

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies

**Conflict Dynamics in a Three-Level Game:
the Conflict Formation in Gambella,
Southwest Ethiopia**

By

Mossa Hamid Wassie

May, 2014

Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Center for African and Oriental Studies

**Conflict Dynamics in a Three-Level Game:
the Conflict Formation in Gambella,
Southwest Ethiopia**

By

Mossa Hamid Wassie

A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa University in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in African Studies (Citizenship and State in Africa).

Advisor: Getachew Kassa (Ph.D)

May, 2014

Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Center for African and Oriental Studies

**Conflict Dynamics in a Three-Level Game:
the Conflict Formation in Gambella,
Southwest Ethiopia**

By: Mossa Hamid Wassie

Approved by Board of Examiners:

_____	_____
Advisor	Signature
_____	_____
Internal Examiner	Signature
_____	_____
External Examiner	Signature
_____	_____
Chairman of the Center Graduate Committee	Signature

May, 2014

Addis Ababa

Acknowledgements

If I were to mention all the people that contributed for the successful completion of this thesis, I would be writing another! Humbled by the goodness of heart of many of my friends, lecturers and professors, I would like to mention but a few: To my supervisor, Dr. Getachew Kassa, I wish to express my special thanks for his extraordinary liberal attitude to pay attention to my views and constructive comments towards academic precision.

I am very much grateful to the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (department of Integration and Conflict) for inviting me to Halle/Saale, Germany for my Ph.D. proposal defense in January 2014 and now as their Doctoral Fellow. On a personal note, I am indebted to Prof. Dr. Gunther Schlee particularly, who is now going to be my doctoral supervisor at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, for his constructive comments on my Ph.D. proposal which I included in this study.

Special thanks go to the whole research participants for the indispensable participation and provision of valuable information; and Gambella Regional State and its people for the hospitality, respect and politeness they showed me in my stay in the region. My deepest gratitude goes to all my friends who have been with me throughout this thesis, especially Ojulu Kwot, Okunge Okello, Nyon Hoth, Sisay Mamo, and Daniel Assefa.

I am indebted to the Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center and Network for its financial assistance; and I am also candidly thankful to Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Addis Ababa Office for its generous fund.

Finally my deepest gratitude goes to my wife Roza Asrar, whose unfailing support, even in those low moments that I was close to breaking point found the right words to reinvigorate my energies, and keen interest in my academic development have always been a source of inspiration.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	I
Table of Contents.....	II
Abbreviations	IV
<i>Abstract</i>	V
Chapter One	
Introduction	
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Issues and problems	3
1.3. Research questions	5
1.4. Objectives of the study	5
1.5. Relevance of the study.....	5
1.6. Scope of the study.....	6
1.7. Limitations of the study	6
1.8. Structure of the study	6
Chapter Two	
Review of Related Literature	
2.1. Understanding Conflict and Security: a conceptual framework.....	7
2.1.1. Conflict: what is in it?	7
2.1.2. Causes of conflict	9
2.1.3. Security: what is it?	11
2.1.4. Conflict and Security: where is the link?	13
2.2. Inter-linked Conflicts and “Security Complex”: a theoretical view	14
2.2.1. Inter-linked conflicts and security dynamics.....	14
2.2.2. Mapping the three-levels of conflicts in the Horn of Africa	17
2.2.3. The relevance of Game Theory in conflict analysis	19
2.3. Related empirical studies	21
Chapter Three	
Methodological Issues	
3.1. Description of the study area	23
3.2. Selection of research sites	26
3.3. Research design	27

3.4. Methods of data collection and instruments	28
3.5. Selection of research participants	28
3.6. Sampling techniques and sample size	29
3.7. Methods of data analysis	29
3.8. Validity of the data and ethical considerations	30
Chapter Four	
Findings and Discussions	
4.1. Historical trajectories of the conflict	31
4.2. Modern global capital meets traditional Anywaa	36
4.3. Good relations are not given: Anywaa armed group in Gambella	42
4.4. Uncoordinated disarmament: changing the balance of power in the frontier	50
4.5. Cattle raiding and child abduction along the Southwest frontier: security for whom?	55
4.6. Cross-border alliance formations: Nuer Empire in the making?	61
Summary and Conclusion:	67
References	73
Appendixes	80

Abbreviations

APDO	Anuak People’s Democratic Organization
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSA	Central Statistics Authority
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defense Forces
EPLF	Eritrean People’s Liberation Front
EPUF	Ethiopian Patriotic United Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
GPDF	Gambella People’s Democratic Front
GPDM	Gambella People’s Democratic Movement
GPDUP	Gambella People’s Democratic Unity Party
GPLM	Gambella People’s Liberation Movement
GPLM/F	Gambella People’s Liberation Movement/Front
GPLP	Gambella People’s Liberation Party
MPDP	Majang People’s Democratic Party
NIF	National Islamic Front
NPDO	Nuer People’s Democratic Organization
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
PDF	Popular Defense Forces
SAF	Sudan Armed Forces
SPLM/A	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army
SSDF	South Sudan Defense Force
SSLM	Southern Sudan Liberation Movement
TPLF	Tigray Peoples Liberation Front
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WPE	Workers Party of Ethiopia

Abstract

Gambella is one of the most, if not utmost, conflict ridden region of Ethiopia. For so long, the conflict formation in the region has been understood as local ethnic conflict between the Anywaa and the Nuer. Most of these are ethnographic studies that subscribe the Anywaa-Nuer ethnic conflict to the dominant “primordial” and “constructivist” narratives of ethnology. Despite this assumption, the conflict formation in Gambella is entangled at the national political process and the dynamic transnational conflict formation in the Horn of Africa. The objective of this study was to examine the conflict formation in Gambella from the three-level game of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics. A qualitative interpretation and analysis of primary data collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions and comprehensive reading of secondary data such as books, journals, reports and other relevant documents have been made. The findings of the study show that the historic local ethnic relations and conflict between the Anywaa and Nuer, that had to do with resources such as water and pasture, began to be entangled to the national political processes in the early 20th century with the advancement of Abyssinian empire state accompanied by grand projects of state and nation building. The two ethnic groups were differentially integrated in the empire state. Starting from the second half of the 20th century the ethnic relations in Gambella which was already entangled into the national political processes became pawns in inter-state relations and conflict in the Horn of Africa. In the transnational conflict dynamics of the Cold War, Derg and SPLM/A on the one side and Khartoum and various armed groups fighting against Addis Ababa on the other side engaged in proxy alliances and wars. Locally, the Nuer in Gambella were mobilized and recruited by Derg in the fight in the North against EPLF and TPLF. The Anywaa supported by the Sudanese and TPLF fought against the Nuer and SPLM/A in Gambella. Even if today the conflict in Gambella is to do with the Anywaa political elites and highlanders and by extension the central government, the more assertive Nuer is a variable in escalating the conflict. In what seems to be a transnational conflict formation in South Sudan, the inter-ethnic relations and conflict between the Anywaa and Nuer are further intertwined as the two ethnic groups mobilized along the traditional “who is with whom” alliance formations along the frontier. Because this is a region where states are weak in their frontiers and similar ethnic groups living in their international borders are easily mobilized in transnational conflict dynamics.

Key Terms: Gambella, Anywaa, Nuer, Conflict, Security, Three-Level Game.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background

The Horn of Africa¹ is one of the most conflict prone regions of Africa (Markakis, 1996: 111; Sommer and Bruchhaus, 2008: 7; Kassahun, 2013: 71; Redie, 2013: 3). For the last 50 years the region has suffered protracted, chronic and complex conflicts (Cliffe, 2004: 151) and almost all the countries that constitute the region have experienced intra- and inter-state conflicts of varying degrees and intensity (Kassahun, 2013: 71).

The conflict in the region is intriguing because diverse forms of conflicts at multiple levels of aggregation have been interwoven into a complex conflict system (Harald and Borchgrevink, 2007: 16; Kassahun, 2013: 71). Local/national Conflicts in individual counties are often compounded by inter-state conflicts of varying degree and intensity which take place at different times (Kassahun, 2013: 72). That is to say, the local/national and inter-state conflicts are intimately connected in the Horn. Local/national conflicts very easily spill across international boundaries triggering conflict between states, resulting in inter-state conflicts. Inter-state conflicts also tend to spawn national cleavages (Redie, 2013: 4). Closely related situation is also the fact that states in the region are masters of interference in the affairs of their neighbors (Clapham, 1990: 405).

Gambella region of Ethiopia, like other parts in the Horn of Africa, is one of the most conflict-ridden regions of Ethiopia (Medhane, 2006: 3; Regassa, 2010: 205; Markakis, 2011: 67). Gambella, bordering South Sudan, can be seen as example for one of the most, if not utmost, complex region in Ethiopia with regard to contemporary political conflicts in the country (Meckelburg, 2006: 7; Harald and Borchgrevink, 2007: 43; Dereje, 2009: 641).

¹ The states covered under the geographical nomenclature of Horn of Africa are not something that has got consensus. Different writers deal with different sets of states to comprise the Horn of Africa. However, widely stretched, the region is assumed to include the states of Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti whose conflict relations with Ethiopia's region of Gambella are to be analyzed.

The historic roots of conflict in Gambella between the Anywaa and Nuer can be traced back to the eastern expansion of the Eastern Jikany Nuer from Southern Sudan (Medhane, 2006: 6; Dereje, 2009: 642). Large scale hostilities between the two groups continued largely owing to the incompatible modes of production and livelihood as the Nuer (mostly pastoralist) trespass their animals onto Anywaa farm land where they live in mixed settlements (Medhane, 2006: 6). The local conflict dynamics were cooperative at some time and conflictual at another time as the balance of power continued to oscillate over the years (Markakis, 2011: 69)

The local conflict dynamics began to take shape with the arrival of the Ethiopian state in the early 20th century accompanied by projects of control and territorial expansion. The subsequent projects of control and other grand schemes of state-building and nation-building brought turning points in the local conflict dynamics (Mossa, 2013: 41). Particularly, the ill-fated and imposed resettlement programme by the Derg regime in the early 1980s added a major variable in the conflict formation in Gambella (Meckelburg, 2006: 11; Medhane, 2006: 8). The escalation of the civil war in Ethiopia in the 1980s further entangled the local actors in the Gambella conflict to national political developments which in turn escalated the conflicts in Gambella (Axel, 2007: 17).

Since the second half of the 1980s, the Gambella conflict had become pawns in regional/transnational² conflicts between Ethiopia and Sudan. As part of the politics of the Cold War, the Derg regime made plain its support to SPLM/A, allowing it to set up military training and base camp facilities in Gambella (James, 2002: 267). Not only were the SPLM/A allowed into Ethiopian territory, they also recruited from the rural population in Gambella, while the Sudanese army began counter-insurgency operations against local Ethiopian civilians in Gambella (ibid: 268).

