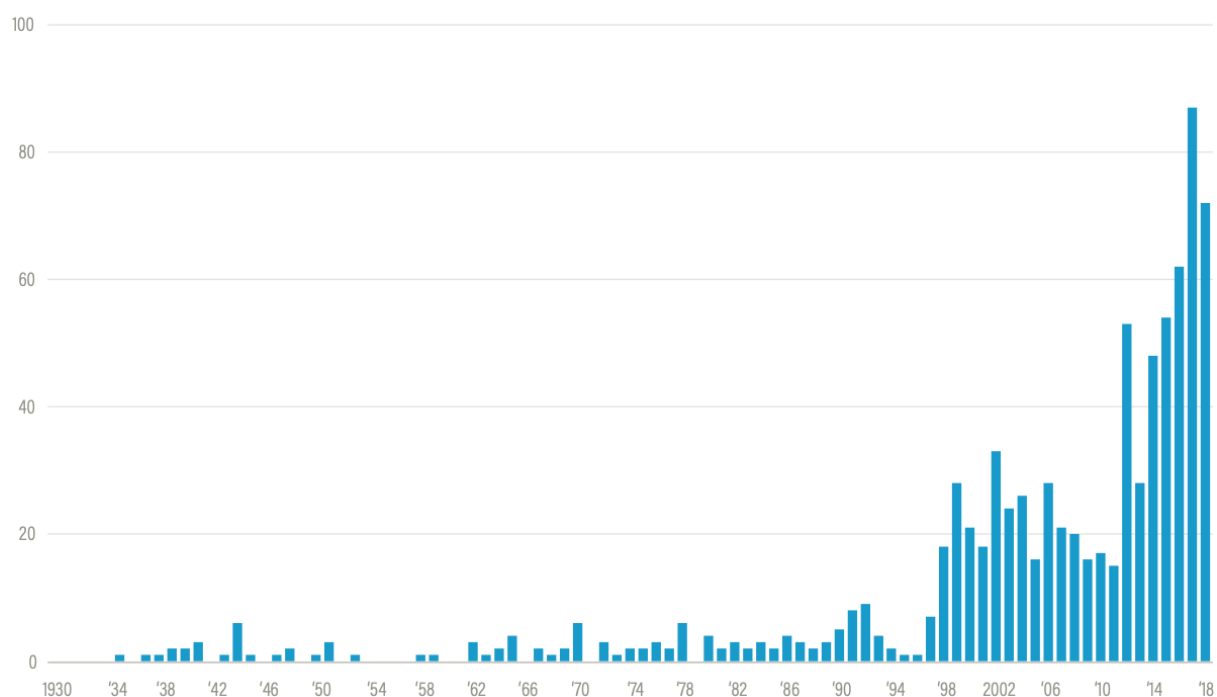


Figure 7: The Trend in Incidences of Violence Associated with Water Resources and Water Systems, 1930 to 2018 (Gleick, et al., 2020)

Based on this, the triggers of water insecurity, water stress, and water shortage in northern Ugandan refugee communities will be examined, being it very important to understand that all the triggers are interconnected and go hand in hand. In addition, this analysis will be used as a foundation to understand and analyse how water becomes a trigger for conflicts in the settlements.

Conflicts over Water Scarcity due to Climate Change

As already highlighted in the last chapters, climate change has a severe effect on all kinds of natural resources, including the supply of water. Being Uganda is a tropical region, water supply has not been a concern in the past; nevertheless, significant changes in recent years have resulted in decreased rain seasons and increased dry seasons, heavy rain and flooding, severe droughts, and rising temperatures. There are numerous direct natural consequences in northern Uganda's refugee camps: (I) As temperatures rise due to climate change, the amount of water required to irrigate agriculture is expected to rise due to higher rates of evaporation and crop transpiration; (II) groundwater levels are expected to fall; (III) rivers and lakes are expected to dry out; (IV) local ecosystems are expected to collapse; (V) destruction of natural habitat further impairs surface water and groundwater quality; and (VI) erosion and desertification (Gleick, et al., 2020).

Climate change's influence on water availability in Uganda has had a substantial impact on the lives of the country's refugees. According to one study, climate change might lower the amount of water available for home usage by up to 50% by 2050. And already in Uganda, drought-related water scarcity is one of the most significant threats to Uganda's rural population. Every year, around 4.5 million people (or 10% of the population) are hit by water scarcity, especially in Uganda's south-eastern and north-eastern regions. Conditions have caused crop failures, and floods have destroyed crops and infrastructure, which leads to food scarcity, making it hard to meet basic needs challenging and has resulted in higher levels of starvation and sickness (Joseph, et al., 2020).

