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Intrastate Conflict in South Sudan: Challenges of Governance

Humanitarian Actors and Peace Support Operations: A Case of South Sudan

Effective Strategies for Responding to Contemporary Conflicts in Eastern Africa

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Foreword

The International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) is a research and training institution focusing on capacity building at the strategic, operational and tactical levels within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and has evolved to be the regional Centre of Excellence for the African Standby Force (ASF) in Eastern Africa. IPSTC addresses the complexities of contemporary UN/AU integrated Peace Support Operations by describing the actors and multi-dimensional nature of these operations. The research conducted covers a broad spectrum ranging from conflict prevention through management to post-conflict reconstruction. The Centre has made considerable contribution in training and research on peace support issues in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa through design of training curriculum, field research and publication of Occasional Papers and Issue Briefs. The Occasional Papers are produced annually, while the Issues Briefs are produced quarterly. The Issue Briefs are an important contribution to the Vision and Mission of IPSTC.

The fourth quarter Issue Brief No. 8 (2014) has two titles on peace and conflict in Eastern Africa (with a special focus on South Sudan): **Intrastate Conflict in South Sudan:** *Challenges of Governance, and* **Humanitarian Actors and Peace Support Operations:** *A Case of South Sudan.* The Issue Brief provides insights into pertinent peace and security issues in the region that are useful to policy makers and aims to contribute to the security debate and praxis in the region. The articles in the Issue Brief are also expected to inform the design of the training modules at IPSTC. The research and publication of this Issue Brief has been made possible by the support of the Government of Japan through UNDP.

Brig. Robert Kabage

Director, IPSTC

Acronyms

AU	African Union
AUCISS	African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan
ASF	African Standby Force
CAR	Central African Republic
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Worldwide
CESS	Centre of European Security Studies
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FAO	Food Agricultural and Organization
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FBO	Faith Based Organisations
GoSS	Government of South Sudan
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGAD	Inter Governmental Agency for Development
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPSTC	International Peace Support Training Centre
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NHPR	National Healing Peace and Reconciliation
NLC	National Liberation Council

NPPR	National Platform for Peace and Reconciliation
OAG	Organised Armed Group
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PSO	Peace Support Operation
RRM	Rapid Response Mechanism
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SPLA/M	Sudan People Liberation Army/ Movement
SSLS	South Sudan Law Society
SSNA	South Sudan News Agency
SSNBS	South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics
SSPRC	South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission
TJRC	Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISFA	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

Introduction to the Issue Briefs

The topics in this Third Quarter Issue Brief are geared towards creating greater understanding and appreciation of peace and security situation in the Eastern Africa Region. Both topics in this issue brief series focus on the world's newest state; South Sudan. In particular, the first paper investigates the intrastate conflict in South Sudan by focusing on the challenges of governance and the second examines humanitarian actors in South Sudan and their role in peace support operations.

The first paper, *Intrastate Conflict in South Sudan: Challenges of Governance,* investigates the assumption that governance deficiencies in South Sudan contributes to conflict tendencies in the country. It acknowledges that despite South Sudan being a new nation after seceding from Sudan, it grapples with issues of unity and stability even within the confines of its borders. The paper investigates what the root causes of the conflict are. A number of factors termed as cause of the conflict are examined including political leadership challenges, SPLA factor, economic and social reasons and ethnicity. Many of these were noted to be governance related. Regional, national and international conflict resolution and reconciliation initiatives were explored to highlight responses and efforts of various state and non state stakeholders; efforts that have been made to forge a way for the return of normalcy to South Sudan. The paper then discusses and analyses the challenges and opportunities for long term sustainable peace. Highlighting factors such as governance within the SPLM Party, weak institutions, pervasive corruption, poor economic management, abuse of cohesive national identity and insecurity, the paper recognises a governance gap that continues to bedevil the country. Nonetheless, to offer durable solutions for sustainable peace a number of factors that can revamp governance institutions have been discussed. The paper concludes by reiterating the significance of institutional reforms which should be realised through a participatory approach. This however, ought to be from a South Sudanese perspective to reinforce acceptance and sustainability.

The second paper, *Humanitarian Actors and Peace Support Operations: A Case of South Sudan* examines the role of humanitarian actors in South Sudan and the extent to which they contribute to peace and stability. It also examines access constraints that undermine the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the populations in need. The paper acknowledges that based on their mandate, humanitarian actors in South Sudan not only alleviate human suffering and pain but also contribute to sustainable peace and stability in the long run. The main roles played by the humanitarian actors include provision of essential needs (food, health care, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and education services) to the affected population, returnee integration, refugees support, lobbying and advocacy. Nevertheless, the paper establishes that despite the presence of many humanitarian actors over the years, humanitarian conditions in South Sudan remain wanting mainly due to access constraints. Among the many access challenges, this paper focuses on three main ones: environmental and infrastructural challenges, insecurity and bureaucratic barriers. Given the critical contribution of humanitarian actors to peace and stability in South Sudan, the paper concludes that these access constraints should be addressed through a comprehensive approach by involving all key stakeholders.

Intrastate Conflict in South Sudan:
Challenges of Governance

Catherine Onekalit

Introduction

In this paper, intrastate conflicts are defined as those conflicts that occur between warring opposing groups within the same country - usually because of irreconcilable differences. South Sudan is a country where such conflicts continue to occur between rival groups. This perseveres albeit it being declared the world's youngest nation in July 2011. The Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) as it was known ceased to be a semi-autonomous regional government and became a national government. Formerly part of the larger Sudan, Southern Sudan was embroiled in a civil war for decades with Sudan - a war that decimated structures in almost all its provinces now known as states. United, Southern Sudanese after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) 2005 together fought a common enemy (Sudan), with the expectation that after independence there would be a dawn of hope.[1] However, since independence the government of South Sudan still continues to experience unprecedented levels of disunity and instability within the confines of its borders. Political disagreements, governance challenges and apparent division along ethnic lines have raised tensions and continued to impact on its leadership and leadership decisions.

Several reports such as Crisis Group Report No. 217 (2014) and 172 (2011) indicate that such rising tensions could have informed the decision of President Salva Kirr in late 2012, when he begun re-organising his senior leadership. In July 2013 through a decree, he relieved his entire cabinet including the Vice President Riek Machar, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) party secretary general (Pagan Amum) placing him under house arrest. Political commentators and analysts alike (Sudan Tribune, Clingendael Institute and Enough Project) alluded that such shifts perhaps elicited fears of political unrest.

[1] The CPA is an agreement that set a roadmap for democratic governance, sharing of resources and presented a timetable for a referendum, that later determined the independence of South Sudan

It is no wonder then that thereafter the former Vice President claimed that the President's decision was a step towards dictatorship (Al Jazeera, 2014; Sudan Tribune, 2013). Evidently, political rivalries and tensions had heightened not only within the South Sudan leadership but also its political arm the SPLM party. It is against this background that the current ongoing crisis was triggered.

Prior to the recent conflict, there were already underlying tensions and mistrust among South Sudanese leaders that date as far back as the Sudan civil war times (1983-2005) and even before. In-fighting among Southern Sudanese rebels in the early 1990s almost derailed the bid for self determination as leaders of insurgencies Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)/SPLM engaged in a protracted competition for power and mobilised support along ethnic lines.[2] While most of the major political and military factions reconciled in early 2000s, and were merged into the SPLA and SPLM, they never really integrated but chose a united front so as to achieve independence. Military and political alliances were thus achieved but this did not resolve competing opinionated claims. Both the party and the army were unable to contain the rivalling political ambitions and disagreements. Simmering ethnic tensions and bitter interpersonal rivalries compounded by the weak structures remained present. These persistently grew under the strains of establishing governing institutions and assuming increasing development responsibilities amid a severe human, institutional and infrastructural capacity constrain (Blanchard, 2014). It is these competing political ambitions that played into fuelling the current intrastate conflict in South Sudan, where ethnicity became a prominent mobilising factor. However it is important to quickly note that the discontent within the South Sudan leadership was never ethnic and these underlying political issues go beyond ethnicity (United States Institute for Peace, 2014).

It is against this background that this paper addresses three main areas. First, it identifies the root causes of the conflict in South Sudan. Second, it analyses the possible options for conflict resolution and reconciliation. Third, it discusses the challenges and opportunities for long term institutional reforms for sustainable peace.

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2   SPLA and SPLM formerly were the armed and political wings of the former Southern Sudan insurgency. The SPLA and SPLM are now the new country's official armed forces and ruling party respectively.

In the process of critical analysis and discussion, this paper will endeavour to prove and or disapprove the prevailing assumptions about the genesis and root causes underpinning conflicts in South Sudan.

The paper is divided into five sections. Section one presents the introduction, assumption, objectives and the theoretic framework. The root causes are critically analysed in section two. Section three examines options for conflict resolution by looking at the work of the GoSS, International community, local actors (Civil Society, Faith Based Organisations) and other stakeholders. Section four identifies challenges and opportunities for long term institutional reforms for sustainable peace while the last section constitutes the conclusions.

Assumption and Objectives

This paper is guided by the assumption that: Governance deficiencies in South Sudan contribute to conflict tendencies in the country.

Based on this assumption identifying the problems bedevilling South Sudan and working towards provision of durable solutions can be realised from within and by South Sudanese, with the support of other partners.

The objectives of the paper:

1. To identify the root causes of the current South Sudan conflict

2. To analyse options for conflict resolution and reconciliation

3. To identify opportunities for long term institutional reforms for sustainable peace in the country.

Theoretic Framework

Several theories articulate the relationship between governance and conflict. This paper adopts two of these theories: Social Conflict and Rational Choice Theories. These theories are considered adequate in illuminating the key aspects if the conflict environment in South Sudan.

Social Conflict Theory

This theory propounded by Karl Marx (1888-1883) argues that society is in a state of perpetual conflict due to competition for limited resources. It emphasises the role of coercion and power in producing social order. Marx theorised that social order is maintained by domination, with power in the hands of those with the greatest political, economic and social resources (Oberschall, 1978). When consensus is arrived at, it is attributed to people being united around common interests; conversely a lack of consensus out rightly breeds contempt which can easily lead to conflict.

In essence, social conflict theory presupposes that inequality exists because those in control of a disproportionate share of society's resources actively defend their advantages. The masses are thus not bound to society by their shared values but by coercion at the hands of those in power. The theory thus accounts for the force of action held by the elite class and their effect on the political leadership. The so called elite class in control of government, through their inner ties influences the leadership for their own gains. The theory is often applied to substantive social research in particular when explaining power structures and domination.

This theory is relevant as South Sudan is one such country where resources are in the hands of a selected few. The few maintain the status quo at the expense of other vulnerable citizens. The current intrastate conflict has to a large extent been attributed to power struggle and prevailing perception of unfairness among different ethnic groups. This is a classic case of an insurgence against a leadership due to perceived injustice (Blanchard, 2014). Nonetheless, this theory only recognises two distinct classes in society; the haves and have not's. Yet in reality there exists other sub-classes within the two classes which may as well have diverse social interests.

Rational Choice Theory

The proponents of this theory pioneered by George Homas (1961) argue that patterns of societal behaviours reflect the choices made by individuals as they try to maximise their benefits and minimise their costs. Thus people make decisions about how they should act based on the following:-

1. Rational calculations

2. Act rationally when making choices

3. Choices are aimed at the maximisation of profit and as such patterns of behaviour will develop within the societies due to these choices.