Political developments in the 1990s both in Ethiopia and Sudan were also turning points in the Gambella conflict formation. The restructuring of the Ethiopian state and introduction of ethnic federalism brought new structures and actors to the conflict in Gambella. The traditional resource

² The term “transnational” is used in the study to indicate the conflict formation beyond the national boundaries of the member states in the Horn of Africa region, particularly Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan and Eritrea. I used the term for inter-state conflicts and proxy wars in the region that may also include actors outside the Horn of Africa like Egypt, China and U.S.A.

based conflicts among ethnic groups in Gambella gave way to a new arena of conflict for control of political power in the newly established regional state. Moreover, political developments from the other side of the border, the escalation of civil war in the Sudan and the split of SPLM/A produced huge influx of refugees in Gambella.

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 that ended the longest civil war in the Sudan was presumed to give a breathing space for Gambella (Regassa, 2010: 187; Chan, 2007: 58). However, the optimism and hope for peace in Gambella was dashed soon internal turmoil and dynamic violent conflicts in South Sudan are now leading to a series of new local, national and regional/transnational-scale conflicts which in turn impacted the conflict formation in Gambella (Mossa, 2013: 51).

1.2. Issues and problems

One very interesting issue that emerges from the above stylized facts is that understanding the conflict formation in Gambella requires a diachronic approach that can take into account the trajectories of the three-level conflict dynamics at the local, national and regional/transnational levels. The conflict pattern in Gambella illustrates how local, national and inter-state/regional dimensions are inter-related and that these have their separate historical bearings that both exacerbate and are exacerbated by contemporary conflicts. In other words, the patterns of conflict and security dynamics in Gambella are not restricted to the clashes of internal or local factors. Conflict over political representation (particularly in the post-1991), land entitlements and different and conflicting modes of production do not only emanate from local realities but also with linkages to national political developments and developments across the national boundaries of the Ethiopian state. The historic cross-border influx of ethnic groups as well as influx of refugees makes claims to citizenship and political representation important denominators and explanatory factors in the current conflict formation in Gambella.

A close examination of the conflicts in Gambella requires understanding of contemporary patterns of conflicts that occur at three levels of aggregation (local, national and transnational). The local level conflicts are closely related to conflicts over scarce environmental resources; the juxtaposition of drought, conflict and (in) appropriate government policies is the underlying sources of complexity here. Keeping in mind the linkages of the local conflicts and national

politics, we should separate local level conflicts between identity groups and national level contentions for control over government power. Unfortunately, the distinction between contention for national power and inter-state wars is difficult given the multi-level conflicts and tit-for-tat policy of member states in the region. Inter-state wars are conducted in proxy alliances which is better understood as transnational conflicts. Moreover, these conflicts are linked through resource exchanges between organizations operating at different levels. Combatants in one country have access from other country (ies) capable of providing relatively low level of resources needed to continue coercive operations.

Despite the complex set of conflicts in Gambella, academic preoccupation on the conflict in Gambella so far looked the conflict formation from different perspective. Some of them comprehend the conflict in Gambella from local historic horizontal conflict relations among ethnic group in Gambella and particularly between the Anywaa and Nuer (Meckelburg, 2006; Dereje, 2008; 2009; Ujulu, 2009). While others try to understand the conflict formation in Gambella from a vertical (national) conflict relation through center-periphery approach (Medhane, 2007; Dawit, 2011; Markakis, 2011). Very few academic works discuss the civil war in the Sudan and its impact on Gambella (Kurimoto, 2005; Chan, 2007; Regassa, 2010). Over all, these works are either limited by their perspective (looked the conflict in Gambella from either local or national levels) or they are time and actor bounded (the impact of the civil war in the Sudan on Gambella till 2005).

Therefore, the Gambella conflict formation was not well addressed in its own right and most prominently, the interplay of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics in the Gambella conflict formation did not receive academic attention. This study is informed by the fact that the conflict formation in Gambella should be explained by the complex process of interactions at the local, national and transnational levels. The study, therefore, attempts to fill the lacuna in the analysis of the Gambella conflict formation through examining the conflict formation from a three-level game of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics.

1.3. Research questions

The central theme of the study is examining the interplay of the three level games of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics in the Gambella conflict formation. The following are the specific questions the study.

1. How are the conflict formation in Gambella region of Ethiopia formed and what are the pertinent factors for the conflict formation?
2. How does the inter-play of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics affect the conflict formation in Gambella?
3. In what ways do the trends of conflict dynamics in the post-CPA and post-independence South Sudan affect the conflict formation in Gambella?

1.4. Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine the conflict formation in Gambella from a three-level game of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. Explain the conflict formation in Gambella and identify actors and factors in the dynamics of conflict;
2. Examine the linkages of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics in the Gambella conflict formation;
3. Illustrate the implications of the patterns of conflict dynamics in the newly born South Sudan for the Gambella conflict formation.

1.5. Relevance of the study

The study might be important in the sense that it examines the interplay of the local, national and transnational conflict dynamics in the Gambella conflict formation. Given the lacuna in the understanding of the conflict in Gambella, this study, through examining the conflict from various vantage points, will be a comprehensive attempt to analyze the conflict. Thus, the study

may serve as a caveat for policy makers and general readers about the conflict formation in Gambella region of Ethiopia.

1.6. Scope of the study

The study will examine the conflict formation in Gambella region of Ethiopia through three-level game of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics. To make sense of the current conflict lines, we need to go through an examination of the historical trajectories of the conflict i.e. historical perspectives complement current analysis. Thus, the study may rely on major historical trajectories however particular emphasis will be given to events after 1980s whereby major national and transnational dynamics came into the Gambella conflict formation. The scope of the study, therefore, will attempt to cover the conflict dynamics in Gambella from the second half of the 1980s to the current conflict dynamics in South Sudan and its impact on Gambella.

1.7. Limitations of the study

The researcher has faced considerable challenges in Gambella. Given the fact that the issue under study is conducted in the region where there is ethnic tension and insecurity as well as lack of all weather roads, the researcher faced challenges to get the required data from the participants. Besides, time constraint poses difficulties on the collection and analysis of primary and first-hand information on the issue under consideration.

1.8. Structure of the study

The study comprises four chapters. The first chapter is about introducing what the study is about, the problem to be examined, the research questions and objectives, significance, scope and limitations of the study. The second chapter briefly review related literature to the major theme of the study and provide a highlight of pertinent related empirical studies on the issue. The third chapter gives the methodological aspects of the study. The last chapter presents the findings of the study. In this part, the thesis discusses the conflict in Gambella from a three-level game of local, national and transnational conflicts dynamics by analyzing the specific conflicts in very specific districts in Gambella. The specific conflicts in very specific district are first analyzed in disaggregated manner, just to focus on one at a time. Then they are synthesized to understand the linkages across the levels. Finally, the thesis wraps up with conclusion.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.1. Understanding Conflict and Security: a conceptual framework

It is no surprise that the study of conflict and security has undergone through both “broadening” and “deepening” approaches during the past twenty years. The study of conflict, as its broadening approach, has grown from a peripheral topic to a central concern for scholars of comparative politics and international relations and more importantly historians, sociologists, economists and psychologists have entertained this set of political and social phenomenon. While each of these disciplines continues to be characterized by their own methodological preferences, new works emerged, as a deepening way, characterized by questions and methods that transcends traditional disciplines and synthesizes insights from multiple fields.

In a similar fashion, the field of security studies has evolved considerably over the years. It has undergone both broadening (considerations of non military threats) and deepening (considerations of security of individuals and social groups) to become an all encompassing condition. This study makes use of the new approaches of both concepts to grasp the interlinked nature of conflicts and security dynamics in Gambella. Thus, it is of significant paramount to look briefly into what is conflict and security and what is in each of these concepts. This part of the thesis presents conceptual underpinnings about conflict, security, interlinked conflicts and conceptual and theoretical underpinnings about the three level conflicts and patterns in the Horn of Africa in a precise and brief way. Related empirical studies conducted so far on the issue at stake will be presented as follows.

2.1.1. Conflict: what is in it?

Conflict as a social phenomenon is widely perceived to be part of daily life (Axt cited in Redie, 2013: 4). In almost all social science discussions, conflict and competition are presented as synonymous or interchangeable. For instance, Reimann represents conflict as the persistent and pervasive nature of inter-group and international competition among disparate interests and values that underlines power dynamics (Reimann, 2005: 5). Competition may produce conflict yet not all instances of conflict reflect competition. Moreover, (scarce) resources are presented as

carnal in competition and conflict. Wallensteen (2002: 16) explains conflict as a situation in which two or more parties strive to acquire the same scarce resources at the same time³. The central point in this definition is scarcity.

Conflicts are not always necessarily about resources. Further, even if the conflicts are about resources, these resources are, in most occasions, not necessarily scarce. As many argue (Galtung, 1975: 4; Deutsch, 1991: 311; Mollar, 2003: 30), in many cases conflict is based on perceptions rather than an attitude or behavior as it has generally been defined. Thus, while discussing the concept of conflict, perception should be included as a central concept since the conflict and the opponent's intention often are defined according to subjective perceptions.

Concerning the origin of conflicts, it has usually centered around two ontological strands of subjectivist and objectivist approach (Axt et al., 2006). The subjectivist approach attributes the origin of conflicts to the perceived incompatibility of goals (Swanstrom and Weissman, 2005: 3). This is to imply that many goals are subjectively perceived as incompatible by actors in the conflict. However, objectively seen, goals can be thoroughly compatible. Incompatibility may be due to misinformation, cultural misunderstanding or misperceptions such as stereotypes, mistrust or emotional stress. The objectivist approach attributes the origin of conflicts in the social and political make-up and structure of society (ibid: 3). Contrary to the subjectivist approach, the implication here is conflict can exist independently of the perceptions of the parties involved. As Schmid (1968: 4) put it: “[class conflict] is not a conflict because the classes have incompatible goals, fight each other, and hate each other ... [but rather] a conflict because the social structure is such that one class loses what the other class wins”.

We may draw a conclusion from this discussion that the distinction between subjective and objective origin of conflict may not have analytical significance. As Mitchell (1991: 221) commented, the objective observer, in labeling the structure of a system as conflictual or violent contrary to the perception of the parties involved, is making a subjective interpretation. That means, it is based on one's own subjective values and criteria that determines as to what constitutes a conflict in the first instance. Hence, the objectivist approach cannot be value-free as

³ It is important to note that resources are not only economic in nature and that the terminology might miss conflicts involving political issues (representation and citizenship) security orientations (political and economic security), environmental concerns, historical issues etc.

it reflects “another subjective assessment of the situation ... by some third party rather than by the participants” (ibid).

Given the conflicts in the Horn of Africa and particularly the conflict in Gambella which are protracted, multi-layered and inter-linked to local, national, transnational actors and interests, it seems evident that these conflicts are best explained as a dynamic process involving a mixture of subjective features (such as identities, perceptions, needs and interests) and supposedly objective structural ones (such as political and economic marginalization, unequal distribution of resources and government deficits and regional conflict patterns). Therefore, any exclusive reliance on either subjectivist or objectivist approach will prove insufficient to understand the dynamics of conflict in the Gambella region of Ethiopia.