Respondents in the baseline survey reported that the access to water had decreased due to a reduction in the groundwater during dry years, increasing the length of time households spend collecting water. Communities informed that they often spend more than an hour collecting water and therefore are considered a vulnerability. Since water is gathered more than once, they have to avoid doing activities such as; domestic jobs, agricultural labour, and family care or, in many cases, children sacrificing their education. Taking longer to fetch water indicates water insecurity, which can lead to food insecurity and worse health conditions in households (Joseph, et al., 2020).

Conflicts over Water Scarcity due to Increased Demand

On top of the effects of climate change, the population growth in the refugee camps has increased the demand for water. Challenging circumstances have made it difficult for the

government to provide water to the camps. As a result, many refugees have had to rely on shared wells or other sources of water (Logie, et al., 2021). As already seen in the previous chapters, sharing resources often becomes a challenge in such a diverse context. A situation that also applied in relation to water access. The increasing influx of migrants has caused congestion (e.g., long lines) at the insufficient water stations, increasing competition for water supply. The host community identifies that the water scarcity and lengthier wait times at water sources have led to refugee-induced environmental stress and enhanced the intergroup tension promoting small-scale community violence. Concerns that already have materialized in violent incidents (Ken & Yuki, 2022). Often, refugees and Ugandans accuse each other of attempting to bypass water line-ups, resulting in periodic clashes amongst individuals, notably women and children, who are frequently in charge of collecting water. A refugee kid from the Rhino Camp refugee community described the situation as follows: “I have witnessed incidents at the water point. The truck comes and pours water, and everybody comes and fights to get water first. Everybody fights. They fear the water will get finished before they get what they need. It happens once a day.” (Refugee Rights, 2019) In one case, that situation escalated and led to the assault of various refugees and hosts, finally being murdered over water (Ken & Yuki, 2022).

Conflicts over Water Scarcity due to Contamination

Access to clean water is a privilege that most of the refugee community lacks. The infrastructures in the camps are being improved; however, the conditions are still precarious, and droughts or floods aren't the best contributions to the needed improvement. This lack of clean water and sanitation leads to diseases like cholera, typhoid, and waterborne which are commonly found in the refugee camps, with major consequences for their health. Another dangerous condition is malnutrition which can directly be traced back to water scarcity. During the dry season, food shortages are common, and in the wet season, floods can destroy crops and contaminate water supplies (Gleick, et al., 2020). Latrine flooding, for example, might contaminate water supplies or agricultural crops. This is certainly relevant when dangerous products, such as batteries, are dumped off in latrines. Residents interviewed at focus group discussions indicated that because of living far away from the borehole and due to the charged commission, they collect water from the river. Some residents who did collect water from the nearby stream reported getting sick (Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development & UNDP, 2013).

Thanks to the deep analysis of the reasons why communities are experiencing environmental degradation and how the effects contribute to communal conflicts, it will now be looked into how the PAMANA project, based on the carried out research, designed its conciliation strategies and techniques for the facilitation of transformative conflict tools.

5. Conciliation Strategies

Since this thesis focuses on the fundamental peacebuilding approach of the HDP nexus approach, applied in the PAMANA project, the conflict analysis that was carried out and presented in the last sections will serve as the elementary foundation needed to present which conflicts were addressed and how the methodology of mediation helped in conflict transformation between the stakeholders involved in NR conflict in the refugee settlements in northern Uganda.

While natural resources in the context of northern Uganda have become the source of conflict, they may also be an effective means for collaboration. It is, therefore, the aim of the peacebuilding approach in the PAMANA project to develop tools that highlight that, in fact, all stakeholders seek sustainable and peaceful use of natural resources since they traverse borders and frequently bind divided parties together (Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development & UNDP, 2013).

5.1 Conflict Transformation

The reason why this thesis works and is based on the relatively new conflict transformation term is that the frequently used “conflict resolution” approach didn’t adequately include the constructive outcome that a conflict can have and didn’t focus on the long-term objectives which are so important in this project. Conflict resolution principally focuses on preventing violence and eliminating or minimising sources of distress, but it fails to address the core problems of a conflict. Conflict transformation, on the other hand, seeks to address disputes in the long term (Dhialulhaq, et al., 2014). It includes the recognition that dialogues must be continuous, an ongoing process that takes place not just during the violence but also before (as a preventative measure) and after (as peacebuilding). John Paul Lederach, a leading conflict transformation scholar, advocates for mediation centered on a “genuine sense of

participation, responsibility and ownership” shared by communities at all levels of power, ranging from grassroots interpersonal to the most elite national levels (Lederach, 1998).