Commonly utilised in the social science field, this theory is illustrative especially in the study of interest groups, elections, coalitions and bureaucratic tendencies. It has successfully navigated between explanatory and descriptive analyses of political phenomenon and provided useful tools for leveraging social scientific knowledge to better design institutions (Ogu, 2013). Supposedly then, rational choice has been applied to formulating public policies and design. More specifically, this theory has been applied in public policy formulation and design of institutions.

The sociological concept of rationality inspires new institutionalism, systems and regulations. This theory applies to this paper in explaining the rational choices that South Sudanese can make to provide their own solutions to governance challenges of the country. Their focus can be on benefits of having formal and or informal arrangements that increase gains for the country. The policy makers can draw from such theories in an attempt to reform the country from within. Studies have increasingly shown that, changes in governance have not risen as pragmatic responses but as a result of advocacy by intellectuals and policy makers. However, one abstract difficulty with all this is how to explain the rise and stability of a pattern of rule in the absence of higher authority. Rational choice theorists generally conclude that the absence of an effective higher authority means that such institutions must be self governing (Ogu, 2013). The theory as well does not explain collective action. For example, if individuals base their actions on calculations of personal gain, why would they ever choose something that benefits others more than themselves? That said the role of rational choice theory in building coalitions

for the common good cannot be overemphasised. Such coalitions for the case of South Sudan will purposely be formed to gain more influence and power so as to influence the institutional reform agenda. Even though such action firstly may be for the individual betterment as contended by advocates of this theory, later it can result into extensive interaction, cooperation and even commitments that could prevent self interested actions.

Research Methodology and Analysis

To address the objectives above, the paper undertakes an in-depth critical review and qualitative analysis of a selected number of authoritative publications and reports on the subject. In a situation where the knowledge management systems are weak the author utilises her experience and previous contacts in South Sudan where she worked closely with different interlocutors including organised uniformed units, government and civil society actors.

Root Causes of the South Sudan Conflict

The situation in South Sudan in every sense of the word is a tragedy and this has far reaching implications for the many people in the following ways. Firstly, far too many people continue to suffer and many more have lost family members, friends and homes; secondly there are clear signs of disillusionment after many years of war for independence. The situation has been compounded by growing political tensions that culminated in the eruption of December 2013. This was hardly three years after its independence that was marked by an overwhelming internationally supported public referendum in 2011. While there are several underlying causes to the conflict, dating far back in Sudan and South Sudan's history the trigger of the current dispute was apparently political (Tiitmamer and Alwolich, 2014). This section identifies and presents root causes of the conflict.

Political Leadership challenges

Since its independence, South Sudan perhaps has been handicapped by competing interests of powerful political actors and the various factions that they represent. Two distinct contentious political developments that became intertwined and took place within a fragile political and military structure contributed immensely as trigger to the current South Sudan conflict. The two issues – a growing opposition on the way the country was being governed in particular within the SPLM party corridors and; the second the decision by the former Vice President Riek Machar- (now leader of SPLM/A opposition) to challenge the incumbent President Salva Kirr for the SPLM leadership and later presidency in the 2015 general elections.

Within the government corridors there was a continued growing unhappiness on the way the president was managing affairs of the state. Some key members of the ruling party in particular felt that the President ignored the SPLM party when filling in cabinet positions, and allegedly made decisions based on the advice of a narrow group of advisors from his home area, the Greater Bhar. EL Ghazal[3] (Joak, 2014). Parallel with all these concerns were governance challenges, allegation of corruption within state institutions and the growing violations of human rights by the regime.[4] Human rights advocates, journalists and both international and local Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) seemingly were being harassed. A case in point cited by the New York Times (2012) and backed by AllAfrica Global media, was the assassination of an online Journalist who had published a number of critical articles on the government.[5] An offer by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of the United States of America (USA) to investigate the case was initially accepted but later rejected by the South Sudan leadership.

Concurrently there was a growing tension within the SPLM party organs. This was exacerbated by an open indication by the former Vice President that he was moving to challenge the President for the SPLM leadership and thereafter presidency. Riek Machar has been a controversial figure in the SPLM. He is a leader of the Nuer, the second largest ethnic group in South Sudan who make up more than half of the SPLA. Machar earlier split from the SPLM (then a military arm of Southern Sudan) and fought against it for years.

In 1991 his forces were involved in the massacre of Dinkas the largest ethnic group in South Sudan. This has never been forgotten even if Machar united with the SPLM in 2001 (Malou, 2013). His ambition thus posed a major challenge to the SPLM.

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3   The Greater Bhar EL Ghazal is a collection of four states namely, Western Bhar El Ghazal, Northern Bhar El Ghazal, Warrap, and Lakes States

4   A Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) released in December 2013 ranked South Sudan as the third most corrupt country in the work

5   This paper utilizes a number of online news analyses (New York Times, AllAfrica Global Media, Sudan Tribune, and South Sudan News Agency (SSNA)) to back up certain arguments. This despite such sources viewed as not authoritative. However a number of reference and cross referencing on the issues by other scholars coupled with the authors experience in South Sudan facilitates the conclusion that the reports utilized are factual and are backed by substantiated details.

Denying him the presidency, could be a threat given that he could easily leave the SPLM and form a major opposition party, or worse, he could draw on 'his' Nuer forces from the SPLA and pose a serious military threat. The bigger challenge was that the party was not addressing these issues. The president in particular did not use the party machinery to defuse or resolve the tensions. Throughout 2013 he bypassed or delayed party mechanisms. Apparently the SPLM National Liberation Council (NLC) meeting held in Juba in December 2013 was where the tension in the party escalated for a violent turn. Many sources (UNMISS Human Rights Report 2014, Sudan Tribune, Sudd Institute) reiterate that this was the actual root cause of the current crisis.

SPLA Factor

The SPLA is the largest and most important institution in South Sudan. Multi ethnic from the onset, it is made up of different fighting factions perhaps loyal to its military commands as a result of the history of liberation.[6] This created disunity within its rank and file for a long time, subsequently making it fertile ground for conflict (Crisis Group, 2014). The situation was aggravated at a later stage by the presidential changes in government generally and SPLA/M in particular.[7] A factor that could have marshalled support for the SPLM/A-opposition as highlighted by the massive defections of army brigades in December 2013 (Sudd Institute, 2014). The government's loss of a significant part of its military strength consequently translated to its inability to effectively respond to the conflict.

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6   During the Sudan civil war Khartoum had a policy of split and co-opt rebel factions. After the death of Garang in 2005, President Kiir took a radical step and merged several former Southern Sudan rebel factions into the SPLA.

7   In 2013 the President retired over 100 senior officers of the SPLA and launched a process of consolidating security forces perceived as loyal to him.

Economic/Sharing of Limited Resources

According to the World Bank (2014) South Sudan despite having largely untapped natural resources (Minerals and oil fields), remains relatively underdeveloped.[8] Assumptions have been made on the relationship between development and conflict. The conflict in South Sudan has aggravated poverty levels through disruption of livelihoods and diversion of available resources from other priority areas to security issues. On the other hand, stability is said to promote economic growth and development through creation of employment opportunities and provision of and access to basic services. In continuing, this would enable engagement in sustainable livelihoods other than concentration on trends that cause insecurity. Such theories and beliefs are what informed the expectations of South Sudanese before independence. In addition it was assumed that inter communal tensions that are often due to scarcity could be overcome as long as there is economic growth and provision of basic needs and services for all South Sudanese (Hutton, 2014).

However, with the shutdown of oil in 2012, which is the primary source of revenue for the economy accounting for nearly 98%, meeting the expectations of the population has remained an uphill task for the government. It is partly because of this that discontent begun building up within the general population. Accusations of resources being unevenly distributed, allegations of corruption and development opportunities plus jobs awarded to a few became common (Tiitmamer and Awolich, 2014). Yet also after the CPA in 2005 most of the leaders of South Sudan just exchanged military uniforms for suits. Allegedly many of them begun amassing wealth and enriching themselves at the expense of other South Sudanese (Eveleens, 2014). This caused further discontentment within the population. The political disagreement that begun in December 2013 thus found ripened ground. Therefore many persons disgruntled with the government became sympathizers, and joined the SPLM/A opposition.

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8   See South Sudan Overview www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview accessed on 17 October 2014

Social/Ethnicity

Many analysts have associated the current South Sudan conflict to ethnicity. New York based Human Rights Watch has documented retaliatory pattern of atrocities of the conflict that commenced on 15 December, 2013. This pitted the Nuer against the Dinka spiralling a massive desertion of the Nuer SPLA soldiers to SPLM/A opposition. In a report by the Sudd Institute, it is reported that two days after the December Juba incident, the government was stunned at how rapidly armed civilians 'The White Army' mainly ethnic Nuer organized themselves. They were involved in a bloody massacre of innocent ethnic Dinkas in Bor town and Akobo County in Jonglei state.

Options for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation

For over 10 months the people of South Sudan have been experiencing renewed and devastating effects of a conflict despite euphoria of being an independent nation. The conflict is estimated by the International Crisis Group (ICG) to have led to the loss of over 10,000 lives with thousands more displaced and rendered destitute. Such suffering can be reversed through creative regional, international and national initiatives. These efforts have begun in haste under the auspice of the African Union brokered mediation through the Intergovernmental Agency for Development (IGAD).

IGAD as Mediator

IGAD was instrumental in finding a peaceful solution to Northern and Southern Sudan conflict.[9] Their efforts led to a successful signing of the 2005 CPA that ended decades of war in Sudan. Once more the regional members have been quick to launch mediation efforts. The IGAD peace talks have yielded so far four agreements, between January and August 2014 namely:-

1. Agreement on cessation of hostilities and Status of detainees (January 2014)

2. Agreement on the recommitment on humanitarian matter of the cessation of Hostilities (May 2014)

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9   IGAD member states include Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya and Somalia

3. Commitment to the formation of a transitional government of national unity (June 2014) which was intended to have happened within 60 days

4. And the latest the implementation matrix of the cessation of hostilities agreement giving the two parties 45 days to form a unity government

The first three agreements have been violated within hours after being announced. Neither has a permanent cease fire nor long term political agreements been reached (ISS, South Sudan Tribune). This raises serious questions about the commitment of both parties to finding lasting solutions to the conflict. The current situation in South Sudan is, however seemingly different and much more complicated compared to the CPA era. While IGAD is a critical partner in this process it may be difficult to predict whether its mediation initiative will be successful or not. This paper highlights a few reasons to elucidate the challenges facing the current mitigation efforts.

There are some IGAD member states that cannot be viewed as neutral. Sudan and Djibouti for example have been reported to have agreed to open up coordination offices for the SPLM/A – opposition (South Sudan News Agency (SSNA), 2014; Sudan Tribune, 2014). Uganda is arguably a belligerent in the conflict as its troops fight alongside the SPLA. Such actions could easily provoke suspicion among warring parties.