The other important point is conflict is not a static situation but a dynamic one (Swanstrom and Weissman, 2005: 6) i.e. the intensity level of a conflict changes over time as the conflicts life cycle or dynamics changes. According to Swanstrom and Weissmann (ibid: 12), conflicts tend to be described as dynamic in regard to their intensity levels, i.e. escalating from (relative) stability and peace into crisis and war (conflict), thereafter deescalating into relative peace. It is also argued that these dynamics are reoccurring⁴. Understanding conflict dynamics is essential for an understanding of how, where and when to apply different strategies and measures of conflict prevention and management. In principle, conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution are regarded as applicable in different phases of a conflict cycle⁵.

2.1.2. Causes of conflict

Various approaches to the analysis of causes of conflict have focused on different aspects such as socio-economic, politico-cultural, identity formations, historical circumstances and society's experience. While these approaches embodied the sources of conflict either to larger social structures (shaped by institutional relationships and value differences) or to an internal

⁴ It should be noted that many scholars add stable, sometimes called durable, peace as an additional phase in which the conflict is considered resolved i.e. the reoccurring pattern of the conflict has been stopped.

⁵ Generally, conflict prevention measures are designed for the early phases, before the conflict has become manifest. Management measures are applied in later phases when a conflict is manifest, but before violence has occurred. Conflict resolution, on the other hand, is applied in the de-escalation phase after a violent conflict has occurred. However, it is also argued that resolution can be applied in all phases as soon as the conflict is manifest (Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005: 11).

psychological environments (social level frustration), we need also to look into national, regional and transnational actors, besides the local dynamics, and factors in the approaches to conflict. These multiple approaches to the causes of conflict show that there is no single explanation. For analytical convenience in this study, we look at the causes of conflict in the Horn of Africa from certain broad clusters of categories.

The commonly alluded causes of conflicts are: territory, ideology, ethnicity, self-determination, religion, access to resources, domination and equality (Moller, 2003: 8). Regarding the causes of inter-state conflicts, Pfetsch and Roheoff (cited in Redie, 2013: 6) identify nine items which they call commodities. These are: territory (border), secession, decolonization, autonomy, ideology, national power, regional predominance, international power and resources. It is widely accepted that the classic cause of inter-state conflict is territory (Axt et al., 2006: 12). On the other hand, the causes of intra-state (local or national) conflicts or civil war are associated broadly with the role of ethnic and religious identity (David, 1997: 17; Mary Kaldor, 1999: 3) and political economy, better known as “greed and grievance” (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2006: 21).

The other important point is the fact that the drivers of conflict are not only internal dynamics (local and national actors and networks), they are also external as they entail transnational actors and networks which are at the same time, similar to internal dynamics, social, economic, political and military. This is to imply that we need to incorporate in our study the interplay of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics in the region from historical and contemporary processes and the role played by the state, capital, civil society, institutional conditions and identity constructions and citizenship discourses.

Given this brief conceptual issues, the conflict pattern in the Horn of Africa and particularly the conflict formation in Gambella resembles the best example to entertain the multiple causes of conflict. We, however, cannot discuss all the causes of conflict in the region where peace could not be attained for more than half a century, which is in fact beyond the scope of the study. Redie (2013: 7) mentions some of those most commonly referred to as: 1) culture (ethnicity, religion, language); 2) livelihood-based resources (land, water, grazing, and pasture); 3) politics (power, inequality, discrimination, marginalization); 4) socio-economic (poverty, drought, environmental degradation); 5) lifestyle (peasantry, sedentary, pastoral, nomadic, highland, lowland); 6) dysfunctional government practices (state legitimacy deficiency, unproductive electoral

practices, dictatorship, lack of autonomy, and marginalization of local indigenous institutions; 7) underdevelopment (agriculture, pastoral and agro-pastoral economy).

The combinations of some or all of these causes explain the myriads of conflict in the region. If we take our case study of conflicts in Gambella, we can see that a combination of livestock based resource competition, cultural differences, socio-economic incompatibilities, and competition for political space are dynamics at the local level. At national level, inappropriate policies at the centre are additional factor to the dynamics of conflict. Cross-border issues such as resource competition between ethnic groups in Gambella and Jonglei State of South Sudan, refugee influxes from and the continued conflict dynamics in South Sudan underpin the transnational dimensions of the conflict formation in Gambella. The inter-state conflicts also resemble a combination of various elements.⁶ It is also important to remind that the causes of conflict are also influenced by structures and levels of conflict i.e. local (community), national (intra-state) and transnational (inter-state wars and proxies) arenas where the conflicts are played out.

2.1.3. Security: what is it?

Many scholars postulate that security is a contested concept; complex for definition, measurement and policy operationalization (Buzan and Hansen, 2007; Paul, 2008). This is because security undoubtedly means different things to different people. Buzan (1991a: 432) defines security as “the pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of change which they see as hostile”. Traditionally, the concept of security was state-centric characterized by the military interaction of sovereign states. This traditional notion of security was largely shaped by the Cold War. For this reason, the focus concerning security was on inter-state relations rather than intra-state conditions.

Structural changes in international system in the post Cold War era have raised questions over the traditional realist conception of security known as “national security”. This is because, the post-Cold War world has been subject to deepening globalization, a process associated with the

⁶ The longest civil war in the Sudan involves various factors that range from identity politics to cultural and religious differences, resource, marginalization and dysfunctional government at the center. The Ethio-Eritrean conflict of 1998 involved culture, politics, external intervention socio-economic differences and dysfunctional government practices.

growth of international linkages, an erosion of the autonomy of the sovereign state (Patman, 2006: 9), and particularly, the creation of new security environment in which the patterns of conflict have moved beyond the protection of the state (ibid).

The shift from state-centric conception of security towards a people-centered approach has come to hold a central place after the end of the Cold War. Along with this shift came the notion that states ought not to be the sole or even main referent of security⁷. The Human Development Report of the UNDP, a report credited for introducing a magnificent concern with the phrase 'Human Security', captures the whole picture of security as understood then:

The concept of security has for too long been interpreted narrowly: as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy... Forgotten were the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives (UNDP, 1994: 22).

Despite the ongoing debates about the scope of security, there seems to be consensus among its proponents that there should be a “shift of attention from a state-centered to a people-centered approach to security that concern with the security of state borders should give way to concern with the security of the people who live within those borders” (Tadjbakhsh, 2007: 5).

State security has been the main national policy agenda of countries in the Horn of Africa. The conflict prone nature of the region and tit-for-tat policy of member states has served the claim to national security which is actually equivalent to regime security. Irrespective of territorial integrity and modest national security, Ethiopia has historically tailored in political conflicts of various types. Its southwestern frontier lowland region is one of the conflict prone regions bordering the Sudan and now South Sudan. The security dynamics in Gambella is the outcome of intertwined factors of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics that indicates the weakness of the Ethiopian state in the Southwest frontier.

⁷ In an attempt to broaden the concept of security, the Copenhagen School of Security Studies identifies and develops five security sectors; the Military, the Political, the Societal, the Economic and the Environmental Sector (Buzan et al., 1998: 49-163).

2.1.4. Conflict and Security: where is the link?

Conflict and security are closely inter-related and mutually reinforcing. Conflict is the most noteworthy and also precarious threat for every kind of actors in international system. Several studies on peace and conflict have shown that violent conflicts caused insecurity which is characterized by breakdown of law and order, increase in crime rate and proliferation of arms (see Buzan and Hansen, 2009; Ken Both, 2007; Paul, 2008).

In contemporary world, armed/violent conflicts are intra-state conflicts. Civilian population constitutes a majority of victims in these armed and violent conflicts. It is now widely accepted that the main threats do not come from major inter-state confrontations any more, but from local and national (intra-state) conflicts. The rationale for new approaches to security that considers threats inside the state seems also informed by logic of the change of war. These threats are equally felt by the individual/communities inside the state and the state itself. There are various reasons why intra-state/internal conflicts are becoming serious security concerns. First, at the very individual level/community level, conflicts are a threat for human beings (in the form of human security and societal security) as crime against humanity and genocide. Second, at the state level, the possibility of spill-over effects of the civil war in one state to another makes internal conflicts to become threats to other neighboring states⁸.

Generally, intra-state conflicts poses main security threats for both the host states and neighboring states⁹. Existence of violent conflict in one state will have impact on the neighboring, particularly geographically proximate, state in terms of refugee influx and (in) security related to refugees and arms flow. As our case study may show, the civil war in the Sudan and now the dynamics of violent conflict in South Sudan have already produced mass influx of refugees and arms flow to Gambella. Refugee movements are result of violent conflict and at the sometime they may serve as causes of conflict between them and host community as

⁸ Buzan, Weaver and de Walde (1998) in their “New Framework for Security Analysis” strongly argue that (in) security transfers in shorter distances than longer one. States very close to the state experiencing violent conflicts will be seriously affected than the other states which do not share borders with the state experiencing violent conflicts.

⁹ The impact of intra-state conflicts on the host state security could be seen from two main points: physical and political. Physically, during intra-state conflicts nearly all infrastructures of the state may be destroyed. Political effects of violent conflicts on the host state are also inevitable. Collapse of central authority may give birth to what Collier (2002) called “trap of conflict” in the form of power struggle.

evidenced from three refugee camps in Gambella and now in Pinyudo refugee camp. The flow of arms from South Sudan, which has been washed by small arms and light weapons due to the longest civil war in the Sudan, has produced serious security problems in Gambella.

2.2. Inter-linked Conflicts and “Security Complex”: a theoretical view

In the turbulent region of the Horn of Africa, a number of local conflicts have become entwined in complex patterns of national and transnational conflicts by the involvement of other states, non-state contestants and spill-over effects from other states’ civil war. This phenomenon of “new wars” is now termed as inter-linked/transnational conflicts. Arguably, this linkage of conflicts is a reflection of a growing importance that conflicts in the region needs to be looked into a complex set of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics. The following theoretical insights about inter-linked conflicts and security dynamics will be a powerful analytical framework to grasp the linkages of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics in Gambella.

2.2.1. Inter-linked conflicts and security dynamics

Among the various analytical approaches for understanding transnational patterns of conflict, the “Regional Security Complex Theory” developed by Buzan and Weaver (Buzan, 1991; Buzan and Weaver, 2003) is the most quoted in the academic discourse on security. As it is defined in their work, “Regional security complex is a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently close that their national security concerns cannot reasonably be considered apart from each other” (Buzan and Weaver, 2003: 44).

The regional security complex theory is founded based on the traditional security concept¹⁰ that considers states as the only unit of analysis and for whom security is sought. Hence, Buzan and Weaver are cautious about to apply the theory in Africa that its “state system”, which they characterize as weak in controlling their territories and peoples and lack of meaningful borders, is not the one based in Westphalia framework. Most significantly, the key role played by non-

¹⁰ Traditionally, the concerns of security studies have been mainly a state’s ability to counter external threats, in the form of military and political amity and enmity relations. In the post-Cold War era, the approaches to security studies turned into a more comprehensive framework that looked at the threats (non-military as well as military) faced by non-state actors (like individuals, social groups, etc) as well as the state.

state actors in Africa indicates the security discourse in Africa is not similar to that of the Westphalia model (Buzan and Weaver, 2003: 223). Their general conclusions about Africa are twofold. First, non-state actors have a large impact on the continent's security dynamics. Second, the inter-state boundaries may be more misleading than helpful as a way of understanding the security actors and dynamics in play (ibid: 247-48). Thus, the idea of a regional security complex might be helpful to some respects but may not be the finest in the understanding of the patterns of conflict in the Horn of Africa and particularly our case study. The conflicts in Gambella are not just regionalized. They are also often localized, nationalized and globalized all at the same time.