On that premise and through the context and conflict analysis carried out, the most conflict-sensitive way to approach the ongoing NR resource conflict in the settlement with a long-term perspective was the implementation of mediation processes and peace dialogues between the involved stakeholders.

5.2 Mediation

“To speak well and to listen carefully is no easy task at times of high emotions and deep conflict. People’s very identity is under threat.” (Lederach, 2022)

Mediation is a technique for resolving a dispute or conflict. It differs from unaccompanied or guided talks between individuals purely for the purpose of improving their relationships; mediation seeks to foster a greater understanding or acceptance or solve an issue in which those engaged are not necessarily at odds or in substantial disagreement. It is a goal-oriented procedure that assists disputants with substantial differences in reaching tangible agreements and outcomes (Moore, 2014). Mediation has been applied in numerous regions of the world to resolve various conflict types (e.g., environmental, business, familial, and international problems), yet it is not a universally applicable approach. Each mediation process can be carefully customised and conflict-sensitive. Previous studies on community-outsider conflicts over forests in Asia have revealed that mediation is one of the most powerful and accessible techniques for conflict transformation (Dhialulhaq, et al., 2014). The secret to the success of mediation processes is offering spaces for listening, expression, tension defusing, dialogue, and of knowing each other. One of the noble purposes of mediation is to bring the antagonists together and foster the needed environment for a dialogue in which a common ground can be found. As a result, it's a technique that's especially valuable to transform fixed postures, unlocking zero-sum positions and enabling the individuals involved in the conflict to comprehend, recognise and empathise with one another. It helps to maximise mutual benefits and reframe conflict, achieving more possibilities for collaboration and building constructive relationships beyond communal, ethnic, national, or regional barriers (UNDPA & UNEP, 2015). In the short term, the aim of mediation might be bound to increasing awareness of a conflict and, if feasible, finding a solution. However, the most critical part is to focus on medium and long-term objectives. Medium and long goals aim to achieve; promoting social

peace, securing land rights, preventing conflicts, initiating land reform, learning to improve land conflict management frameworks and mechanisms; improving living conditions and productivity, initiate a behaviour change process, and so on (UN-Habitat, 2013).

To achieve these long-term improvements between conflicting parties, guiding principles and key considerations must be followed when mediating a conflict. The following section will introduce them and highlight how PAMANA made sure to implement them in the development of the mediation process.

1. Understand the Context

As the HDP nexus is a fundamental pillar of PAMANA the project, so is conflict sensitivity. One of the main reasons why the mediation technique was decided on as a peacebuilding tool is its flexibility. Each mediation set-up must be tailor-made, calling upon creativity and a deep analysis of the context of the peace process. On this account, coordination mechanisms need to be tailored to the unique setting, taking into account the different mediation parties engaged and the issues at hand (OSCE, 2016). Further, understanding the core cause of the conflict, the interplay of natural resources with other conflict drivers, the larger political economy, and the entry points for a mediated solution are fundamental (UNDPA & UNEP, 2015).

Aware of the critical role that these factors play when implementing a mediation process, the highly time-consuming process of conducting the Baseline Survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KII), which were presented and analysed in the last chapters, were a must. Moreover, depending on the natural resources, conflict over; forest, land, cattle herding, or water generates multiple forms of conflict, which require different approaches to mediation. Factors and characteristics that were carefully taken into account when designing the mediation process to ensure its functionality and success when dealing with uncertainty (UNDPA & UNEP, 2015).

2. Inclusivity

Why is inclusivity so essential in mediation? It is fundamental because it is the participants who determine the structure, dynamics, and, eventually, result of the peace process. That means that if the needs and interests of all stakeholders, particularly disadvantaged populations, the process will automatically fail to address the core causes of the conflict. And for instance, the agreement's legitimacy is not only by the primary conflict parties but by all involved stakeholders (OSCE, 2016). Consequently, a precise and nuanced mapping of players and interests is required for effective mediation. Only after being thoroughly aware of the complex

network of relationships among natural resource actors and their interests should mediators engage in the interactive phases of the mediation process. The analysis should take into account both direct and indirect participants at various levels of the conflict dynamic, as well as their diverse interests (UNDPA & UNEP, 2015).