It is alleged that some IGAD member states like Sudan would rather have a polarised South Sudan. This is because it is does not want to be put under pressure to resolve some outstanding issues such as the contested border areas of Abyei, Heglig and Kafia Kingi enclave. Also some commentators (South Sudan Times, Sudan Tribune, SSNA and AllAfrica Global Media) have argued that Uganda is pursuing economic interests in South Sudan. Such arguments, however, cannot hold as South Sudan has become a crucial link in the regional economy, integrating both capital and workers from neighbouring countries (International Crisis Group, 2014; Enough Project, 2014). Its stability is critical to the region, probably that is why Rwanda and Kenya are a significant contributor of peace keepers at the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Ethiopia is also a sole contributor to the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).

Many of the IGAD countries are experiencing internal wars for example, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan. How can these countries then contribute to peace in South Sudan when they have failed to resolve their own internal challenges? Yet also there are seeming tensions between some IGAD countries, for example, Eritrea and Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan, and South Sudan and Sudan. Such a complex situation has multifaceted contradictions which makes harmonisation towards a common goal difficult to achieve.

Lastly IGAD has been seen to focus the peace talks largely on the interests of the two major political actors at the expense of other stakeholders. In doing so the mediation process may, at best, succeed in reaching a bilateral agreement. While this may be accepted by the parties it will not be respected by all South Sudanese. The bigger challenge, which is transforming the South Sudanese governance institutions so as to promote inclusive and fair socio-economic and political processes, is not being addressed.

It is therefore vital that the South Sudanese leadership and the SPLM/A opposition look for solution as well from within. There continues to be discussions among South Sudanese that the current situation would best be resolved by creation of an interim government. The interim government would be headed by a neutral person with no political ambition for the coming elections in 2015 and who is not from any of the warring ethnic groups (Nuer/Dinka). While this suggestion may not be accepted by the current sovereign government that maintains it has to serve its full term, it is important that IGAD considers such an option. This could provide the best scenario of creating a framework for the transformation of South Sudan.

Response by the Government of South Sudan (GoSS)

The GoSS has not been mute with regards to conflict resolution and or protection of its sovereignty. While several analysts (ISS, Crisis Group, Enough project) may argue that the invitation of Uganda to protect key installations and civilians escalated the conflict, this paper observes that many lives were protected instead. It can be recalled that the crisis (already highlighted) swiftly spread to other states of the country. It then later transformed into what would have been recounted as genocide (Awolich, 2014). The SPLA forces loyal to the government were admittedly overwhelmed due to the high number of desertions and could not contain the situation. By calling on

Uganda's support the GoSS contained a situation that would have otherwise been catastrophic; however temporary a resolution it was.

UNMISS's Role

The first official reaction from the UNMISS was a statement of the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG). The mission indicated that it was 'deeply concerned' and urged all the parties of the conflict to cease hostilities and exercise restraint. A following statement by the Secretary General Ban Ki Moon called on the President of South Sudan to "offer dialogue to its opponents and resolve the respective differences peacefully" (Global Responsibility to Protect).[10] Following the December 2013 and May 2014 resolutions 2131 and 2155, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) doubled its military component and further reiterated its responsibility to protect.[11] This was so as to achieve progress in support of conflict resolution and reconciliation across all its components. The mission in addition reprioritised its tasks which included fostering inter-communal dialogue and support to the IGAD mediation process whenever called upon. Its Human Rights and Civil Affairs components continue to raise awareness on the degree of violations and foster inter-communal co-existence and national dialogue in their field offices.

Other International Partners

There have been a number of international partners who have condemned the crisis in South Sudan. They have called for peaceful resolution and reconciliation of aggrieved parties. Among them are the African Union (AU), the United States, and the Peoples Republic of China, Egypt, IGAD member states and Rwanda. Most of them have reiterated their commitment for a peaceful and prosperous South Sudan with support to international unity and the IGAD–led mediation process. South Africa has dispatched envoys to put pressure on parties at conflict; the GoSS and SPLM/A opposition. A commission has as well been established by the AU to probe the origins of the violence.

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10 http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/south-sudan-december-15-crisis-timeline.pdf accessed on 19 October 2013

11 UNSCR 2132 (2013) http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2132(2013) accessed on 19 October 2014

Transitional Justice System

Long term peace and reconciliation may require a combination of measures for redress to be explored. The need for an alternative system for example a truth and reconciliation commission cannot be overemphasised. A proposal by the South Sudan Law Society (SSLS) to constitute a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) to investigate and reconcile past historical grievances has been floated.

Experience of the present conflict points to rhetoric's from both warring parties of unresolved injustices as drivers of violence. The SSLS thus proposes a Truth and Dignity Commission that will involve all actors both state and non state including civil society and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) to reconcile the many truths in South Sudan from 1972 to date (Deny, 2014). Experiences from Rwanda, South Africa and Sierra Leone, countries which took somewhat different paths towards justice after violent pasts show that transitional justice can indeed promote healing. It also builds a historical record and grants victims a modicum of justice after mass crimes. The underpinnings of the South Sudan crisis thus can be addressed by creation of a TRJC that has confidence of South Sudanese.

Grass Root Reconciliation Efforts (Civil Society, FBOs and Media)

Beyond IGAD and other international actors are the South Sudanese trying to organise their own conflict resolution and reconciliation initiatives. Accordingly independent grassroots efforts have sprung up, initiatives that may offer more tangible solutions. An example is the National Platform for Peace and Reconciliation (NPPR). Formerly launched in April 2014; it is an independent body that seeks a united platform for peace and reconciliation. So far reports (Conciliation Resources, 2014; IRIN News, 2014) indicate that since its launch, NPPR has attempted to reach out to several stakeholders in the mediation process.[12] Among these are the government, SPLM/A opposition, as well the IGAD team in Addis Ababa. NPPR reportedly works with local media, FBOs and civil society groups. They also work with the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission (SSPRC) and the National Legislative Assembly's specialised committee on Peace and Reconciliation.

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12 IRIN news is the humanitarian news and analysis service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Conciliation Resources is a peace building, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) supporting people at the heart of conflicts who are striving to find solutions

There are other similar grassroots bodies that have also been initiated. One such is the National Healing Peace and Reconciliation (NHPR) organization with membership from FBOs and Civil Society (Solidarity, 2014).[13] According to its secretary general Reverend Bernard Suwa, in an interview with IRIN news *there is a realisation that the problem of South Sudan must be worked out by South Sudanese themselves*. (IRIN news, 2014) Indeed for peace and reconciliation to be realised grass root initiatives should be taken into account. United States Institute for Peace (USIP, 2014) report indicates that local dialogue including small peace talks with the local society is effective and can create stability.

The NPPR[14] for example has thus far registered some dividends including:-

1. Enabling small gestures like President Salva Kiir and Machar shake hands during the signing the May 2014 peace agreement.

2. Reached out to a wide range of constituents including in counties, Bomas and Payams.

3. The clergy including Bishops are already preaching peace and reconciliation to an inclusive audience of South Sudanese including the warring parties

4. Seven days of Peace Activism was completed by a Walk of Peace. The clergy and civil society representatives made speeches decrying the war. As well children recited peace poems.

5. Actual emotional scenes of women rolling on the ground and wailing for peace in South Sudan have been witnessed.

While these may seem like small gestures, it is important to note that they come from deep within the core of a society. These often present long-term solutions for genuine peace and reconciliation.

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13 Solidarity with South Sudan (*Solidarity*) is a consortium of more than 200 religious congregations. *Solidarity* trains teachers, nurses, and pastoral communities and creates peace awareness in several locations throughout South Sudan.

14 For more reading visit http://www.reconciliationsouthsudan.org/reconciliation-platform accessed on October 15 2014

Challenges and Opportunities for Long Term Institutional Reforms for Sustainable Peace

The people of South Sudan have lived under repressive regimes for decades. This section discusses governance deficiencies that have been conflict drivers and continue to impede the realisation of real peace in South Sudan. It will as well discuss opportunities for longer term institutional reforms for sustainable peace.

Challenges

Governance Challenges

While South Sudan has made some progress in state-building, the early signs of governance - it remains a fragile country. Weak institutions, pervasive corruption, poor economic management, abuse of cohesive national identity and insecurity are characteristic of the country. These challenges, which are, governance in nature continue to cripple the country and to a great extent have magnified the conflict. This is expounded further below.

Governance within the SPLM Party

The December 2013 crisis was triggered by a governance disagreement within the SPLM political bureau. The SPLM party is categorised into three arms; the Political Bureau (PB), Executive Committee (EC) and the SPLM secretariat. The former two authorised by a presidential decree are headed by the president. It is reported that many SPLM members were dissatisfied with the way two divisions were being governed. Thus in February 2013 in an SPLM-PB meeting the former Vice President Machar challenged the leadership (President Salva Kiir) and raised six issues as clear evidence of his leadership failure (Deng *et al.,* 2014).

1. A dysfunctional SPLM
2. General insecurity in the country
3. Economic mismanagement
4. Pervasive corruption
5. Foreign policy failure
6. Tribalism

While these failures do exist, it is the author's belief that all the arms of the SPLM; the PB and the EC were equally to blame. This is because they were all in government from August 2005 to July 2013. Despite this, it is clearly pointed out that there was expression of displeasure within the party. This issue therefore should have been resolved internally and amicably within party organs. That it could not and instead spiralled into violence later is an indication of a governance gap within the SPLM.

Weak Institutions

The lack of visible steps to build democratic and oversight institutions that monitor and control a growing public sector indicates governing deficit of a regime. In the case of South Sudan, the scale and level of destruction as a result of the crisis could be an indication of this deficiency. Before the conflict, government institutions had only just been established and were beginning to expand. This situation is compounded by weak capacity of the national human capital. Perhaps this could be due to its fragile history that human and governance institutions are lacking (Wilson Centre African program, 2014). Also South Sudan has not yet developed a permanent constitution. It is only hoped that the process, if independent and under good leadership, will be such a vehicle that will enable realization of strong accountable institutions. Such a process though should foster inclusive participation.

Pervasive Corruption

Despite various strategies that have been applied to limit and control the pervasive impacts of corruption across the world, corruption continues to be a global menace. Sub-Saharan Africa has been the hardest affected and South Sudan has as well fallen victim. In South Sudan, corruption tendencies are common with the public finance management and procurement procedures (Deng *etal..,* 2014). While South Sudan has laws and regulations, seemingly there is an almost complete lack of ability and willingness to enforce them. The Anti Corruption Commission established lacks both resources and prosecutorial powers (Sudd Institute, 2014). In 2013, the South Sudan President wrote to 75 government officials accusing them of embezzling money which was meant for the social service sector (Riak, 2013). Reports on corruption are many but no serious action has been taken to deter the perpetrators. This trend has undermined the trust and shared values that make a society thus causing or stirring conflict.

Poor Economic Management

Usually governments tackle economic management by making use of coherent expert analysis. Often this is done by studying different policy options and utilizing the option seen as best for the country. Such a step is a governance strength that can be used to gauge whether a government is making a decision taking into account the aspect of cost and benefit analysis for its betterment. However a classic case that may portray that the government of South Sudan was somewhat lacking with regard to this, is its decision to shutdown oil production in 2012. It can be recalled that oil accounts for over 98% of South Sudan's revenue. Some commentators have said that the decision was informed by emotions rather than logic. It was then not surprising that there after the GoSS could not pay salaries even of its military (Enough Project, 2014). The pros and cons of why the GoSS reached such a decision can be debated, however what was clear is that its decision stirred discontent within the country.