The regional conflict formation model developed by the Center on International Cooperation (CIC)¹¹ in 2001 for the analysis of conflict formation in the Great Lakes Region of Africa could be another analytical framework for the analysis of inter-linked conflicts in the Horn of Africa. The CIC model defined regional conflict formation as “a set of transnational conflicts that form mutually reinforcing linkages with each other across state borders and through the region, making for more protracted conflicts” (CIC, 2001: 3). The model is drawn from four key elements. First, contemporary armed conflicts tend to be regional. Second, regional conflict formations are characterized by regional and global political, military, economic and social networks. Third, a regional conflict management strategy addresses the geographical and functional elements of such formations. Fourth, a regional approach engages regional and/or sub-regional states, intergovernmental organizations and civil society networks (CIC, 2001: 5-6). At the operational level, the regional conflict formation model proposes that conflict management approaches should be integrative taking into account the linkages and networks of conflict within the region and sub-regions (ibid: 11).

This model assumes that conflicts are neither local, civil nor intra-state, they may cross national boundaries. The linkages among local, national, and transnational actors facilitate the transnational aspect of such formations. Global factors like multinational companies (engaged in land grabbing or oil drilling) can aggravate conflicts by facilitating resource based conflicts and

¹¹ The model was developed by Center on International Cooperation, New York University and the African Peace Forum, Nairobi, Kenya in November, 2001 after three days discussion among academics, professionals and government representatives held in Nairobi. The model is to analyze regional conflict formation in the Great Lakes Region of Africa and then to recommend policy options to resolve the conflict in the region.

cross-border migrations. The national actor may exacerbate conflicts by the transnational activities that connect them to regional global capital and power.

This is particularly evident in our case study of Gambella conflict formation whereby cross-border migration and contested citizenship, porous border, weak states, and land grabbing are intertwined factors of local, national, and transnational aspects of the conflict in Gambella. Moreover, the Gambella conflict, one among the many in the Horn of Africa, shows how the conflict has been and continues to be produced by a range of factors like ethnicity, political systems at the center, inter-state relations, Sudanese civil wars, influx of refugees and the new conflict dynamic in the newly born republic of South Sudan.

Furthermore, recent studies on the contemporary civil war evidenced that civil wars are not limited to national boundaries. They reveal a transnational character whereby key actors, resources and events span national boundaries. Gleditsch (2003) and Ellingsen (2000) presented large amount of quantitative data showing how linkages between states and regional factors strongly influence the risks of transnational dimensions of civil war. The neighborhood effect has been replicated in many other studies as well (see Gleditsch, 2002; Sambanis, 2001). As for instance, ongoing conflict in neighboring state may led to easy availability of small arms and light weapons and thus making it relatively less expensive for groups to mobilize insurgencies. On the other hand, the increase in risk may also stem from actor-specific forms of intervention and support from actors outside the state in question. Moreover, civil war become regionalized and internationalized through direct intervention from neighboring states (Reagan, 2000: 2). However, direct interventions from other states in civil war are relatively rare¹². States may intervene in more indirect ways in disputes in other states. For instance, by providing forms of covert support to one of the parties or by permitting rebels to operate without major obstacles.

In a nutshell, the conflict formation in Gambella (particularly after the second half of the 20th century) has been entangled with the civil war in the Sudan not only because Gambella is geographically proximate to Southern Sudan but also the people of the region share the same ethnic groups with the people on the other side of the border and the mutual destabilization

¹² According to Uppsala Conflict Data System about 5% of the internal conflicts are considered internationalized civil wars whereby either the government or the opposition receives support from the government of other states.

policies of the successive Ethiopian and Sudanese governments. Thus, treating the Gambella conflict formation as fully domestic events in Ethiopia is problematic, as the risks of civil war may be influenced by participants and processes outside the boundaries of the Ethiopian state. In this study we will be examining how transnational linkages and interactions across the boundaries between Ethiopia and South Sudan affect the dynamics of conflict in Gambella.

2.2.2. Mapping the three-levels of conflicts in the Horn of Africa

It is important to reiterate that a simple classification of conflicts in the Horn of Africa is problematic because of the evident multi-casual, multi-dimensional and inter-connected nature of conflicts in the region. For analytical leverage in this study, however, a dichotomous distinction of conflicts at three levels of local, national and transnational seems adequate, albeit only with the addition of their combination in internationalized local conflicts, here labeled inter-linked conflicts.

The distinction of conflicts within and between states rests on the political status of the combatants. If the combatants are recognized members of the international state system, then the conflict is defined as inter-state (Paul, 2011: 15). On the contrary, if one of the combatants is not a recognized member of the international state system but is located within a recognized state, the conflict is defined as intra-state or civil war (ibid).

Conflicts between states have shown a remarkable reduction in the post Cold War era¹³. Most of today's armed conflicts are intra-state. According to Moller (2003: 4), intra-state conflicts take place either between different groups within a society, or between the state and an insurgent group. The contentious issue or incompatibilities for this type of conflicts have been lumped together under the headings of government and territory i.e. as having to do with either the type of political system or the incumbent government or with the territorial issues such as secession or autonomy (Wallenstein and Sollenberg, 2002: 631).

¹³ For instance, according to Uppsala Conflict Data Programme, of the 96 armed conflicts that occurred between 1989 and 1996, only five were between states. The trend becomes even more pronounced in the 2000s (Farrell and Schmitt, 2012: 4).

For the last 50 years the Horn of Africa has suffered protracted, chronic and complex local, national and inter-state/transnational conflicts¹⁴ (Cliffe, 2004: 151). Overall, the conflict in the region falls into three levels: local (society-society), national (state-society), and transnational (state-state/ proxy wars). While transnational (state-state/proxy wars)¹⁵ are conflicts between sovereign states, national (state-society)¹⁶ conflicts relate to civil wars (communities with legitimate grievances challenge the state). Local (society-society)¹⁷ are conflicts of communal strife (intra-communal and inter- communal) under the shadow of the state (Redie, 2013: 6). In addition to these major inter-state and intra-state wars, countries in the region have also fought many proxy wars against each other by engaging in what Cliffe (2002: 54) calls “mutual interference”, support for each other’s insurgency movements. Paul (2011: 11) noted that the common underpinning sources for all these conflicts in the region are the state. A fragile state or a state in crisis in the region has become the sources of conflicts and insecurity.

Having a clear understanding of actors and issues at each conflict level and their dynamics is paramount. At the local level, identity groups compete over access to resources (water, land, cattle). Interactions among these identity groups involve common, conflicting and complementary interests. For instance, pastoralist groups search for space for their animals. In most instances sedentary communities are reluctant to allow pastoralists access to their crops yet animals allowed to forage on the vegetation remaining after cultivation will automatically provide natural fertilizer for the next season crops. This indicates as Brink (et al., 1995: 4)

¹⁴ According to the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme, since 1990 the Horn of Africa has suffered from 32 state based armed conflict dyads, 179 non-state armed conflicts dyads, and 22 dyads of one-sided violence. The state-based armed conflicts have resulted in approximately 231,510 battle-related fatalities; the non-state armed conflicts have killed approximately 31,511 people; and roughly 25,264 have been massacred in the campaigns of one-sided violence.

¹⁵ Among the region’s major inter-state wars the three fought between Ethiopia and Somalia. The first in 1961 escalated in 1964 and lingered in 1967 and the second in 1977 and 1978 both over Ogaden. The third war was in 2006 and 2009 when Ethiopian forces intervened in Somalia to dismantle Islamic Courts Union which they viewed it as a threat to Ethiopia’s stability and territorial integrity. The 1998 border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea is perhaps the largest war the region has seen in the post-colonial era, at least in terms of causality figures.

¹⁶ Every country in the region has faced at least one civil war during the post colonial era. In most cases, states have fought multiple civil wars, with the parties to the conflict the state or militia groups created by the state on the one side and sub-state actors, such as ethnic, religious, regional or other political organization on the other hand. Sudan (1955-1972 and 1983-2005 and the current Darfur crisis) and Ethiopia (1960- 1991 and various conflicts in the post-1991) suffers complex and multiple society-state conflicts.

¹⁷ These are often fought between ethnic and clan groups over resources such as land, water and livestock. Gambella has for so long riddled by violent conflicts among various ethnic groups for resources such as water and livestock.

showed, pastoralists and sedentary farmers are typically involved in a complex networks of economic exchange. However, in a situation of environmental extremity and governance deficit inter-group interactions may come to be dominated by direct clashes of interest.

The local conflict/cooperation interactions are not unaffected by the policies and actions of government at the center. In some cases, as this cases study of the conflict in Gambella shows, ethnic and clan conflicts over resources such as land, water and livestock are aggravated by government interference, on one side or the other. If certain identity groups engage in rebellion or resist policy measures, government tend to intervene in communal conflicts by supporting rival identity groups . Similarly, intra- and inter-communal conflicts over resources may become violent and deadly due to government inability to address them. At national level, contenders for power seek to dominate the national political process and their by obtain control over the resources made available to internationally recognized authorities. Under the prevailing conceptualization of sovereignty, the group, party, organization or family that constitutes the “legitimate” political authority has exclusive access to benefits derived from governmental activities.

At the transnational level, governments and contenders for power have been supported by other countries in the region, other governments and non-governmental organizations. The many weapons provided to combatants and the political support for each other’s rebels defused to combatants at the local levels that entangled the local dynamics into national and transnational conflict dynamics. The tit-for-tat policy of successive governments in Ethiopia and Sudan led the Gambella conflict to have transnational dimensions.

2.2.3. The relevance of Game Theory in conflict analysis

Game theory is the formal study of conflict and cooperation. Theodore and Bernhard (2001: 4) stated that game theoretic concepts apply whenever the actions of several agents are interdependent. Hovi (1998: 11) defined game theory as a theory of interaction among rational actors. Hovi’s definition explicitly states the fundamental assumption of game theory, that of actors making rational choice in the context of strategic interaction. The assumptions about rational¹⁸ actors are: 1) act consistently with their preferences and beliefs, where preferences are

¹⁸ For an introductory overview on the concept of rationality, see for example Chapter 2 in Hovi (1998).

assumed to be transitive¹⁹ and beliefs non-contradictory; 2) choose the best possible among available means in order to achieve goals they have in a given situation; 3) act so as to maximize their own interests taking into account the strategic environment, that is, the range of possible choices other actors have, acknowledging that the outcome for all is determined by the actions of all (ibid: 19).