In the PAMANA project, beneficiaries and households were interviewed and questioned about the ongoing dispute over natural resources during the Baseline Survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KII). Thanks to the close collaboration with the local structures, the project was able to develop mediation processes that involve all conflict stakeholders.

3. The Role of the Mediator

The one who is in charge of how interactions proceed and guides the whole mediation process is the mediator, who, however, has no power in decision-making is the mediator. A mediator is a neutral third party who supports the parties and follows the entire process of negotiation to ensure non-violent and transformative communication, helping them find an appropriate solution for both parties. And what is key is that the person must be impartial and accepted by the parties (UN-Habitat, 2013). It's the very crux of the matter as, without this, the whole process could be seen as a sham. However, in the context of northern Ugandan settlements in which community members have been let down so often by empty promises, have lost faith in projects that act without self-interest, have been exposed to corruption, and don't even trust "their own shadows," trust building is a great challenge. In fact, it became clear that the mediator couldn't have a connection with any of the nationalities involved in the conflict. Meaning that external mediators were needed for the process, plus a long period of intense communication, aiming at clarifying the mediators' objectives; eventually, all the parties agreed to go to mediation was needed.

In consideration of the complex political and intercommunal relationships, the flexibility that the mediation mythology offers was key. It offers many different peacebuilding techniques and approaches to deal with complex technical and scientific information common to resource disputes, such as non-violent dialogues (UNDPA & UNEP, 2015).

To unwind the very tense situation, dialogue workshops were set up to bring together participants from different 'sides,' breaking down stereotypes, broadening perspectives, developing common understandings and aspirations, and identifying possibilities for parallel or joint action. In the case of PAMANA, it was intentionally decided that these meetings should cover interesting though general topics which are not related to the conflict. A common interest

serves as the foundation for an indirect encounter, just as ‘training’ serves as an entry point or vehicle for discourse (Francis, 2002).

Mediation has been used on many occasions to address natural resource challenges and has been proven to be particularly effective in resolving resource conflicts involving unsustainable resource usage, clashing demands for resource use, or revenue and benefit sharing (UNDPA & UNEP, 2015). Likewise, also the PAMANA project can report its first successes and outcomes from its implementation. In response, the next section will be outlined which steps were taken to implement the mediation methodology in the settlement. However, it should be noted that the project is still in its early stages since the previous three months have been extensively spent carrying out the Baseline Survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KII), for a coherent context and conflict analysis. The PAMANA project is currently in the pre-mediation, allowing the first gasp into how and what has been implemented so far.

5.2.1 Implementation of the Mediation Process in the PAMANA Project

Each mediation sets off with a preparation (premediation phase). Preparatory activities are as crucial as the mediation process itself (Dhialulhaq, et al., 2014).

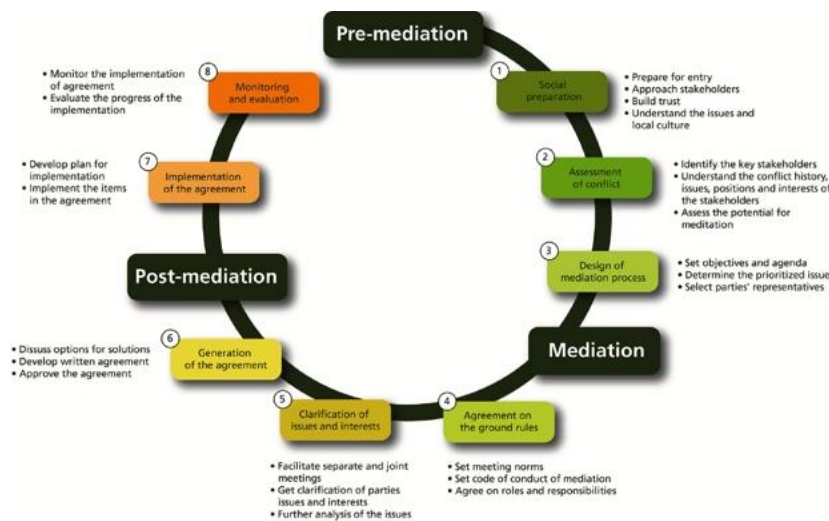


Figure 8: The process of conflict mediation (Dhialulhaq, et al., 2014)

As pictured in Figure 8, carrying out a mediation entails multiple procedures. PAMANA is currently designing its mediation process, soon being able to carry out the mediation. The process so far has taken four months, with the objective to get to know all the parties involved, build trust, build relations and understand the culture and conflict issues,

identifying the involved stakeholders and setting the objectives depending on the conflict which is being addressed. Therefore, the analysis that has been carried out and presented in the last sections was crucial. Tools such as the Baseline Survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KII), where necessary, to get an overview on which are the current tension among the communities and start building trust and a relationship with the members. Moreover, the close collaboration helped to set the objectives that the members wanted to achieve through the mediation.