Abuse of Cohesive National Identity

Under normal circumstances, diversity is celebrated as a source of strength and enrichment; it is usually a discourse of hope and togetherness. However within a discourse of hegemony and exclusion, it becomes a liability and sometimes a hazard to stability. Such has been the case within South Sudan. It is evident the Nuer and Dinkas abused their citizenship and became a tribe before a nation. Such un-cohesiveness not only depicts a lack of civic education for citizens but portrays a deficiency in governance. This is so because a government should by default assign a department to educate its population on the significance of citizenship and national identity.

Insecurity

While security is elusive to South Sudan, insecurity is not. The latter is a reality whose negative consequences have been experienced by many in South Sudan. This is because South Sudan as a country has been insecure and unstable for many years. The country is not a stranger to proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) which in itself causes a security vacuum. This has been compounded by the presence of Organized Armed Groups-OAG (such as the White Army in Jonglei State) which engages in inter-tribal warfare, retaliatory attacks and cattle rustling.

All these issues have in one way or another been discussed in this paper and they highlight the extent of instability and fragility of South Sudan.

Opportunities

Based on the foregoing governance challenges there is need to explore the opportunities for sustainable peace in South Sudan. This section will explore specifically the institutional reforms that need to be implemented to realise long term stability in South Sudan.

Institutional Reforms

The weakness of national institutions like the legislature, the Judiciary, executive and the security sector that remained unaddressed partly contributed to the environment in which the South Sudan conflict unfolded. These weaknesses gave rise to a number of challenges that in a way sustained the conflict. For instance, the lack of checks and balances in government ministries, militarisation of institutions, parallel weak legal regimes (Civil and Customary laws) and a lack of appropriate oversight of the security sector. Despite the establishment of the UNMISS with a specific component (justice and security sector) to help develop South Sudan's capacity, not much has been achieved. South Sudan has a large pool of intellectuals with a significant proportion residing outside of the country (Diaspora communities and/or citizens). This group if encouraged to return into the country could inform the creation of institutional reforms. Such will also reinforce ownership and the rhetoric of bringing solutions to challenges from a national perspective.

Professionalising the Army (SPLA)

One of the biggest challenges to security and stability of South Sudan is its army, the SPLA. Reportedly made up of guerrilla fighters, their strength is estimated by the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO) in 2012 to be approximately 150,000 soldiers. That in itself creates its own security challenges. The problem that the SPLA was not professionally trained and/or screened and comprise child soldiers in its rank and file adds yet another problem on top of its excessive numbers. Perhaps this is why they often have been alleged to be involved in sexual crimes including rape and human rights abuse (UNMISS Human Rights Report, 2014;

Amnesty International, 2012). The GoSS embarked on the task of professionalising the SPLA and making it accountable by creating the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs. The Ministry prepares the SPLA budget, procures its equipment and provides training purposely to achieve unity and transformation as well so as to inform accountability (Deng et al., 2014). UNMISS and other international partners like the Government of Switzerland and Netherlands are also contributing to building the SPLA capacity.

However, this goal has clearly not been realized. There is thus a need for a variety of in-house strategies to aid reforms in the SPLA. For example tests for health both physical and psychological could be done to ensure fitness for the military. To ensure that those who fail the test are not vulnerable to recruitment by OAGs, they should be taken through the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) process. However all this needs concerted effort and political will. The international partners can aid by providing resource with stringent mechanisms in support of accountability.

Healing, Justice and Reconciliation

The UN human rights investigations in 2014 have established that both groups of the conflict (the SPLM/A and the SPLM/A opposition) have committed gross human rights violations. Civilians were reportedly a direct target and often than not along ethnic lines. There have already been calls for investigation and accountability from both within South Sudan and the international community. For example, the African Union established a Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan (AUCISS). So far missions by AUCISS conducted in South Sudan with various actors; including women, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), members of civil society, media actors and Faith Based organizations indicate an overwhelming support for the establishment of an inclusive transitional government of national unity. In addition, the necessity for a broad based and inclusive national dialogue to address issues of reconciliation and healing was viewed as extremely significant. It is therefore critical that South Sudan establishes an institution that will support genuine national efforts of reconciliation so as to facilitate healing. Experiences from African countries (including South Africa, Sierra Leone and Rwanda) that have had violent past and successfully reconciled can be utilized to inform the workings of the commission.

Demilitarisation and Demobilization of OAGs

Militias and OAGs often embody a special dimension of warfare that goes beyond normal intrastate and/or interstate conflicts. These entities are prone to pursue conflict first in terms of their local interest. This makes it extremely difficult to handle the context of conflict as well a transition to peace. Thus standard approaches for disarmament like DDR and the incentives that come with it may not work. A classic case of such OAGs is the 'white army militias' located in Upper Nile and Jonglei states. The group has for a while been involved in cattle raids and occasional banditry acts that have led to an appalling amount of suffering and insecurity in their areas of operation. They were as well reported to have heavily contributed to the capture of Bor Town and massacre of hundreds of innocent civilians mainly from the Dinka ethnic group during the 2013 crisis (Awolich, 2014).

Interestingly, the GoSS from 2005-2006 was involved in a disarmament process particular for this militia group; an exercise that to a great extent is said to have achieved its purpose (Arnold and Alden, 2007). However, what is crucial is that more considerations should be put in place when dealing with demilitarization and disarmament of such groups. The GoSS could for example re-strategise and involve traditional chiefs and elders who are instrumental and respected in the South Sudanese society to be part of the process. First, they can encourage the youth to disarm peacefully and then organise for mediation with communities on why they should disarm. In addition, local civil society programs can lobby and sensitise the youth on the benefits/dividends of peace.

Strengthening the Role of Civil Society

Civil societies in emerging democracies are often viewed as threat. Probably due to their watch dog role in the governance sphere. Rather governments should view civil society as a fundamental building block of a stable democracy that needs to be nurtured. Any healthy state needs to be buttressed by a robust and active civil society and South Sudan is no exception.

While securing lasting peace is an immediate priority in South Sudan, a longer-term challenge will be to create an enabling environment for civil society to flourish. This will require paying attention to the legal and regulatory environment for civil society to make sure it is not overly-restrictive. There are countless political and economic challenges facing South Sudan. However, obvious attention needs to be paid to those immediate priorities that will make South Sudan safer, help end poverty and promote stability. Investing in a vibrant civil society can aid all these. South Sudan should therefore nurture positive conditions for civic life to flourish.

Conclusion

This paper concludes by highlighting Mareike Schomerus' quote:

> *"I learned that in order to be able to contribute constructively to a more peaceful environment, it is necessary for the all actors including the international community to be very clear about its conceptual approach. This broader, unified vision is obviously very difficult to achieve, with so many actors involved, but lack of it does have an effect on how peaceful the environment is in which Southern Sudanese citizens live."*

Making reference to the above quote, the South Sudan conflict has conclusively shown that governance deficiencies do contribute and can even aggravate conflicts. Enabling institutional reforms is thus a significant factor in assuring disgruntled groups that a government has an obligation of improving their lives. However, such actions cannot be realized in isolation. An inclusive participation of all actors; both non state and state (civil society, government, international partners and FBOs) leads to a broader unified vision. Nonetheless it is critical that all actors comprehend the South Sudan situation and together come up with a common and informed agenda. While this process is daunting, it is possible and should be initiated by the South Sudanese themselves so as to be respected and promoted among all ethnic groups and other stakeholders. There is also need to borrow lessons from other countries that have successfully emerged from civil wars and tailor them to suit the South Sudan context. The assumption that governance deficiencies in South Sudan contributes to conflict tendencies in the country is therefore accepted as all analyses presented above demonstrate so.

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Humanitarian Actors and Peace Support Operations: *A Case of South Sudan*

Margaret Cheptile

Introduction

This section presents the overview of the paper, background, problem statement, scope and the hypotheses that the paper seeks to address.

Paper Overview

Unger (2008) asserts that at any given point two-thirds of the countries in the world are either suffering from political tensions and violent conflicts or are in aftermath of destructive conflicts or wars. Nielson (2003) observes that indeed no continent except for Australia and Antarctica is free from violent conflicts. Conflict researchers have further documented a great number of wars and conflicts currently raging worldwide, most of which are in Africa (in countries such as South Sudan, Somalia, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and Libya among others). Needless to say, the humanitarian impact of these wars and conflicts on the affected populations is devastating and it includes loss of lives, destruction of livelihoods and properties, increased poverty levels and displacement among others (Lang, 2001). In response, presence and the action of local and international humanitarian actors in conflict and war zones have increased considerably mainly to save lives and alleviate suffering of the affected populations in the face of inhuman conditions (McCallum and Okech, 2013).

Some of the major humanitarian actors operating today in conflict-affected areas include United Nations (UN) humanitarian agencies (United Nations Development Programme-UNDP, World Food Programme-WFP, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees-UNHCR, Food and Agricultural Organization-FAO and World Health Organization-WHO), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Worldwide (CARE), Save the Children, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision

and many other organizations which have been on the front line of humanitarian assistance. According to Lange and Quinn (2003) these humanitarian actors contribute to Peace Support Operations (PSOs) in three main ways. First, they reduce the suffering of non-combatants and strengthen their capacity to resist the effects of conflict by providing food, shelter, health care, education opportunities and other basic needs. Second, their presence lessens human rights abuses by reminding conflicting groups of their obligations to non-combatants and reporting breaches of international human rights law and humanitarian codes of conduct therefore protecting civilians and preventing spread of conflict. Third, development-oriented humanitarian actors are reported to build local capacity which enables the affected populations meet their basic needs thus curbing conditions for conflict occurrence.

The ongoing crisis in South Sudan is of particular concern to both local and international communities. Despite the large number of humanitarian actors present, the humanitarian needs in South Sudan still remain dire (African Union, 2014). It is presumed that access constraints might be affecting the delivery of humanitarian assistance and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of the affected populations in South Sudan. This argument has however remained unexplored. The main objective of this paper is therefore to bring to light the reasons why humanitarian crisis in South Sudan remains persistent despite the presence of large scale humanitarian agencies. This will be achieved by discussing the roles of humanitarian actors in South Sudan and the extent to which they contribute to peace and stability. This knowledge gap will also be filled by examining the assumption that access constraints in South Sudan undermine the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the populations in need.

Overall, this paper is structured around four main areas. The first section covers the introduction of the paper. Section two provides the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide the paper. Section three provides the methodological approach and insights emerging from the analysis while section four presents the conclusion and recommendations.

Background

Independence of South Sudan, world's newest state, in July 2011 was considered a cornerstone for sustainable peace and stability, economic growth and development (Lanzer, 2013). Although a lot has been achieved, conflict and violence continue to affect millions of people especially in Greater Upper Nile region (Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states) and parts of Bahr el Ghazal (Warrap and Lakes states). The conflict, rooted in political and governance struggles and resource competition (land, pasture and livestock), has taken an inter-ethnic dimension breeding hatred between dominant and minority ethnic groups (Bennett, 2013). Deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the country have been reported as a result of the conflict which has disrupted and destroyed food production, health, water and sanitation, and education services among others. In addition, protracted impacts of North and South Sudan conflicts, poverty and continued tensions with Sudan have aggravated the humanitarian condition in South Sudan (African Union, 2014). As a result of this and the government's limited capacity to support the population, a large proportion of people across the country rely on humanitarian community for survival (Lanzer, 2013). While it is true that Greater Upper Nile and some parts of Bahr el Ghazal region are mostly affected by conflicts and droughts and hence require substantial amount of humanitarian assistance, the whole of South Sudan is in fact in dire need of humanitarian aid. For instance, Central Equitoria, the origin of the current conflict, hosts majority of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) while Western and Eastern Equatorial are home to Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and thus potential areas for conflict occurrence.