For the purposes of this thesis, game theory is best thought of as a methodology for examining strategic behavior among interacting and interdependent units or actors in the conflict. If seen as a methodology rather than as a theory, it is clear that no definitive game theoretic interpretation of a sequence of real world events such as those that led up to the conflict in Gambella could be developed. In game theory, the interacting units are called players. Who or what constitutes a player, however, is a determination left to the individual analyst. Normally, the identification of players depends on the analyst's purpose and the specific research questions addressed. One could, for example, conceive of the conflict in Gambella as a two-actor game between Anywaa and Nuer, as a two-actor game between the central government and Anywaa opposition, or as a three-actor game among Anywaa and Nuer, central government and regional actors. Simply, both the number and identification of players are extra-game theoretic decisions that, in principle, should be driven by theoretical and/or empirical factors rather than by methodological considerations.

Further, to model an interaction (a game), it is necessary to specify the following elements: (1) a set of players that interact; (2) a set of available strategies/actions for each player; (3) the information players have when making a choice; (4) the potential outcomes which follow from different combinations of actions players have chosen; and (5) the preferences each player has over outcomes (Hovi, 1998: 27). This is the first step in formal modeling; the second step is to examine how rational players' strategies interact to produce possible solutions for the game (Gates and Humes, 1997: 12).

For this thesis, dynamic model is preferred because it includes the situations in which one actor can observe the other actor's move before it makes a decision. Thus, the model is a non-

¹⁹ If it is assumed that $A > B$ and $B > C$, then it follows that $A > C$.

cooperative game²⁰. This makes it easy to analyze the model under different assumptions regarding the information the players have. As to the implication of game theory assumptions for this thesis, the argument by Kydd (2004: 346-348) fills the gap that game theory is particularly meaningful when it is used in conflict and security studies since stakes are high for the actors involved, and thus the actors carefully consider their strategies and have strong preferences over outcomes. lastly, it is good to bear in mind that the researcher's intention is not to test game theory in Gambella conflict formation, rather to benefit from the theory to identify the most important elements of the conflict, to define the actors and to specify the relationships among them in order to derive logical inferences in the analysis of the conflict in Gambella.

2.3. Related empirical studies

The conflict in Gambella has received little scholarly attention so far. There are few studies on the long standing ethnic conflicts among ethnic groups in the region and recently conflicts associated with the introduction of federalism and land lease issues dominated academic and media works on Gambella. These include theses, article and political and media works.

Most of the available literature on the conflict in Gambella deals with the dynamics of local, at the sometime historical, conflict dynamics among ethnic groups in Gambella. These works are anthropological studies of ethnic relations particularly among the Anywaa and Nuer of Gambella (Kurimoto, 1994; 2004; Dereje, 2003; 2004; Alexander, 2006; Ojulu, 2011). These anthropological studies show that the inter-ethnic conflict of the Anywaa and Nuer in Gambella is one of the prominent and protracted one. They trace the inter-ethnic conflicts back in the early 20th century with the commencement of the advancement of the Nuer towards east. The Nuer expansion was in search of pasture and water. The early contacts and relations were more peaceful (Dereje, 2003: 23).

Very recent works (Dereje, 2009; Dawit, 2011; Markakis, 2011) gives attention to the introduction of ethnic federalism and Gambella experience. These studies, in one way or another, explains the challenges of ethnic federalism in Gambella region which is a multi-ethnic with a considerable size of "highlanders" that comes from other ethnic states. The new political formula

²⁰ Non-cooperative game theory, in contrast to cooperative game theory, assumes that actors cannot make binding commitments (Rasmusen, 2007: 21).

has brought new dimensions and actors to the dynamics of local conflict that has been about resources (water and pasture). As Dereje wrote, with the introduction of ethnic federalism in the post-1991 the Anywaa and Nuer employed different political strategies to access and legitimize resource claims (Dereje, 2006: 953). He argued that the Anywaa's reaction to the problems created by the Nuer have crystallized into "the project of containment", a strategy aimed at holding back the Nuer expansion into their territories. On the other hand, the Nuer have crystallized into what Dereje called "catching up" aimed at inclusion into the political structure (ibid).

Very few works attempts to show the impact of the civil war in the Sudan on Gambella. Particularly Regassa (2010) and Chan (2007) documented the impact of south Sudanese refugees on the host communities in Gambella. This has been a case in Pinyudo and Dimma refugee camps in which refugees were targeted by their being Nuer as their fellows were at war with Anywaa in Gambella and Itang (Chan, 2007: 67).

Overall, these studies are limited either by their perspective or the time frame. The conflict formation in Gambella could not be limited to the local ethnic relations and conflict between Anywaa and Nuer. The local conflict dynamics has been shaped and reshaped by national political processes and transnational conflict dynamics. The literature on the civil war in the Sudan and its impact on Gambella presumed the end of the civil war in the Sudan in 2005 will give breathing space for Gambella. Yet, the current conflict dynamics in South Sudan, national political process at home and the transnational conflict continue to shape the conflict formations in Gambella region. Ethnic conflicts, the failure of disarmament and insecurity in South Sudan, new wave of cattle raiding along the border between Gambella and South Sudan and cross-border insurgency continue to produce new wave of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics that have spill-over to Gambella. This study, therefore, attempts to fill the lacuna in the Gambella conflict formation by examining it from the interplay of the local, national and transnational conflict dynamics.

Chapter Three

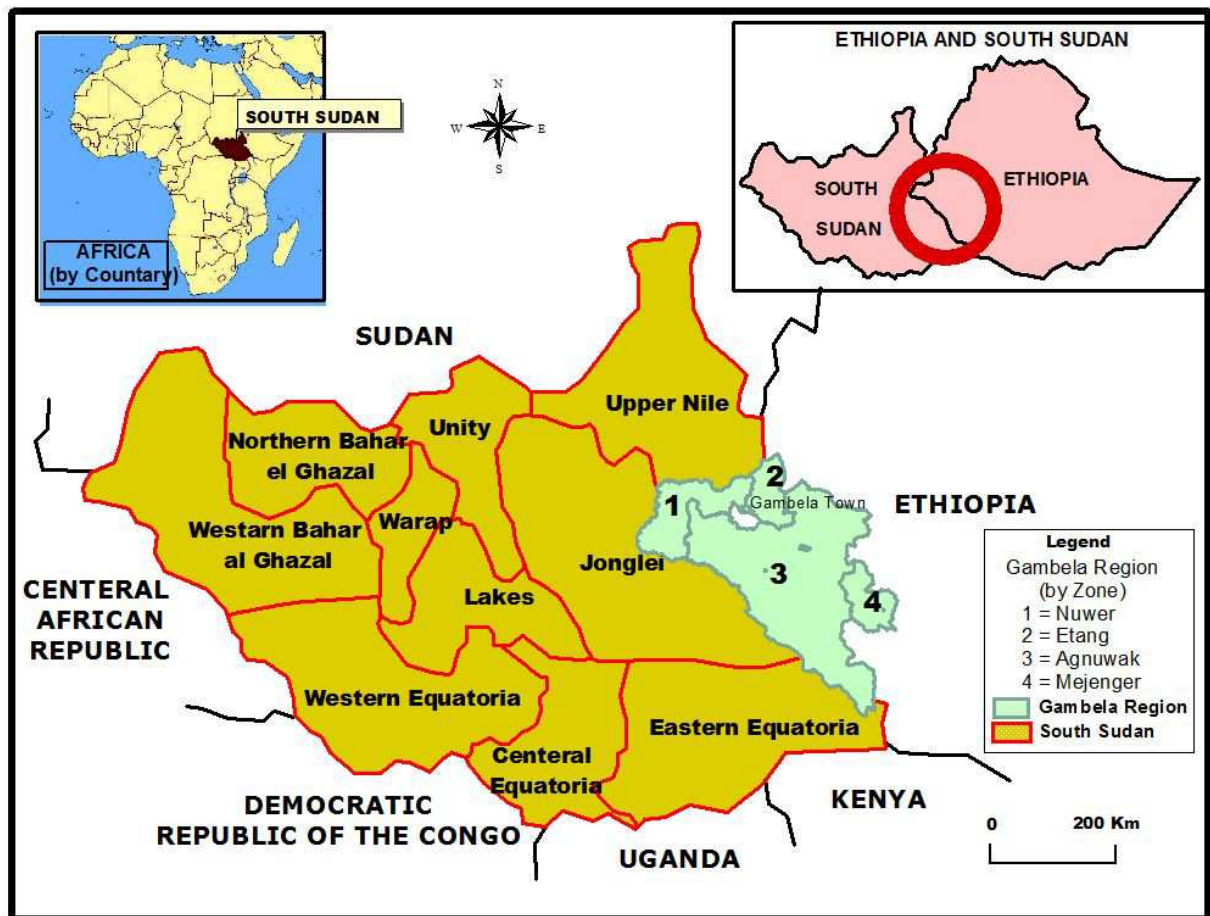
Methodological Issues

Studying the conflict dynamics that are entangled into interlinked webs of conflicts both at the political developments in the center and across the boundaries to transnational dynamics requires combining a local micro-level process with a national level political reform process and transnational dynamics that are shaped by national political reforms. Thus attempts are made at the local level to understand inter-ethnic relations through various tools. Moreover, the researcher attempts to analyze cross border factors in the “who is with whom” alliance formations across the border between Ethiopia and South Sudan.

This part of the thesis presents methodology of the study that entirely shaped the research design and methods of data collection as well as the manner of presentation and interpretation of the collected data through various tools. The rationale for preferring a qualitative methodology for the study are depicted; selection of research sites, methods and design, and sampling procedures and data collection techniques are presented following description of the study area.

3.1. Description of the study area

Gambella is located in southwestern frontier of Ethiopia. 766km far from the center, Gambella is one of the most remote parts of Ethiopian lowlands. This lowland plains are part of the Sudd hydraulic complex and between June and November most of this lowlands are flooded and marshes cover substantial areas. Gambella is crossed by several large rivers that flow into the Sobat River in South Sudan and hence to White Nile. Rivers like Baro, Akobo, Gilo and Alwero are natural borders between Gambella and South Sudan and major natural resource for their livelihood and transpiration. Gambella covers a total land size of 25,274 km². It borders Oromia Regional state in the East, and SNNPRS in the South East. Jonglei and Upper Nile State of South Sudan are its most Western frontiers borders (see Map 1. below).



Map 1. Ethio-South Sudan border: Gambella and Jonglei and Upper Nile States of South Sudan

According to the 2010 census, the population of Gambella is 307,000. This figure makes it the second smallest state after Harar. Gambella is one of Ethiopia's multi-ethnic regional state, comprising major "indigenous" ethnic groups; Anywaa and Nuer and three minor groups – Majang, Opo and Komo. Beside these indigenous ethnic groups, Gambella also comprises a sizable immigrant community, although not few of them are born and brought there, of commonly known as "highlanders".

Since 1995, Gambella's administrative structure was redrawn and three zones were created. Anywaa zone constitutes six Anywaa inhabited *Woredas* along the Baro and Akobo Rivers. Abobo, Gog, Jor, Gambella Zuriya, Gambella and Dimma *Woreda* were transferred from SNNPRS in 1996 and became the Anywaa's six *Woreda*. This made the Anywaa a political majority controlling six out of nine *Woredas*. With a population of over 65,000, the Anywaa spread comfortably over eight of the region's nine *Woredas* covering 70% of the regions land.