For a better understanding of how the process has been implemented so far, the example of the refugee community in Lobule (Bibi Bidi refugee settlement) will be used.

After the Baseline Survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KII), the community highlighted that their main concern was the tensions with the host community regarding cattle herding. The community expressed that they had experienced conflicts due to animals trespassing the land of the host community and destroying their crops. In reference, it was first listened to the perspectives of both parties. Refugees stated that the land provided to them isn't big enough, and host communities said, "why should we also suffer under the difficulties that the refugees are facing?" While engaging with them, they were asked to create a list of; (I) what they would need, (II) which change would help them, (III) what they think could be a possible solution for the conflict, (IV) what they could offer and (V) which their objectives and expected goals are from the mediation. All these engagements at the beginning were carried out separately. Refugees said: (I) They would need a bigger land, (II) defined properties where their animals can graze, (III) reaching an agreement with the host community for using their land, (IV) higher control over their animals, (V) improved understanding with the host community. On the other hand, hosts stated: (I) Refugee animals to keep away from their crops, (II) official policies of cattle herding, (III) refugees controlling their animals (IV) certain parts of land in exchange for money, (V) fewer crops being destroyed. Information that provides an important objective overview of both positions. As can be seen, there were even linkages between both positions, making it very feasible to find a solution through the mediation process. Moreover, those insights have been key to the design of the mediation. The next step was, as mentioned earlier, to engage both parties in peaceful dialogues. The aim was to reduce the tensions in a context in which they could meet each other on natural ground and talk about general topics such as; education, health, women empowerment, and new economic opportunities. What can be highlighted is that during the first meeting, people felt uncomfortable to be sharing a space with their "rivals." However, it was beautiful to observe that as the meetings went on, these tensions somehow cleared, and

people started being engaged in the conversation, even finding that they had common interests and were sharing a similar perspective. Moreover, at the end of the day, many understood that even though they had different backgrounds, they were facing similar situations and challenges. As a facilitator of these dialogues, it was also evident to see that the trust and belief in the work grew. People started to develop positive feelings towards each other, which is a ground-breaking step forward.

Based on that achievement, PAMANA is currently developing the structure and agenda for the mediation process in which finally substance and terms of the agreement will be addressed. This agenda will be based on the key findings of the last months presented in this thesis. Nevertheless, mediation does not necessarily end when an agreement is reached. In fact, it is the aim of PAMANA to keep up the peace dialogues among the communities so that the safe space where people come together to address different topics keeps strengthening their relationships. It is expected that the mediation itself will take place at the beginning of November 2022 as the agendas for the different mediation processes, in total, 22, have to be established. However, in general terms, it is expected that the outcomes will be positive and create a sustainable and more peaceful coexistence among the community members.

6. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to examine how conflict transformative methodologies such as mediation can be implemented in challenging situations of natural resource conflict to mitigate the tension and contribute to peaceful coexistence.

Northern Uganda is the third-largest refugee-hosting nation in the world, reporting 1.4 million refugees in the last two and a half years. Events causing a drastic nationwide conjuncture in all spheres, including the environment. Specifically, the influx of refugees in West Nile has exacerbated a range of ongoing environmental impacts such as; land degradation, woodland loss, and water scarcity. The results are meso and micro-level conflicts over access to and control over natural resources and problems associated with poor natural resource management. Through acknowledging the challenging situations that communities face, the Austrian Development Agency cooperating with Caritas Switzerland, brought the PAMANA project to life. By being engaged in the project as an intern, this thesis, therefore, focused on the work which had been carried out so far. For a coherent overview, at first, the principles, fundamentals, and objectives of the project were outlined.