In explaining the scale and complexity of humanitarian situation in South Sudan, WHO in 2014 declared the country one of the least developed countries in the world. As illustrated in Table 1.1, available data shows that over 50% of the total population in South Sudan live below the poverty line and less than 44% of the population have access to basic services. About 1.8 million people have been displaced by the ongoing conflicts, 450,000 of which have sought refuge in the neighbouring countries. Moreover, South Sudan has the worst health indicators in the world with maternal and infant mortality rates recorded at 2,054/100,000 live births and 102/1000 live births respectively. About 4.6 million of the total population are considered food

insecure and children suffering from severe acute malnutrition are estimated to be 235,000, of which 50,000 are at risk of dying. The ongoing humanitarian crisis has further been complicated by recent cholera outbreak with 5,300 cases reported in September 2014, including 115 deaths. With regards to education, only 10% of those enrolled in primary school actually complete but less than 2% of them enrol in secondary school.

Table 1.1: Humanitarian Situation in South Sudan

	Indicator Description	Frequency/Frequency (Approx.)
1	Total Population	12 Million
2	Displaced Population (up to date)	1.8 Million
3	Population Below Poverty Line	Over 50%
4	Life Expectancy	42 Years
5	Population with Access to Basic Needs	44%
6	Maternal Mortality Rate	2,054/100,000 Live Births
7	Infant Mortality Rate	102/1000 Live Births
8	Severe Acute Child Malnutrition	235, 000 Children, 50,000 Death Risk
9	Cholera Outbreak	5, 300 Cases, Over 115 Deaths
10	Population with Access to Sanitation Facilities	7.5%
11	Food Insecure Population	4.6 Million
12	Primary Completion Rate	10%
13	Secondary Enrolment Rate	Less than 2%

Source: WHO (2014); OCHA (2014); UNICEF (2014)

In view of the foregoing humanitarian scenario, South Sudan has been reported to be the recipient of large scale humanitarian assistance. By the end of 2012, the UN and partners were delivering humanitarian assistance in 52 of South Sudan's 79 counties (United Nations Children's Fund-UNICEF, 2014). In 2013, the Consolidated Appeal for South Sudan was the second largest in the world after Somalia seeking more than United States Dollars (USD) 1.16 billion. Recent arguments however indicate that humanitarian assistance in South Sudan in 2014 might have been higher than that of Somalia (Zeitvogel, 2014).

A quick definition of the concept of humanitarian assistance within the context of peace support operations will help to put the discussion into proper perspective. Humanitarian assistance is commonly defined as activities designed to rapidly reduce human suffering endured by civilian population in crisis situations (Weiss and Collins, 1996).

The aim is to sustain dignified life by providing basic needs, strengthen the efforts of local institutions to relieve human suffering and build self-reliance as well as to ensure that the first step is taken towards peace, reconstruction, and development (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-OCHA, 2014). It is important to note that the primary responsibility for the well-being of a population rests with the lawful Government of the affected State (UNHCR, 1995). However, where the State Government is unable (the case of South Sudan) or unwilling to protect and support their populations with the appropriate assistance, humanitarian response by concerned actors may take place. In most cases, many humanitarian actors (local and international) who specialize in particular areas (such as education, health, food security and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene-WASH) work together in ensuring that required assistance is provided to the populations in need.

Humanitarian assistance, however, cannot be fully effective unless it is linked to the comprehensive strategy for peace and security as proposed within the framework of the 'Agenda for Peace' by Boutros-Ghali (1992). This implies that the long term goal for humanitarian assistance should be to promote and build sustainable peace among the affected population. For this reason, therefore, humanitarian action is often better understood within the context of PSOs. Mackinlay (1996) defines Peace Support Operations as the activities undertaken by civilian and military organizations deployed to foster peace and/or relieve human suffering in conflict environment. These activities are multifaceted in nature ranging from military actions to diplomatic, social, economic and humanitarian measures carried out to establish peaceful conditions in conflict-affected areas (North Atlantic Treaty Organization-NATO 2001; Centre of European Security Studies-CESS 2008). Humanitarian activities are therefore critical as they complement those of other PSO organizations in promoting sustainable peace and stability. For instance, since most of them work at the grassroots level, humanitarian actors may have adequate understanding of the society, the people and the environment within which military or diplomats may be operating (Unger, 2008).

While the activities of humanitarian actors may differ, all are united by their commitment to provide humanitarian assistance and promote peace in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. According to Nielson (2003), these three principles remain the main guarantors of security of humanitarian

personnel and access to victims in conflict situations. Adhering to these principles creates a climate of confidence with all parties and secures respect for humanitarian action. In brief, the principle of humanity dictates that humanitarian assistance should comprise goods and services vital for the survival of the civilian population deprived of the basic necessities of life as a result of the crisis (Stoffels, 2004). This implies that the purpose of the assistance should be to relieve human suffering and protect human life, dignity and health. On the other hand, impartiality principle requires humanitarian aid to be provided in a non-discriminatory manner except on the basis of humanitarian necessity. It argues that humanitarian assistance must address the needs of all individuals who are suffering, irrespective of their nationality, ideology, sex or ethnicity (UNHCR 1995; Stoffels 2004). Lastly, neutrality principle emphasizes a distinction between combatants and civilians since only civilians are entitled to receive humanitarian assistance. It states that humanitarian actors must neither be allied nor provide assistance to warring parties. In general, humanitarian actors that do not comply with these principles are unlikely to be considered humanitarian. However, challenges of implementing these principles in conflict situations have been raised. For instance, it is often difficult to distinguish combatants from civilians when combatants manage to mingle with civilian population (Nielson, 2003).

In South Sudan, the humanitarian crisis is overwhelming to the extent that it has received attention from numerous humanitarian actors worldwide. The humanitarian actors operating in South Sudan include UN humanitarian agencies as well as international and local organizations. However, apart from the role played by UN humanitarian agencies (mainly WHO, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and FOA) and other international agencies (such as Save the Children, Catholic Relief Services, Action Against Hunger and CARE among others), the contribution of local humanitarian organizations has to a certain extent remained undocumented. Nevertheless, using the existing literature this paper aims to generally bring out the main roles played by humanitarian actors in peace support operations in South Sudan. The challenges faced by these humanitarian actors in delivering the needed assistance will be partly explored by focusing on the access constraints.

Problem Statement

It is a widely acknowledged fact that conflict in any society bears considerable humanitarian impacts. Some of the documented impacts of conflict include population displacement, loss of lives, disruption of livelihoods, destruction of property, aggravated poverty levels and diversion of available resources to security needs (Smock 1996; Lange and Quinn 2003). As a result of these impacts, conflict-affected populations are often forced to largely depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival. Though their immediate goal is to lessen human suffering by providing basic needs to affected population, humanitarian actors also aim to influence and promote sustainable peace and stability in the long run (Lange and Quinn, 2003).

The situation in South Sudan is no different. The ongoing conflict has exposed the country to its worst humanitarian situation in many years characterized by massive displacement, food insecurity, high mortality rates, high levels of poverty and limited access to basic services among others (WHO, 2014). Owing to this wanting situation, the number of humanitarian actors in South Sudan has increased considerably with the common aim of improving the humanitarian situation. In fact, the scale of humanitarian operations in South Sudan has reached a point that currently constitutes the biggest aid operation inside any single country (Zeitvogel 2014; Defence Web 2014; UNICEF 2014). The magnitude of the crisis is aptly captured by Bennett (2013) who states that South Sudan is host to one of the world's largest humanitarian responses, bringing together national and international humanitarian actors in an operation worth approximately USD 1.2 billion in 2013.

Despite the presence of many humanitarian organizations in its history, humanitarian conditions in South Sudan remain appalling, precarious and complex (Lanzer, 2013). A high proportion of the population remains internally or externally displaced and access to basic needs such as food, shelter, water and sanitation, health care and education services remain elusive. It is also reported that displaced people are currently sheltering in makeshift and overcrowded camps and with a high possibility of disease outbreak at any time (WHO, 2014). It is documented that the rainy season which started around May has caused secondary displacement. In total, about 4.8 million people, out of the total population of 12 million, are presently in need

of emergency assistance. Conway (2013) warns that deteriorating humanitarian situation carries with it security implications as communities begin to compete for diminishing resources. Against this background therefore, there is need to investigate why humanitarian situation in South Sudan remains poor despite presence of many humanitarian actors. This paper is an attempt to contribute to fill this gap in knowledge by examining the roles of humanitarian actors in South Sudan and the extent to which they contribute/promote peace and stability. In addition, the paper investigates the extent to which access constraints curtail humanitarian efforts in South Sudan an aspect that has been tackled superficially by a number of scholars.

Purpose of the Paper

In view of the problem statement, the main purpose of this paper is to analyse the reasons why humanitarian crisis in South Sudan remains constant despite the presence of large scale humanitarian actors. This will be achieved by identifying the roles of humanitarian actors in promoting peace and stability in South Sudan as well as by examining the access constraints which undermine the delivery of humanitarian aid in the country. This is justified on the grounds that experience shows that without humanitarian assistance in conflict contexts to meet basic needs (food, shelter and health) dialogue and other peace building efforts may be fragile (Unger 2008; Lange and Quinn 2003). Humanitarian assistance therefore complements and reinforces peace-building efforts often steered by civil society organisations that work with the communities.

Hypotheses

This paper is guided by the following two hypotheses:

Ho$_1$: Humanitarian actors in South Sudan contribute to peace and stability in the country.

Ho$_2$: Access constraints undermine the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the populations in need in South Sudan.

Theoretical Approaches and Conceptual Framework

This section presents the theoretical and conceptual frameworks adopted by the paper.

Theoretical Approaches

This paper is guided by two theories, the theory of obligation and bottom-up theory, which aim to explain the role of humanitarian actors in peace support operations.

Theory of Obligation

This theory was postulated by Carolyn Pope Edwards (1985) and later strengthened by Ronald Cohen (1989). It proposes that individuals and organizations working in a context of suffering and abuse have a moral obligation to seek ways to improve the human condition. It is centred on the assumption that there exists a moral imperative to aid the structurally dispossessed and functionally abused. In this theory, obligation is defined as 'what one should do' to assist someone in need. Based on this argument, the theory states that humanitarian assistance is a moral relationship based on the obligation of 'those who have' to address the felt needs of 'those who have not.' As a result, there are two major components in this theory; the morally possible and the materially possible. The overlap between the two components constitutes actions that individuals and organizations are obligated as representatives of humankind to pursue.