The Nuer belongs to the nation who lived in today's South Sudan. According to Markakis (2011: 80), the recent history of the Eastern Nuer is one of steady expansion Eastward in the Gambella plain, where the abundance of pastureland and permanent water sources are obvious attraction. The longest civil war in the Sudan contributed for huge influx of these people into Gambella. By the turn of the 21st century, the Nuer in Gambella reached 148,000 (CSA, 2010). This figure is more than double of the Anywaa. The 1995 redistribution of zones, allocated three *Woredas* to the Nuer, the three *Woredas* are Akobo, Jigaw and Iari.

The other indigenous groups are the three minorities of Majang, Opo and Komo. The Majang, are the third largest indigenous group in Gambella. The 2010 population census put their number to 22,000. They lived in Majanger Zone that constitutes two *Woredas*: Gondere and Mengesh *Woreda*. They also found in Abobo in small number. According to the 2010 census, the Komo, with a population of 8,000 live dispersed in Gambella *Zuria Woreda*. They also live in Benishagul Gumuz region. The other group, Opo is numbered less than 1,000 and lives in Itang *Special Woreda* and few also reside in Akobo and Jikaw *Woreda*.

In addition to the indigenous groups, since the 1980s Gambella has also witnessed a huge influx of diverse ethnic groups from the central/highland parts of the country. This wave of migration has introduced a new category of people in Gambella known as “highlanders” or “Degenga” in local maxim. The category highlander is only applicable in Gambella context and it is generally used to collectively refer to other Ethiopians in the region who do not belong to the five indigenous groups of the region. This category of people makes 26% of the total population (CSA, 2010). The identity boundary between the five indigenous ethnic groups versus the highlanders is constructed along linguistic, racial and cultural origins. From the locals' vantage point, the brown colored highlanders and the central Ethiopian state are only two sides of the same coin (Mossa, 2013: 31).

Politically and socio-economically, Gambella and its people have been among the most marginalized communities in Ethiopia. The historical marginalization combined with prolonged conflicts on the other side of the border, it would not be surprising then why Gambella has been one of the conflict ridden regions of Ethiopia. Besides the geographical proximity of Gambella to South Sudan which has been experiencing violent conflicts for more than four decades, the

people of Gambella share historical and cultural similarities with the people living on the other side of the border. Thus any development in South Sudan has spillover effects to Gambella.

3.2. Selection of research sites

Systematic field work was preceded by my previous three field works in Gambella. My first field visit to Gambella was between September and October 2011 as data collector and co-researcher for the project "National Conflict Mapping" organized by the Institute for Peace and Security Studies and House of Federation and financed by the German Development Cooperation, giz. I was working in a specific district called Itang which is a special *Wereda* and the conflict I studied was about the Highlander-Anywaa conflict. My second field visit was conducted in December, 2012 and January 2013. This time was for my Master of Arts in Peace and Security Studies generously financed by the Freidrich Ebert Stiftung Research Award. Gambella city, Abobo, Itang, Lari and Jikaw *Wereda* were the specific districts I collected data. My third visit to Gambella came between January and February 2014 while I was a supervisor for the project "Baseline Survey for Sustainable Development of the Gambella-Omo and Rift Valley landscapes" conducted by the Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center and Network. I covered all Anywaa *Weredas* and particularly I stayed more in Gambella Zuria, Abobo, Gog and Jor *Weredas* of Anywaa Zone. Data for this study are mostly collected in my third visit; data from my previous visits also enrich the discussion in this study.

Understanding the conflict formation in Gambella from a broader perspective requires a multi-sited diachronic project in which specific sites are selected on the basis of the issue being explored. Thus, three sites Pukadi-Alwero *Kebele* of Abobo *Wereda*, Abol Kiir *Kebele* of Gambella Zuria *Wereda* and Lari and Wanthwa *Weredas* are selected to explore the dynamics of local, national and transnational conflict dynamics in Gambella. Pukadi-Alwero *Kebele* is one of the Anywaa districts that recently experience very unique conflict related to the central government. Abol Kiir *Kebele* is an Anywaa *Kebele* but increasingly encircled by Nuer settlements and one of the district that experience long existing conflicts between Anywaa and Nuer. Lari and Wanthwa *Weredas* are Nuer *Weredas* close to Pibor County, Jonglei State of South Sudan which are signs for cross border conflicts as well as alliances.

Generally, the choice of these districts was informed by the nature and intensity of conflict dynamics and interactions of people being explored. Moreover, qualitative design and its data collection tools allow us to identify our participants and sites based on places and people that can best help us understand our central phenomenon (Creswell, 2009). In purposeful sampling the standard used in choosing sites and participants is whether they are information rich (Patton, 1990: 109).

3.3. Research design

This study is entirely based on qualitative research design. As Straus and Corbin (1998) and Patton (cited in Creswell, 2009: 156), remarked, qualitative research is about lives, lived experiences, behaviors, emotions and feelings as well as about organizational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomenon and interactions between groups. Besides, in a qualitative inquiry, the intent is not to generalize to a population but to develop an in-depth exploration of the central phenomenon of the study. Hence, qualitative design helps the researcher to pose general, broad questions to participants and it further allows the participants to share their views relatively unconstrained by researcher's perspective.

In addition, qualitative design is an approach in which the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspective with an intent of developing a theory or pattern or advocacy/participatory perspective (Creswell, 2009:). Kothari's explanation adds to the picture that qualitative design is intended to study qualitative phenomenon. By qualitative phenomenon, he meant phenomenon relating to or involving quality or kind (2004). In other words, qualitative research design generates results either in non-quantitative form or in the form which are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis.

Therefore, according to Kothari (2004), when the purpose of a research is to come up with non-statistical forms, qualitative design is most useful and appropriate. Further, qualitative design is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine (Patton cited in Creswell, 2009: 109). Thus, qualitative design is appropriate for conducting a study that has not been dealt with so far. Analyzing the conflict formation in Gambella from a broader local, national and regional dimensions will be pioneering and hence needs analytical and exploratory approaches.

3.4. Methods of data collection and instruments

Qualitative design and its method of data collection consists of collecting data using forms/tools with general, emerging questions to permit the participant to generate responses, gathering word/text or image/picture data and collecting information from a small number of individuals or sites (Creswell, 2009: 137). Hence, the design allows the researcher to collect both primary and secondary data.

In addition, qualitative design often aspires complex and detailed understanding of the issue which can only be realized by talking directly to people, going to their homes or places of work and allowing them to tell the stories unfiltered by what we presume to discover or what we have read in the literature (ibid). Thus, primary data is collected from participants in their natural setting using different tools such as interview (semi-structured), observation and focus group discussions. Furthermore, secondary sources are used to gather information. A critical and comprehensive reading is made on texts, government archives, journals, books, news both printed and broadcast, and other documents relevant to the issue under study.

3.5. Selection of research participants

As indicated above, qualitative inquiry intends not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of the central phenomenon. To understand the central phenomenon and to get the research questions answered the researcher purposefully or intentionally select individuals/participants. In a purposeful sampling, the standard used in choosing participants and sites is determined by whether they are “information rich” (Patton cited in Creswell, 2009: 109).

Therefore, the researcher purposefully selects individuals from the study sites. Snow ball sampling was used to trace informants who are information rich. Elders and individuals engaged in the conflict or in the negotiation process are selected using snow ball sampling. In the process considerations were given for ethnic and gender parameters. Seven interviews were made in each *Woredas*. Data collected using interviews in the *Woreda* are used for the analysis of the inter-ethnic relations among the conflicting parties. Further, data from these methods were important in the analysis of the conflict between the Anywaa political elites and the central government. Moreover, five interviews are made at Gambella city with the regional security officials at the Region’s Security and Administrative Bureau as well as at the Regional State Council and

President Offices and from other sections. Interviews with government officials and the data generated from them were relevant in analyzing the institutional narratives that could not be found in ordinary interviews. Two focus group discussions were also held in Gambella city and similar considerations are taken in choosing informants. The first focus group discussion among the Nuer included six participants and the second focus group discussion among the Anywaa include seven participants. The data generated in the focus group discussion is used for the analysis of the inter-ethnic conflicts between the Anywaa and the Nuer.

3.6. Sampling techniques and sample size

Based on the research problem that the study intends to address, Snow-ball sampling is used. This is based on the rationale that snow-ball sampling is a purposeful sampling strategy in which the researchers sample cases or individuals that differ on some characteristics (Creswell, 2009). The researcher identifies participants in Gambella region of the *Woredas* based on their inter-group relations and vulnerabilities to cross-border conflicts and security threats that comes across the border in South Sudan. Moreover, the sampling strategy is helpful to trace individuals who are information rich. Besides, flexibility was considered in sampling techniques and sample size so as to gain better outcome. Finally, the process attempt to be inclusive.

3.7. Methods of data analysis

Qualitative research study is about qualitative phenomenon. The data collected through qualitative methods interpreted accordingly. In a qualitative design classification and connection of data begins before the end of data collection to help make sense in the data collection and guide data generation (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). This helps the researcher to shape and reshape data collection at the middle of data collection phase. Then the actual data analyses begin by transcribing the data into English. Following this phase, data collected was sorted and arranged depending on the sources of information. Themes and categories were formulated to conceptualize, reduce and abstract the data which help the researcher to analyze them accordingly.

3.8. Validity of the data and ethical considerations

Efforts were made to ensure the validity of the data through mechanisms such as triangulating data through interviews, cross checking information and documents and evaluation. In addition, great care is taken during transcription. Regarding ethical considerations, the privacy and rights of participants are duly respected. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was accordingly sought. Besides, the right of privacy of the participants were not only guaranteed but also respected. All data collected are kept with great confidentiality.

Chapter Four

Findings and Discussions

Disaggregating conflicts in Gambella into local, national and transnational conflict dynamics might help to understanding the distinctive patterns of conflicts in Gambella at a time. However, it is also vital to consider that these levels are lenses to focus on one at a time. There is equal need to synthesize and correlate the linkages across levels. In other words, what seems a local conflict might be motivated by the other actors and factors outside the local arena. For instance, inter-ethnic conflicts may seem caused by incompatible livelihood strategies. But a close inspection may reveal that the livelihood strategies are rather compatible and the role of government or the political developments at the center brought new political factor in the conflict. Or the role of insurgent groups and population influx across the border in South Sudan may add dynamics to the local inter-ethnic conflicts. Or armed opposition might actually represent mere frustration about eviction from the land, political prosecution or refugee flows.

For analytical convenience in this part, specific narratives at a very specific district in Gambella are presented to focus on one level of conflict at a time. The disaggregated levels are then synthesized and correlated to understand the linkages across the levels and thus the dynamics of conflict formation in Gambella. This is sorted out as a conclusion. Brief historical trajectories of the conflict in Gambella are presented before the specific narratives. This will avoid the risks of repeating the historic conflicts in each specific narrative. The specific narratives are built on recent developments but with strong linkage to the historical past.