Confident and convinced of the potential and positive impact the methodologies will bring, the PAMANA project established its structure and strategies based on the HDP nexus and its three guiding principles; humanitarian assistance, development support, and peacebuilding. Even though all principles are fundamental for successful long-term improvement, this thesis exclusively highlighted the work carried out in the peacebuilding area. Guided by the key research question of how the beneficiaries will achieve an improved ability to manage natural resource conflicts by peaceful means, the strategies and methodologies of PAMANA were developed. To address this objective, this thesis highlighted the tools that were used for the development of a conflict-sensitive approach, addressing the urgent situation while meeting the needs and concerns of the community members. In response, the process of how the Baseline Survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KII) were pursued was extensively presented. Data that enabled the project to carry out a context and conflict analysis in the refugee settlements (Bidi Bidi and Rhino Camp). What was identified by the context analysis is that it is an intertwined and complex situation of historical, social, economic, political, and environmental circumstances that brings its communities to the brink of extinction. South Sudan and Uganda have had a transcendental history of war and migration, creating significant instability, fear, insecurity, and hatred. Nevertheless, the shared background has created a sense of solidarity for one another, wherefore Uganda is engaged in supporting the communities experiencing the war in South Sudan.

People who arrive in the setup settlements have experienced trauma, are thrown into a new environment, often separated from their families and all their belongings, and have to build up a new life from scratch. As if that weren't enough, refugees' conditions and policies are hardly in accordance with human rights policies. In fact, what became evident through the research, is that one of the main reasons for these inhumane circumstances is the significant environmental degradation. In response, the conflict analysis framework was used to understand why environmental degradation is so severe, how it affects the communities and their relationship, and finally leads to intercommunal conflicts. It was crucial to conduct this analysis to understand how an alteration in the availability of natural resources, essential for the communities survival, can become the source of conflict. As a result, the natural resources on which the communities rely the most were investigated: wood (forests), land, animals, and water. The scarcity is primarily caused by climate change and the area's rapid and devastating urbanisation due to the massive influx of refugees. Since a significant part of the impacts can be traced back to the arrival of refugees, the host community often blames them for their difficult situation. In essence, it was revealed that the challenging policies and conditions to

which refugees are exposed: too small plots of 30m x 30m for self-sufficiency, no legal rights frameworks, and insufficient humanitarian support, stemmed from structural and direct violence with the host communities and the involved governmental institutions.

Equipped with that fundamental overview of the circumstances and emerging sources of conflict, the PAMANA project could transition to the design of the conflict transformative tools that would be implemented to mitigate this tension and promote solutions and, therefore, more peaceful coexistence among the members. After thoroughly examining the different available conciliation strategies, the PAMANA project decided to apply the methodology, which is mainly applied in conflict transformation, mediation. As presented in this thesis, mediation is a conflict-sensitive and efficient tool that has often been used to resolve natural resource conflicts. For its implementation, the PAMANA project worked in close collaboration with the beneficiaries to develop a mediation agenda tailored to their concerns and needs, a process carried out among twenty-two communities. Since that process is highly time-consuming and has been given a lot of attention, the mediation is still in its preparation phase. As part of that premediation phase, communal dialogues were carried out, including all the involved stakeholders in the conflict, with amazing results. As aimed, some of the tensions and stereotypes that community members had faded, and the substantially needed fundament of trust was slowly built. A first success that allows a positive outcome of the mediation to be expected.

Finally, the findings suggest that the mediation process implemented by PAMANA will meet the objectives of transforming the ongoing natural resource conflicts and finding mutually agreed solutions. So far, it has facilitated the creation of a conducive environment for multi-stakeholder dialog, built trust among the conflict parties, improved relationships, and committed to long-term cooperation. The parties also believed that a successful mediation would improve social, economic, and environmental conditions, as the ongoing conflict hindered their development. However, peacebuilders should consider that mediation is not a silver bullet and that mediation alone is not enough to deal with the root causes of conflict, particularly structural inequalities. This raises the question of how to set conditions to ensure that mediation can achieve its potential to transform conflict. These issues must be addressed if we aim to promote mediation as an effective tool in transforming forest and land conflict. One major obstacle to achieving transformation is creating meaningful changes at the policy level to address the underlying causes of conflicts. This is especially important since, as seen throughout the thesis, many forest and land conflicts are policy driven. An effort that will

require long-term engagement and trust-building with the government as policymakers and NGOs at sub-national and national levels. (Dhialhaq, et al., 2014)

Even though it takes a lot of courage, time and we as peacebuilders will often hit walls, questioning whether what we are doing even makes sense and if there is a solution to that conflict, it is vital to keep in mind what Saul Alinsky once said: “Change means movement. Movement means friction. Only in the frictionless vacuum of a non-existent abstract world can movement or change occur without that abrasive friction of conflict.” (Alinsky, 1971) And if everything is possible in this world, why shouldn't we achieve that paradigm shift change with one of the most powerful tools, PEACE?

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