The morally possible component suggests that we have a moral obligation to assist those in need of our help and as a result we only have an option regarding which type of assistance to offer and not whether we should offer assistance at all. On the other hand, the materially possible component suggest that since it is impossible to solve every humanitarian issue at once, individuals and organizations must choose realistic initiatives that are able to be supported and sustained over time. Organizations are encouraged to invest in initiatives where available resources can be of most assistance. This calls for an assessment of felt needs of the intended beneficiaries and the recognition that the needs and interests of the beneficiaries are of greater importance than those of the humanitarian organizations.

Theory of obligation has been used by a number of scholars to explain the role of humanitarian actors in conflict situations. For example, Van Arsdale (1992) used the theory to highlight how humanitarian organizations provided Cambodian families with basic necessities during the 1975-1979 genocide while Monsutti (2005) applied it to explain the humanitarian support provided to Hazara refugees of Afghanistan during the Hazara conflict. Specifically, this theory is relevant to the current paper because the conflict in South Sudan has caused a lot of suffering and pain to the civilian population. Both international and local organizations therefore have a moral obligation to assist in alleviating human suffering, providing necessities deprived to the population as a result of the conflict as well as in promoting sustainable peace and stability in South Sudan. Depending on the amount of resources they have, these organizations should implement projects that are sustainable and those that complement the needs of South Sudanese. However, this theory has been criticized on the basis that it is likely to encourage dependency syndrome among the populations in need (Van Arsdale, 2008). The extent to which this applies to South Sudan needs further research.

Bottom-up Theory

This paper is also guided by bottom-up theoretical approach, famously known as three-track model, by John Paul Lederach (1995). Lederach presents conflict transformation and peace-building efforts in three levels/tracks. Track one constitutes dialogue and negotiations between official and high level leadership such as government representatives, diplomats and regionally or internationally recognized bodies among others. Track two comprises non-official, mid-level individuals, groups or organizations such as civil society agencies while track three involves grass-root level individuals and organizations such as council of elders, humanitarian actors, chiefs, council of elders and other local level interventions which have an effect on the context in which peace negotiations and talks occur.

This theory stresses the significance of accessing the populations in need by humanitarian actors. It suggests that for humanitarian agencies to effectively influence peace efforts, they must always operate in track three where they can easily access the affected population. Lederach further argues that while humanitarian actors and their activities make up for only a part in dealing with conflict, they

complement track one and track two processes and therefore ensure a lasting peace that is embedded in the local communities and individuals. In fact, the theory reiterates, humanitarian actors have an advantage in addressing local dimensions of peace due to their proximity to the people they are working with and their neutral and impartial role.

Scholars such as Lange and Quinn (2003) and Goodhand and Sedra (2006) have applied this theory to explain the relationship between humanitarian actors and local communities in Sri Lanka, Liberia and Afghanistan. They observed that the close relationship between humanitarian actors and conflict-affected populations contributed significantly to the acceptance and effectiveness of humanitarian aid by the local communities. Likewise, this theory is relevant to the study of humanitarian organizations in South Sudan. For instance, humanitarian actions constitute a necessary condition for peace and stability to occur in South Sudan since they lessen human suffering and assist the locals to meet their basic needs thereby creating a ripe environment for peace building. Due to their immediacy to the local people, humanitarian actors in South Sudan are likely to have comprehensive knowledge of the people, the environment and the conflict that other PSO stakeholders operating in South Sudan may not have. Nonetheless, this theory has also been thought to breed dependency syndrome. Lange and Quinn (2003) argue that due to time and resource constraints, many humanitarian agencies engage in short-term strategies that encourage dependency among the local populations which in turn is likely to be detrimental to the country's long-term recovery.

It is important to note that the two theories are not mutually exclusive but rather complement each other in explaining the contribution of humanitarian organizations in peace support environment. While the theory of obligation highlights the moral responsibility of humanitarian agencies, bottom-up approach explains the importance of accessing the population in need.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework adopted by this paper derives its logic from the theoretical approaches discussed earlier and is elaborated in Figure 2.1. It represents a combination of the author's synthesis of key elements of the theories and in depth conceptualization of the roles of humanitarian actors in South Sudan and

the extent to which they contribute to peace and stability. The independent and dependent variables in this paper are the roles of humanitarian actors and peace and stability respectively. With respect to the roles of humanitarian actors in South Sudan the paper will focus on provision of essential needs (food, health care, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and education); returnee integration; refugee support and lobbying and advocacy. Peace and stability is loosely operationalized as absence of conflict. The arrows in the diagram show the flow through which the relationship between the variables is understood; by following the arrow to the next box.

Figure 2.1: Role of Humanitarian Actors in Peace and Stability: A Conceptual Overview
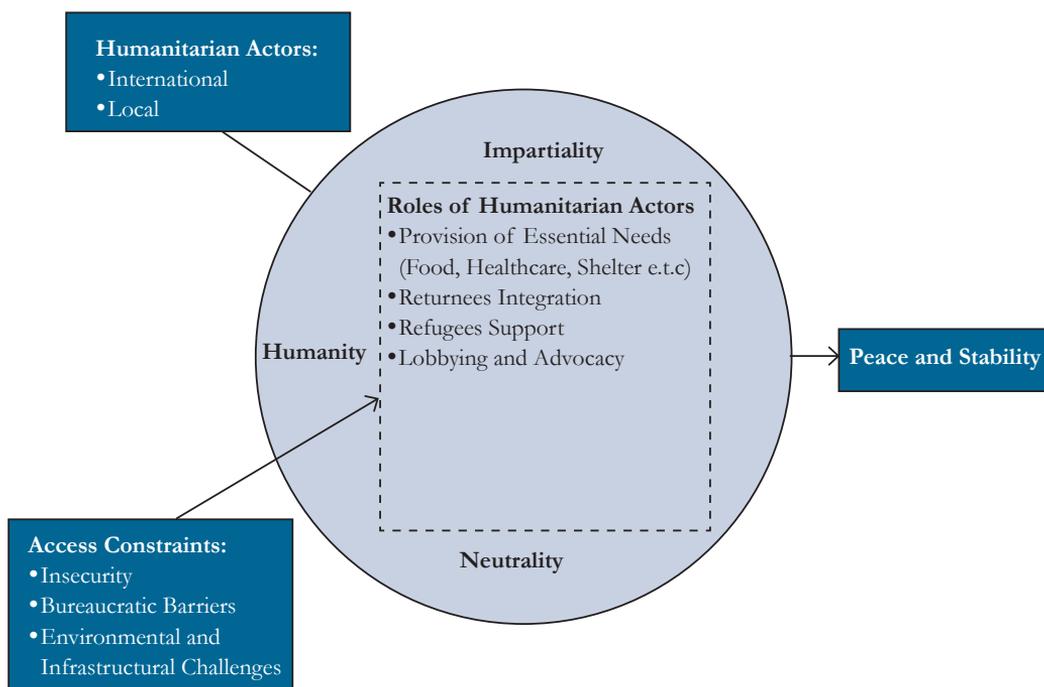
Source: Author's Conceptualization

Based on the available literature, humanitarian actors in South Sudan constitute both international and local organizations. Most of these actors coordinate in their work with the aim of effectively delivering assistance to the affected population even in some of the remotest parts of South Sudan. Although there is inadequate information on the specific roles performed by some of the local humanitarian organizations, the main roles played by humanitarian actors in pursuit for peace and

stability in South Sudan are shown in the middle (dotted) box. These roles include provision of essential/basic needs (food, shelter, health care, water, sanitation and hygiene among others) to the affected population; integration of returnees from neighbouring countries such as Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia; supporting refugees, mainly from Sudan, currently seeking protection in South Sudan; lobbying for support from other organizations and advocating for the protection of civilians especially where human rights are violated. However, as shown in the middle circle the implementation of these roles are guided by the principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality as outlined in the International Humanitarian Law (IHL). According to IHL, these principles maintain the credibility of humanitarian actors and failure to which the assistance provided may exacerbate conflict instead of quelling (Stoffels, 2004). When the humanitarian actors carry out their roles in accordance to the outlined principles, the long term goal of promoting peace and stability is likely to be achieved as shown in the far right box. However, while humanitarian actors may be willing to carry out the stated roles, access constraints in terms of insecurity of humanitarian personnel and assets, bureaucratic barriers, environmental and infrastructural challenges prevalent in South Sudan may undermine their efforts to deliver the needed assistance to the affected population (*see the bottom left box*). As a result, humanitarian conditions are likely to remain appalling and insecurity intensified regardless of the number of humanitarian actors present in South Sudan. As earlier discussed, humanitarian activities play a critical role in the realization of peace and stability as they complement the peace-building actions performed by other actors such as civil society, military and diplomats. Therefore, as illustrated in the diagram access constraints should be addressed for humanitarian actors to effectively play their presumed roles.

Methodological Approach and Analysis

This paper is based on critical review of selected reports, government publications, books, theses and academic journals on contribution of humanitarian actors in peace support operations. The literature review was further complemented by personal experience. The arguments herein are therefore based on a combination of these approaches. More specifically, qualitative analysis has been employed to provide an in-depth understanding of the topic under discussion.

The following are some of emerging insights from the analysis of roles of humanitarian actors in South Sudan and access constraints they face while fulfilling their mandates:

Role of Humanitarian Actors in South Sudan

Nielson (2003) acknowledges that most humanitarian actions prepare the ground for long term conflict resolutions such as dialogue, negotiation and mediation. This is because provision of basic essentials, rehabilitation and psychosocial support to the population in need as well as relieving their suffering gives them hope and motivation to compromise and reconcile. Without humanitarian assistance the victims would be left entirely on their own, a situation which is likely to complicate and delay peace building and conflict resolution efforts. The contribution of humanitarian actors to peace and stability can therefore be explained by a critical review of the roles they play in a context of conflict.

Provision of Essential Needs

The following are some of the essential needs provided by humanitarian actors in South Sudan.

a) Food

Food aid constitutes the bulk of humanitarian response in South Sudan. Over the last three years more than 10% and 30% of the population has been severely and moderately food insecure respectively (Lanzer, 2013). In 2012, 2.7 million people received food assistance (OCHA, 2012). According to UNICEF (2014), about 235,000 children are suffering from severe acute malnutrition with 50,000 of them at risk of dying. It was this kind of situation that prompted the WFP in 2012 to

declare a Level 3 emergency in South Sudan. The main causes of food insecurity in South Sudan include seasonal flooding and droughts, conflict-related displacements, disruption of agricultural production, continuous influx of refugees from Sudan and the closure of the border with Sudan which has disrupted the usual supply of food commodities to the markets of South Sudan (Lanzer 2013; USAID 2014). In addition, lack of appropriate storage facilities, poor road network and dependency on rain-fed agriculture has exacerbated food insecurity in South Sudan.

It is in this context that recurring food insecurity has been reported in South Sudan leading to humanitarian response. Food insecurity has been established to increase mortality rates and also precipitate conflicts as people are forced to compete for limited food sources (WFP, 2009). Humanitarian actors specializing in food security and livelihoods (United States Agency for International Development-USAID, WFP, FAO, Action against Hunger and other organizations) are currently operating in South Sudan with the aim of addressing food insecurity. They are doing this by implementing short and long term programmes which are likely to build the reliance of local communities in the long run. For instance, these organizations in conjunction with the local people have build roads that connect the communities to markets for easy access to food. Furthermore, in 2012, more than 2,000 farmers from all the six states of South Sudan were trained on advanced agricultural production with special focus on proper food storage to ensure sufficiency during drought periods and how to tackle soil erosion during heavy rains. Targeted supplementary feeding programmes have also been established where daily feeding programmes have been implemented in more than 1,350 schools in drought-stricken states. This has been reported to reduce the number of children dropping out of school from these states (UNICEF, 2014). Currently, FAO is working with government institutions to build capacity for detecting food insecurity; monitoring systems in the South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics (SSNBS) have already been established.