4.1. Historical trajectories of the conflict

Gambella is one of the conflict prone frontiers of Ethiopia. With regard to contemporary political conflicts, it can be seen as an example for one of the most complex areas in the country. The conflict in Gambella involves an intricate web of inter-related and overlapping factors. These conflicts can be summed up as inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic, indigenous versus migrants, state against ethnic groups and cross-border conflicts. The Anywaa-Nuer inter-ethnic conflict is the most protracted and deep-rooted conflict with linkages at the center Addis Ababa and across the border in South Sudan.

The historic roots of the conflict can be traced back to the eastward migration of the Jikany Nuer group in the second half of the 19th century. The eastward expansion of the Nuer into Ethiopia from South Sudan was in search of vital natural resources such as pasture and water (Ojulu, 2011: 186; Dereje, 2009: 341; Medhane, 2006: 4). In the early days, the Nuer were sensitive to the Anywaa mode of production and thus did not destroy Anywaa cultivated fields. Social control inhibited raids against these immediate neighbors, and relations with the people directly on the border of the Nuer settlement were more relaxed (Medhane, 2006: 6).

However, this peaceful mode of interaction was later interrupted due to the gradual eastward migration of the Nuer. By the end of the 19th century the Nuer had already expanded their territory fourfold. The 20th century commenced a major Nuer advancement into traditional Anywaa territories and this marked the genesis of the Anywaa-Nuer conflict (Kelly, 2005: 2). When they grew in number, the Nuer became reluctant of herding their cattle away from their neighbors' Anywaa farms and were ready for confrontation.

Thanks to the firearms they obtained from the then Ethiopian authorities in the highlands, the Anywaa managed not only to contain Nuer territorial expansion but also launched counter offensive against the Nuer to recover lost territories (Markakis, 2011: 106). The ivory-for-firearms trade by the Nuer helps them to acquire arms and this led to the stabilization of relations. Confrontation based on balance of power gradually gave way to socio-economic cooperation. Since then the Anywaa and Nuer had lived a relatively harmonious relations based on cooperation, albeit small scale skirmishes (Ojulu, 2011: 187).

The arrival of the Ethiopian Empire state in the early 20th century accompanied by territorial expansion and state and nation building led to the subjugation and enslavement of the lowland Nilotic people. The Anywaa settlements close to the escarpments of the Oromo were the first to meet the highland soldiers. The highlanders subjugate the local people and collect taxes from them. In response to this, sporadic Anywaa opposition started in early 1910 when armed Anywaa attacked police stations around Itang. Subsequently, there have been skirmishes between the Anywaa and the central government agents in Gambella.

In the 1960s and 1970s, due to the eruption of the first civil war in the Sudan, the Nilotic People in Gambella were mobilized for the war against the brown highlanders in Ethiopia and Arab Muslim North in the Sudan. The Ethiopian officials in Gambella had also suspected linkages of Anywaa opposition in Gambella and Anya-nya guerilla (the first guerilla armed group in the Sudan) in southern Sudan. The Anywaa opposition was named outlaws and were further prosecuted. The first civil war in the Sudan (1955-1972) produced flow of refugees into Gambella. To accommodate the increasing flow of refugees into the region, the imperial government of Ethiopia allowed refugees to settle in Itang and granted them land for cultivation, grazing and constructing houses. Refugees were not the only one to cross the border. Armed groups linked to Anya-nya crossed the border into Ethiopia. These armed groups were a source of insecurity for the communities in Gambella.

Markakis (2011) also documented that the Ethiopian government suspected links of the Anywaa rebellion in Gambella and the Anya-nya movement in the Sudan. Weapons of the later were found in the hands of the Anywaa rebels in Gambella. Similar historical grievances, marginalization and cultural similarities between Anywaa rebels and Anya-nya were a serious concern for the local administration of the area. The archive from the then Gambella administration reveal that the two rebel groups had expressed interest to a common statehood.

[Both] the Anywaa and the Nuer are black people in general and should establish their own government. They [Anya-nya] declared that for this objective they wanted to give military training to their children [the Anywaa and Nuer families in Gambella] to fight in the struggle for freedom and after they establish their own government they would be given important posts in administrative and military positions... (Ragassa, 2010: 102).

Thus, it can be argued that the civil war in the Sudan had extended battle fields across the border and intensified insecurity and instability in Gambella. Furthermore, the increased influx of refugees in the 1970s due to the escalation of the violence in the Sudan intensified the suffering of the local communities in Gambella.

Further political developments both in Ethiopia and the Sudan in the mid 1970s entangled the local inter-ethnic conflict into national and regional dynamics. Since the eruption of the first and second civil war almost all South Sudanese liberation movements benefited from the successive Ethiopian governments. The three known South Sudanese liberation movements namely, Anya-

nya I and II and SPLM/A used the Ethiopian western frontier Gambella at various times in 1960s, 1975 and 1983 respectively. These liberation movements established their operation bases and training camps inside Gambella during their successive struggle against the government in Khartoum.

In the second civil war, Gambella also became a military base for the rebel SPLM/A which the Derg supported in response to Sudan's support for rebel groups fighting government at Addis Ababa. With its headquarters near Itang, the SPLM/A set up several camps in the region and training center in Bonga. The military region allowed SPLM/A "considerable freedom of action, especially in dealing with the population in the refugee camps, where SPLA recruited youth for its guerrilla army. That army had many Nuer soldiers and commanders, and even the Murle, a traditional enemy of the Anywaa, were represented in its rank." (Markakis, 2011: 223).

The second civil war had also produced huge influx of refugees in Gambella. In the 1980s, Gambella hosted many refugees that outnumbered the local community by a factor of three to one. In the mid 1980s, the number of refugees reached 350,000 and most of them settled in two refugee camps of Itang and Pinyudo which are Anywaa lands. The presence of huge number of refugees and incursion of the Jikany Nuer into Gambella significantly contributed to the conflict formation in Gambella. This could be viewed from the inter-related factors of political and socio-economic aspects.

Before the 1980s the Anywaa were the largest ethnic group in Gambella and majority of the total population. However, this demographic situation began to change quickly in the mid 1980s due to the influx of huge number of refugees fleeing the civil war in Southern Sudan. In addition to the influx of refugees, the longstanding patterns of eastward expansion of the Jikany Nuer increased the Nuer population in Gambella. Furthermore the resettlement programme in the 1980s had also brought some 60,000 highlanders to Gambella. The Sudanese Nuer and all settlement villages were set up in Anywaa territories. Now a days, the Anywaa are outnumbered by large immigrant population and become a minority in their own homeland. This created political and societal security threats among the Anywaa and has been the main causes of the frequent violent conflicts in Gambella since 1990s.

Besides the grievances of local communities that host large refugee camps, the Anywaa-Nuer conflict caused by competition for resources and political power was also extended to the refugees. As the hostility between the two groups escalate, the refugee came to be targeted, especially Nuer refugees by the Anywaa. This has been a case in Pinyudo and Dimma refugee camps in which refugees were targeted by their being Nuer as their fellow were at war with Anywaa in Gambella and Itang (Chan, 2007: 67).

The socio-economic impact of hosting huge refugee camps was also significant in Gambella. First, the refugee camps became centers of vast aid operations run by UNHCR. The flood of food aid in the region for two decades was a crippling disincentive for local production. At one point the price of a quintal of maize fell into three birr, less than the cost of the bag itself (five birr), forcing local production out of the market (Markakis, 2011: 222). This created dependence on imported food and halt any advancement in their mode of production. Second, unfair advantage is taken by the Nuer whose citizenship status was not clear, as most of them have dual identification with Ethiopia and southern Sudan. The Nuer exploited the opportunities offered by the refugee centers and international aid organization. One such opportunity was education in English offered in UNHCR operated schools inside the refugee camps. This benefited mainly Nuer youth and produced the first shots of modern intelligencia in the community. The Nuer was able to manipulate the ambiguity of their civil status. Many who were long settled in Ethiopia could pass as Sudanese refugees and benefited accordingly, and they could do the same in southern Sudan and Kenya (ibid).

The Anywaa-Nuer conflict in Gambella in the post-1991 has been shaped by new factors and actors to the conflict. In the new political arrangement, the Anywaa were reluctant to accept the political participation of the Nuer which they assumed as South Sudanese. Today this is an intense political struggle in Gambella region. According to Regassa (2010: 205), the period of violent clashes between Anywaa and Nuer in the post-1990s was known as “*girgir*” referring to confusion and anarchy of the time. The Nuer who were considered to be more Sudanese refugees rather than to be Ethiopian citizens became victims of the politics of exclusion since 1991.

4.2. Modern global capital meets traditional Anywaa

The Anywaa since the early time resented their land has been taken by both the central government represented by the highlanders in Gambella and by the Nuer influx from South Sudan. It has been easy for the Anywaa to negotiate land with their counterpart Nuer. The highlanders in Gambella not only took Anywaa's lands but also what would be a new employment opportunities for the Anywaa in the newly established Gambella Regional State. Highlanders also control the economy of the region. Now it seems that more powerful transnational and global actors hungry for land are "invading" the Anywaa land collaborating with the national actors at Addis Ababa.

This specific case is about the story of the land that has never stopped giving the Anywaa children the fruits of nature. Olenge Okache aged 73 lives his entire life in Pukadi district of Abobo *Wereda*, one of the 6th *Weredas* of Anywaa Zone. He and his neighborhoods came to Pukadi-Alwero *Kebele* recently by the villagization programme which the government claims the programme is for the good purpose. Many promises were made by the government for resettling them in a new village. Yet none has reached Pukadi-Alwero *Kebele* till this day except a small clinic at the center of the village that is now closed due to lack of skilled personnel.

Pukadi-Alwero *Kebele* is located 35 kms Southwest of Abobo *Wereda* which is 43 kms South of Gambella city, the regional capital. In the historical narratives of the conflict among the Anywaa of Gambella, this area represented the Lull clan (Anywaa who settled along major Rivers of Gilo, Alwero and Akobo). The Anywaa along the Baro River are known as Oppeno (who settled along the Baro River). This is an intra-ethnic conflict among the Anywaa. The historical root of the conflict goes back to the 1980s and early 1990s when the Anywaa were fighting against the central government and the subsequent political struggle to control the regional power in Gambella in the 1990s²¹.

The Lull Anywaa resented against the Gambella People's Liberation Movement (GPLM) that was dominated by the Oppeno Anywaa. When the armed group controlled Gambella after 1991, the

²¹ Ujulu Kwot is my Anywaa friend who helped me as a facilitator in my stay in Gambella particularly in the Anywaa *Weredas* of Gambella Zuria, Abobo and Gog *Weredas*. He taught me a lot about the Anywaa political struggle in Gambella and the political struggles between the Lull Anywaa and Oppeno Anywaa. He is from the Lull Anywaa and helped me to know a great deal about Anywaa-highlander relations in Gambella.

Oppeno Anywaa continued to dominate the political space in the newly created regional state. The four presidents since Gambella were created as regional state (Okelo Oman, Okelo Nygelo, Okelo Akuange and Omad Ubong) were from Oppeno Anywaa and this has been a source of grievance for the Lull. The political struggle between Oppeno Anywaa (who had good relations with the highlanders and EPRDF) and Lull Anywaa (who are considered anti-highlanders) have significantly shaped the inter-group relations between Anywaa and highlanders and by implication EPRDF led central government.