To this end, the activities of these organizations ultimately contribute to peace and stability. Provision of food has sustained lives of the affected population in South Sudan and has hence created an environment for peace building and conflict management (WFP, 2009). It is important to note that it is nearly impossible to effectively carry out peace building initiatives within a hungry population. WFP

(2009) also points out that continued lack of food and other basic necessities is likely to exacerbate conflict in South Sudan as people are forced to compete/fight for the limited amount available.

b) Health Care and WASH

Health and WASH conditions in South Sudan, especially in IDP and refugee camps, are appalling with only about 7.5% of the total population having access to sanitation facilities (WHO, 2014). In addition, most people lack access to life saving primary health care services which is worsened by weak health systems characterized by lack of medical supplies and skilled staff. Most of the health facilities in the conflict affected areas, such as Bor, Bentiu, Malakal state hospitals, are reported to be almost non-functional as the health personnel fail to report owing to high insecurity. Cholera cases are reported to have steadily increased particularly in Upper Nile state, which is also the worst hit by the current conflict (Conway, 2013). In response, humanitarian organizations have expanded activities in conflict affected areas through a new strategy known as Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM). Through this approach, multi-sector teams have reached the population in need with nutrition, health and WASH support even in some of the remotest areas such as Akobo town in Jonglei state, Mayendit and Nyal towns in Unity state and Melut town in Upper Nile state (USAID, 2014). WHO, for instance, has supported the reported health emergency by delivering medical supplies to hospitals and primary health care centres throughout the country, including the health units inside IDP camps. In addition, UNICEF in partnership with WFP, FAO and other humanitarian actors is currently responding to severe acute malnutrition through micronutrient supplementation and the promotion of appropriate feeding practices both inside and outside the IDP and refugee camps. These agencies also continue to address the risk of water borne diseases through provision of emergency latrines, potable water, sanitation supplies and hygiene promotion. Furthermore, UNICEF continues to protect children from preventable diseases such as polio and measles by providing appropriate vaccinations. It also provides critical maternal and newborn medical care. [15] Other humanitarian agencies such as UNHCR continue to provide psychological support to the displaced population and facilitate health campaigns with the aim of promoting the importance of healthy living.

15 For more information on the work of UNICEF in South Sudan please visit their website on: www. unicefsouthsudan.org

Through the provision of health care and WASH services, humanitarian agencies also contribute to peace and stability in South Sudan. Increased human mortality rates that are associated with conflicts have been documented to trigger retaliatory attacks and violence (Unger, 2008). Therefore, by alleviating human suffering and saving lives, these organizations indirectly curtail retaliatory violence. In South Sudan for instance, USAID (2014) argues that if it were not for the efforts of humanitarian agencies to save lives and reduce deaths following the 2013 conflict, castigatory attacks could have taken place in Jonglei and Upper Nile states. In this sense, humanitarian actions have a calming effect on conflicting groups. In addition, ensuring the wellbeing of the affected populations may encourage them to engage in dialogue and reconciliation with the perpetrators of the conflict thereby promoting peace and stability. The extent to which the later argument applies to South Sudan calls for further research.

c) Education

Literature indicates that conflict affects schooling in variety of ways. Holmes (2010) in particular outlines three ways in which conflict affects attainment of education. First, conflict disrupts livelihoods and exacerbates poverty making it difficult for households with competing priorities to fund their children's education. Second, the delivery of education services in conflict-affected areas is often disrupted by displacement of teachers, students and other school staff. Third, few children attend school in conflict-affected areas owing to fear of attacks. Given these effects of conflict on schooling, school enrolment and attendance rates in the South Sudan have been generally low as earlier indicated (*see Table 1.1*). While some schools have been converted into safe haven for IDPs others are being used by armed groups as operating bases. Humanitarian actors such as UNICEF, Save the Children and other child protection agencies have called upon armed groups to vacate school premises, especially in Jonglei state. So far, armed groups are reported to have vacated from six schools (UNICEF, 2014). Humanitarian actors in collaboration with the Ministry of Education have also provided teachers with training on psychosocial support and emergency life skills thereby building their capacity to manage crisis situations. Furthermore, during the Jonglei conflict of 2011 and 2012, emergency education

support was provided to over 4,200 students which included establishment of 15 temporary learning spaces, provision of emergency education supplies and rehabilitation of schools affected by the conflict.

Ensuring that conflict-affected populations continue to receive educational services will eventually contribute to long lasting peace and stability in their communities. Bird, Higgins and McKay (2011) strengthens this argument by aptly stating that there is a relationship between attainment of education and conflict management. The scholars argue that educated people are not only likely to have socio-economic resilience during conflicts but are also less likely to engage in conflicts. The South Sudan conflict in particular has led to high rates of school drop-out and absenteeism which by extension has resulted in frustrations, hopelessness and poverty among young people (UNICEF, 2014). Though it is expected that such situation may lure young people into violence, humanitarian actors in South Sudan have raised optimism of better future for many children and households by providing them with education facilities and services (Gatimu, 2014).

d) Other Basic Needs

Conflicts uproot families from confines of their homes. Often times in South Sudan these families are left with no choice but to settle in makeshift camps which in essence are more secure than their original places of residence. To ensure the wellbeing of such displaced populations, humanitarian agencies such as International Committee Red Cross (ICRC) and UNHCR have provided temporary shelter and other necessities including household items. Furthermore, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has set up protection sites in various conflict-affected states (OCHA, 2014). It is at these sites that most humanitarian actors provide their assistance/services.[16] Provision of these needs improves the wellbeing of the affected populations and motivates them to engage in peace building processes.

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16 Given the unique situation of South Sudan it is common to find humanitarian actors providing their services in mission/military protected sites.

Returnee Integration

According to International Organization for Migration (IOM) database over 375,000 South Sudanese have returned from Sudan between 2010 and 2012. This number has since increased to nearly a million (UNHCR, 2014). This return is partly because their legal status in Sudan has been unclear since South Sudan gained its independence in 2011 and also because the ongoing conflicts in the boarder areas have worsened the conditions of South Sudanese remaining in Sudan (OCHA, 2012). Humanitarian actors specializing in refugee's matters, mainly UNHCR and ICRC in collaboration with other related partners have assisted in the process of receiving and integrating the South Sudanese back to their original homes.

Most of the returnees enter South Sudan through two main points; Renk and Makakal in Upper Nile state. Humanitarian actors specializing in a variety of sectors (health, food, and water and sanitation among others) are present at these entry points to cover the returnees anticipated needs. In addition to providing assistance, humanitarian actors are also working with other agencies (including the concerned government institutions) involved in integration to ensure a broad and successful transition to sustainable existence for returnees. Financial capital has also been provided to assist the returnees build sustainable livelihoods upon return to their original homes. It is however reported that about 80% of the returnees are yet to establish a sustainable livelihood (Lanzer, 2013). Furthermore, UNICEF with other child protection agencies also addresses the needs of separated and unaccompanied children through provision of psychosocial support services, family tracing, reunification and alternative care. It also monitors and advocates for release of children recruited in armed groups as well as providing them with rehabilitation and reintegration support.

The returnee integration process has not been without challenges. Close to 18,000 returnees have been reported to be stranded in the transit or awaiting land allocation in Renk while another 20,000 people await clarity on land allocation in Aweil, Northern Bahr el Ghazal state (UNHCR, 2014). This has been attributed to insufficient funds available for both the government of South Sudan and humanitarian actors to help returnees with transition and integration. In addition, poor road networks, seasonal river barges and insecurity have prolonged waiting time in the entry points. It is also

stated that due to the returnee influx, vulnerable communities in South Sudan have struggled to accommodate the new arrivals thereby straining the scarce resources available (UNHCR, 2014).

Nevertheless, integrating returnees into their original homes gives them an opportunity to rebuild their livelihoods and participate in peace building and conflict management processes in their country.

Refugees Support

With more than 130,000 refugees from neighbouring countries at the end of April 2014, South Sudan has become one of the leading refugee hosting countries in Africa (UNHCR, 2014). As shown in Table 3.1, in the past three years South Sudan has registered refugees from DRC and Central African Republic (CAR) as a result of attacks by LRA. The refugees continue to receive basic needs (including food, water and sanitation, health and education services) at three camps in Central and Western Equatoria states. In addition, South Sudan also hosts about 4,000 Ethiopian Anuak asylum-seekers in Jonglei, Upper Nile and Central Equatoria states. Refugee influx from Sudan has also been reported as a result of the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states. In fact, so far, nearly 30,000 refugees from Sudan have been registered in Unity state and about 70,000 in Upper Nile state (UNHCR, 2014).

Table 3.1: Refugees in South Sudan

Host State	Country of Origin	Frequency
Upper Nile	Sudan, Ethiopia	70,000
Unity	Sudan	29,372
Western Equatoria	Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic	15,558
Central Equatoria	Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan	10,894
Jonglei	Ethiopia	3,499
Upper Nile	Sudan, Ethiopia	70,000

Source: UNHCR (2014)

Refugee influx in South Sudan has added to overall demands for humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian agencies have scaled up assistance in the country to respond

to the needs of bulging refugee populations. The assistance that has been offered include shelter, health care, food, clean water and education opportunities. Refugee registration, planning and infrastructure development in formal sites where refugees are hosted are also underway. Some of the infrastructures under construction include schools, health clinics, and storage and distribution centres for relief items.

It is commendable that despite its internal challenges South Sudan continues to support international provisions such as the 'Responsibility to Protect'. Often times, refugees are vulnerable to recruitment into armed groups/militia a situation that is likely to affect the stability of the host country. Provision of humanitarian assistance therefore improves the wellbeing of refugees making them less dependent on activities which may be detrimental to peace and stability of the host country.

Lobbying and Advocacy

Humanitarian needs that are accompanied by conflict situations are diverse and complex. To this end, humanitarian organizations specializing in certain areas of response can lobby for assistance from other agencies in areas beyond their scope (Unger, 2008). In the case of South Sudan, most humanitarian agencies coordinate and collaborate through the Rapid Response Mechanism to ensure that the various humanitarian conditions are improved. For instance, WHO can be called upon to address humanitarian health needs, UNHCR and ICRC address matters of refugees while WFP deals with aspects of food security. Other humanitarian organizations in South Sudan have also been reported to protect civilians by raising awareness on human rights violations. Also their presence is said to discourage combatants from abusing civilian populations. For example, UNICEF and Save the Children protect the rights of children. Nevertheless, humanitarian actors in South Sudan also coordinate with other stakeholders who may not have humanitarian mandate such as Enough Project. Therefore, lobbying and advocacy introduces a sense of teamwork among various humanitarian and non-humanitarian organizations working in South Sudan therefore making the process of pursuing peace and stability bearable.

Access Constraints Faced by Humanitarian Actors in South Sudan

Humanitarian actors face a number of challenges in responding to conflict-related needs. Owing to this, staff turnover is reportedly high and their presence sporadic making it difficult to effectively address the needs of affected population (MacCallum and Okech, 2013). This section focuses on the main access constraints that affect the delivery of humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected population in South Sudan.

Bureaucratic Barriers

Humanitarian actors have reported significant bureaucratic obstacles that impede their efforts in meeting the needs of conflict-affected population in South Sudan. While it is understandable that a newly independent nation needs time to establish governance and policy frameworks and that it may be challenging to work in a context where labour, registration and immigration laws are still being formulated, humanitarian actors in South Sudan have reported that the local authorities seem to deliberately undermine their operational independence. For instance, in 2012 South Sudan customs service declared an end to tax exemptions for humanitarian organizations (Bennett, 2013). Although senior government officials seemed unaware of the decree, a declaration document was circulated to all customs offices in the country which immediately led to massive disruption of imports of humanitarian goods. Furthermore, international humanitarian agencies have repeatedly reported increased difficulties in obtaining work permits and visas. Interestingly, the bureaucratic impediments are reported to have increased significantly since South Sudan gained its independence in 2011. For instance, while almost half of all visa applications were completed within a month in early 2011, survey by South Sudan Non-governmental Organization (NGO) Forum indicates that 40% of NGOs' work permit applications requested in 2012 took more than three months to process.

Given this scenario, humanitarian agencies have experienced delays in delivering assistance to populations in need throughout the country. In Maban County for instance, humanitarian personnel have argued that bureaucratic obstacles have made it impossible to deliver the needed assistance to over 113,000 refugees hosted in the county. Attempts by humanitarian actors to question or resist these demands have been made with threats, violence or expulsion (Bennett, 2013).

The recent decree by South Sudan government to expel all foreigners working in the country strengthens this argument further.[17]

Insecurity

Access and actual delivery of humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected population in South Sudan are greatly challenged by insecurity. In fact, Bennett (2013) argues that more than 60% of access constraints recorded in South Sudan in 2012 were attributed to direct violence and threats against humanitarian workers, assets or premises. It is against this background that South Sudan is described as one of the most dangerous places for humanitarian workers, ahead of Somalia and Syria (WHO 2014; Bennett 2013). Killing of and physical violence against humanitarian workers, especially national staff, by militia is a common phenomenon in South Sudan. For instance, five South Sudanese working as humanitarian personnel in Maban County were killed in 2014 by a community-based self-defence militia called Mabanese Defence Forces (Defence Web, 2014).[18] In addition, at least 61 humanitarian workers in 2014 have been assaulted by state security forces. Looting and diversion of humanitarian relief by armed groups have also been reported.

Therefore, given the security situation in South Sudan, humanitarian agencies have been unwilling to provide assistance in some of the conflict-prone areas such as Greater Upper Nile and parts of Bahr el Ghazal (Conway, 2013). Reports show that there have been regular suspensions of humanitarian activities or temporary withdrawal of staff due to insecurity. In addition, mines and unexploded ordnance continue to cause concern, with a total of 684 known or suspected hazardous areas at the end of 2012.

Environmental and Infrastructural Challenges

South Sudan's physical environment and infrastructure pose logistical difficulties to humanitarian agencies. The road conditions in the country are wanting and approximately 60% of the country is cut off during the rainy season which is about six months or more. In particular, road access in key locations of humanitarian response is minimal or impossible during this period. For instance, Maban county

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17 For more details see Daniel Kalanaki's article on Daily Nation (18, September 2014) "Threat by Juba to expel foreign workers may be myopic, but not surprising."

18 The attacks are mainly based on ethnic animosity and revenge

which currently hosts a large proportion of refugees and conflict-prone states of Jonglei and Warrap are mostly affected by limited road network and flooding. Furthermore, the heavy rains and poor road conditions not only affect the movement of humanitarian assistance but floods have also been reported to cause secondary displacement of refugees and IDPs in the country. Lanzer (2013) admits that food insecurity could be mitigated by food imports from Uganda but poor road conditions and costly fuel have led to high market prices. On the other hand, WHO (2014) states that transportation of emergency medical supplies to high risk areas has also been delayed due to flooding and limited road network. This situation poses severe logistical problems for the implementation of humanitarian response thus making operation in South Sudan costly and extremely challenging.

Important to note is that given the mentioned access constraints in South Sudan (especially insecurity, environmental and infrastructural obstacles), humanitarian actors have had to seek for logistical support from UNMISS. Upon request, UNMISS coordinates with the actors in terms of security clearances and transportation of humanitarian relief items to the population in need. This level of cooperation between them and UNMISS (which has a political mandate) has raised concerns from many people, including local armed groups, on the independence and neutrality of humanitarian agencies sometimes leading to outright denial of access (Lanzer, 2013).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Humanitarian actors as per their mandated areas have contributed and are still contributing to peace and stability in South Sudan. They have provided the affected populations with essential needs such as food, heath care, water, sanitation and hygiene, education, shelter and other household items. These needs have improved the wellbeing of the said group and even encouraged them to engage in dialogue, reconciliation and other peace building processes. This paper also acknowledges that provision of education, health and food to conflict affected population has both short and long term impacts on peace and stability. In addition, humanitarian actors in South Sudan have facilitated integration of returnees to their original homes, supported refugees hosted in the country, and have also lobbied and advocated for more assistance to be provided to the populations in need.

Nevertheless, despite the large scale humanitarian presence in South Sudan, the humanitarian situation remains wanting owing to a myriad of access constraints. This paper has however focused on three access constraints believed to largely undermine the delivery of humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected populations. These constraints of access include bureaucratic barriers, insecurity setbacks, and environmental and infrastructural challenges. In particular, insecurity and environmental and infrastructural hindrances have forced humanitarian actors to coordinate with UNMISS, a situation which has cost them their credibility in the eyes of both state and non-state actors. However, it is important to appreciate that humanitarian actors in South Sudan are on crossroads. Without assistance from UNMISS in terms of security and transportation humanitarian actors may hardly have access to populations in need. Yet with UNMISS's support their independence and neutrality principles are questioned. Therefore, in view of the critical contribution of humanitarian actors on peace and stability in South Sudan, there is need to address the access challenges that are currently undermining their absolute effectiveness. To this end, both hypotheses are hereby confirmed.

Recommendations

As the theory of obligation states, it is difficult to meet all humanitarian needs in emergency/crisis situations. However, key stakeholders are advised to do their level best to ensure alleviation of human suffering, survival of the affected populations, and sustainable peace and stability in their area of operation. In this regard, there are a number of strategies that humanitarian actors in South Sudan and other key stakeholders should implement to mitigate current challenges faced and steer the humanitarian response onto a more effective and principled course. Nonetheless, the suggested recommendations need to be bolstered by field research.

In an attempt to address bureaucratic and insecurity challenges, humanitarian actors should build and strengthen their relationships with South Sudan authorities including the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the police among other stakeholders that are concerned with labour laws, immigration laws and NGO registration laws. These relationships will likely facilitate trust and understanding of the critical roles played by humanitarian actors in South Sudan hence motivating the South Sudan authorities and other stakeholders to respect humanitarian mandates.

Literature states that most South Sudanese find themselves in a continuous mode of survival and are likely to need humanitarian assistance for some time to come. However, this may not be the case if humanitarian actors strengthen their efforts of building sustainable and resilient communities in which the people can cope with crisis without large scale and costly emergency aid. For instance, humanitarian actors can do this by helping local institutions build their capacity in the delivery of basic needs such as health care, water and sanitation, food and education. It is recommended therefore that humanitarian agencies work with the local communities to improve road networks, build sanitation and health care facilities as well as construct drainage and irrigation systems. This way, humanitarian actors will be providing assistance that has long-term benefits and that encourages South Sudanese to solve their own problems.

The pressure associated with emergency situations may not permit enough time for requisite planning. Nevertheless, humanitarian organizations in conflict-prone contexts such as South Sudan should pre-plan extensively to avoid being caught unawares whenever conflict erupts. All key stakeholders should be involved in such planning processes as proposed by bottom-up theory. Humanitarian actors, for instance, should train local relief workers in advance as well as pre-position stocks of relief items which are needed during conflict emergencies. Furthermore, humanitarian agencies should have capable and well-prepared teams on standby ready for deployment in case of an emergency.

Lastly, all humanitarian actors in South Sudan need to strengthen their already existing coordination and collaboration. Given the unpredictable context of their operation, these agencies must implement a greater degree of transparency in discussing the constraints they face. This will promote their ability to develop a shared analysis of challenges faced and common intervention strategies.

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Highlights of the Key Messages in the Issue Briefs

This fact sheet is a quick reference guide regarding issues discussed in the two papers. The key messages include:

Intrastate conflict in South Sudan: *Challenges of Governance*

- South Sudan is a new nation having seceded from Sudan in July 2011. However it grapples with issues of unity and stability even within the confines of its borders. The joys of independence are truly a distant memory for South Sudanese due to insurmountable challenges because of a political crisis.

- A number of reasons are highlighted as causes of the conflict, including challenges with the South Sudan political leadership, a disunited national army (SPLA), poor economic management and ethnicity among a few. Many of these were noted to be governance related and to say the least have to a great extent justified and magnified the conflict.

- Regional, national and international conflict resolution and reconciliation initiatives that emphasise responses by various actors in an effort to intervene in the conflict are discussed. These include responses by the GoSS, IGAD, other International governments, UNMISS, Civil Society Organisations and FBOs to mention but a few.

- Analyses of challenges and opportunities for long term sustainable peace are discussed. Factors highlighted as hindrances for sustainable peace included governance within the SPLM Party, weak institutions, pervasive corruption, poor economic management, abuse of cohesive national identity and insecurity. A number of factors that can give face-lift to governance institutions for sustainability were in addition analysed. These included institutional reforms, professionalising the army, establishment of a Healing, Justice and Reconciliation Commission and strengthening Civil Society among others.

- The author concludes by reiterating the significant of enhancing institutional reforms which should be realised through a participatory approach. This moreover, should be from a South Sudanese perspective to reinforce acceptance and sustainability.

Humanitarian Actors and Peace Support Operations: *A Case of South Sudan*

- Humanitarian effects that are associated with conflicts include population displacement, loss of lives and disruptions of livelihoods among others. As a result, the affected populations are often times forced to depend on humanitarian assistance for survival.

- The ongoing conflict in South Sudan has exposed the country to its worst humanitarian situation in many years. In response, the presence and actions of local and international humanitarian actors have increased considerably with a common aim of improving the humanitarian conditions.

- These actors not only provide emergency relief but also contribute toward sustainable peace and stability in the country. Their main roles include: provision of essential needs, refugees support, returnee integration, lobbying and advocacy.

- Despite the presence of many humanitarian actors, humanitarian conditions in South Sudan remain wanting hitherto. The paper attributes this situation to access constraints that undermine effective and timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to the populations in need. These access constraints include: environmental and infrastructural challenges, insecurity and bureaucratic barriers.

- Given the critical contribution of humanitarian actors in South Sudan, the paper proposes the need to address the access constraints mainly through an all-inclusive approach that constitutes all the key stakeholders.

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