For Olenge²², the problems today in Pukadi are to do with the government (central government). He did not know who the central government is. For him, “Gala”, locally known as “Degenga” which literally means people that comes from the highland parts of Ethiopia, are synonymies with the central government. Besides this difference, the brown color of the highlanders is contrasted to the black color of the indigenous people of Gambella. In the words of Olenge, “Gala are soldiers, they come here to kill”²³. The irony is that these brown skin colored people are agents of the central government. He reminds that previously these people came to his village to collect taxes. There was no such harm and killing since they returned to their area soon.

The villagization programme by the Derg brought a lot of “Gala” in Village 07 which is close to Pukadi²⁴. The first settlers arrived in Gambella in 1984 and around 50,000-65,000 resettled in and around Abobo areas (Kurimoto, 2005: 5). Among the three different ethnic groups (Tigre, Wollo from Amhara and Kambata from Gamo) that arrived Abobo, Wollo from Amhara settled in Village 07. The settlers accompanied by the socialist state had significant impact on the Anywaa in cultural, environmental, economic and political terms. Culturally, the traditional Anywaa had to face new culture from the settlers and the socialist state force the Anywaa to abandon their traditional way of life which is now considered “feudal”. Settler’s relations with nature particularly for food and firewood in the new village had environmental consequences. Economically, the Anywaa were also forced to embrace cash economy that came with settlers and socialist state. The political impact was so tremendous that led to the foundation of separate

²² Olenge Okach is an Anywaa elder in Pukadi-Alwero *Kebele* of Abobo *Wereda*. I interviewed him on February 06, 2014 in Alwero-Pukadi *Kebele*.

²³ Field note, Alwero-Pukadi, February 06, 2014

²⁴ Field note, Alwero-Pukadi, February 06, 2014

identity of the Anywaa as they begun to see themselves as “natives” in contrast to settlers and refugees.

Oman’s minor resentment today that “these people (settlers) took our land; they come to fish on Alwero River”²⁵ may indicate that despite small skirmishes, there has been no violent conflict between the Anywaa and the new settlers. It was later in the early 1990s armed Anywaa begun to attack settler’s villages when the socialist state that accompanied highlanders was overthrown. Yet, it is clear that with the coming of settlers, government will encroach and tax the Anywaa.

Global capital and interest with the help of national actors at the center that recently reach Pukadi seems more devastating to the Anywaa than the villagization programme of Derg. The Anywaa has never been able to feed themselves for many decades. Now they are forced to feed the people of the planet. The massive agricultural investment programme by the government puts the Anywaa land its target. The people of Anywaa are agriculturalist and their livelihood and settlement pattern is along the major rivers in Gambella (Baro, Alwero, Gilo and Akobo). These large rivers are needed for agricultural investment in the most arid desert areas. This is additional pull factors for massive agricultural investments that are now conducted on traditionally Anywaa lands. Almost all massive agricultural investment activities are conducted on Anywaa land.

Along the way from Abobo to Gog *Wereda*, both foreign and local investors took chunk of land for investment. Starting from the big names of “Karatouri”, Pakistani owned agricultural firm and “Saudi Star”, owned by Ethiopian billionaire, Mohammed al-Amoudi, to the multitude of Ethiopian local investors are located in these Anywaa *Weredas*. The Anywaa vast and fertile “Eldorado” land combined with big rivers highly needed for irrigation for the modern capitalist production continue to attract both local and foreign land “grabbers” onto Anywaa lands.

Land has never been “scarce” in Gambella before the arrival of Ethiopian state in the early 20th century and particularly before the resettlement programme of Derg. Still today, Gambella has vast arable land that has never been used for cultivation. The problem is the perception of Anywaa actors in Gambella that perceive the government’s move as “eating” the Anywaa “cake” without sharing to the local people who traditionally own the land. Moreover, the forceful

²⁵ Oman Ungere is a village head of Tenge *Kebele*, one of the Anywaa *Kebeles* in Abobo *Wereda* on the upper bank of Alwero River. I interviewed him on February 08, 2014 at Tenge *Kebele*.

villagization programme by the government and the already tense relations between Anywaa elites and EPRDF-led central government added to their cause.

The modern capitalist production in Gambella is destructive. Maize is the main staple food for the natives in Gambella. The cereal is very much significant that it is found in all food items of the Anywaa. It also serves to prepare the local traditional alcohol *Achota* and tobacco *Ochoyo*. From year to year, all Anywaa farms are covered by this cereal. The shortage of the cereal caused death of many people every year in Gambella. The massive agricultural investment in Gambella is producing and intended to produce items that have no relevance in Anywaa traditional food staffs. Some of the local communities even did not know the names of the product being produced in their fathers land.

The agricultural investors cannot produce maize that the Anywaa hardly needed but products demanded by customers in Europe, Middle East and Asia. These products become alien to the Anywaa. For some of them who work on the farm and become familiar with the product, the price of the products in the local market is something unthinkable. The massive agricultural investment did not consider the demands of the local Anywaa. This is another grievance among the local Anywaa that also serve for the Anywaa political interest against the central government.

Ownership of land in Gambella now becomes contested. The minority ethnic groups in Gambella Opo, Komo and Majang did not contest about Anywaa's ownership of the region land. Even the Nuer acknowledges that most of the land in Gambella belongs to the Anywaa. Yet, the central government at Addis Ababa do not recognize in that way. For the government, land belongs to the "nation, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia" which has very delicate existence and the category of people it refers is unclear. The confusion seems benefiting the government that literally gives them power to sell Anywaa lands for lease.

Land has been locally negotiated between the Anywaa who traditionally claim the region land and the pastoralist Nuer who moves from place to place in search of pasture and water for their cattle. The Anywaa have strong attachment to the land. They have communal land holding system that transcends to generation. In earlier times, the Nuer should get acceptance from the Anywaa local chiefs before they advance to the Anywaa land. When the local balance of power shifts to the Nuer, they pushed the Anywaa further to the East until they reach to the escarpment

of the Oromo. The balance of power oscillates over time and this paves the way for relations of cooperation and conflict between these two ethnic groups.

Political developments in Ethiopia and the Sudan in the second half of the 20th century began to affect the local balance of power between the Anywaa and the Nuer in Gambella. The first civil war in the Sudan fought between 1955 and 1972 produced refugees, particularly Nuer that came to Gambella. The imperial government of Ethiopia provides land for refugees to settle and farm as a sign of Ethiopian's strong commitment to UNHCR. After the end of the first round of civil war, these refugees did not return to their homeland. They remain on Anywaa lands. The subsequent violent conflicts in the Sudan have produced large influx of refugees and this led to the opening of refugee camps in Gambella. Three refugee camps were opened and all of them were on Anywaa land.

Land that has been negotiated culturally by the Anywaa and the Nuer now becomes a source of fierce fighting between these two groups. The politics at the center in Addis Ababa brought the two groups into a new arena of conflict. The introduction of federalism and ethnicity as a major organizing element led to fierce competition for territorial space that will determine the decision making power in the regional council. Land previously needed for farming and grazing now is an arena of political game between the Anywaa and the Nuer. In the new ethnic based political arrangements in Gambella, controlling more territorial space (increasing *Weredas*) will enhance one's political muscle in the regional council which is a decision making organ in Gambella.

For the Anywaa, who still feels the region belongs to them; it has been easy to negotiate land with the Nuer. The new actors in the land "grabbing" are much more powerful and beyond the traditional Anywaa negotiating capacity. The Anywaa still uses their hand to produce what they consume. So the modern highly mechanized and globalized agricultural investment meets the traditional Anywaa who never produce more than subsistence. The national actors at the center who are integrated in the global business and interest seems willing to provide the Anywaa land whatever hectare the planet needs.

The land deal in Gambella remains a matter of secret for the Ethiopian government. No official data has been produced by the government as to the terms of the deal. Many Anywaa have been evicted from their land by villagization programme. The government strongly insists that it is for

the good of the people to come together so that social services could be provided. For the Anywaa, the move of the government is to take their land and to handover it to investors. It seems that in the middle of these arguments and counter arguments, the plight of the Anywaa remains unseen.

My informants recalled again and again that their land is taken away to give to highlanders in the name of investment. Oman resented:

“Land was to be granted for others by the Anywaa. Now the Anywaa should ask others for land. Land is given to Degenga in the name of investment. Degenga will pass the land to his son. What will be our children’s land is being stolen. Where our children will farm next? Degenga are like a stream, the water will not stop flowing out and whatever highlander you may kill, they will never stop coming into Gambella”²⁶.

The highlanders have relative advantage in capital, equipment and connection with the center. These advantageous positions help them to assume the status of “investor”. The disadvantaged natives did not have such privileges. In Pukadi district no native has been given the privileged status of “investor”. On the other hand, in Pukadi alone 149 local investors took 49, 538 hectares of land for agricultural investment. Most of these investors came from the Northern region of Tigray who represent the core of the regime just simply adding the grievances of the local Anywaa elite.

Some of these investors abuse the privileges and benefit schemes from the regime by engaging in charcoal production which are not expected from agricultural investors. Capital flights are also common. Among the benefit schemes the government provide for investors are long term loan to invest. Yet, the money is sent to their home in the North for other businesses. Local business are conducted aiming for short term profits given the fact that highlanders are not recognized as indigenous people by the regional constitution. There is serious threat of losing business among the highlanders in Gambella. Thus, what has been profited in the business in Gambella will be sent to their home town in the highlands.

Highlanders’ encroachment from the East to Gambella is not limited to the Anywaa land. They also dominate the economy in Gambella and employment opportunities in the newly created

²⁶ Oman Ungere, Village head of Tenge Kebele, interviewed on February 08, 2014 at Tenge Kebele

region state. The long existing Nuer advancement from the West advances into what has been traditionally Anywaa land. Yet, the new global actor's interest and demand for land is beyond the Anywaa's control. It seems that the Anywaa are in the "middle of nowhere". The encroachment of the Nuer from the West and the migration of highlanders from the East is a serious political and economic security threat for the Anywaa. As Romi stated, "now we cannot defend ourselves even from the Nuer, the government took our guns"²⁷. With the massive agricultural investment and villagization policy, the Anywaa are now confined into a small territory in the region that they claim belongs to them. It seems a lose collusion is in the making among the global business, central government and the Nuer against the Anywaa.

4.3. Good relations are not given: Anywaa armed group in Gambella

Gambella remains the most insecure parts of Ethiopian territory. The security situation in the area has been shaped and reshaped by political developments both at the center, Addis Ababa and the other side of the border, developments in the southern Sudan. Political developments in the volatile region of the Horn of Africa have also mould the local security dynamics in Gambella. Of course, one of the main features of the Horn of Africa is local conflicts have regional dynamics. Each country in the region has been modeling in the affairs of others that give the local conflicts transnational implications.

Successive Ethiopian and Sudanese governments have exerted little control over their shared frontiers mainly because of its remote setting. As a result, border lands have long been inhibited by *Shifta* groups or bandits, some of whom have taken on a political character (Young, 2007:16; Markakis, 2011: 69). The current ruling groups in Ethiopia and South Sudan have combined *Shifta* and political activities in the frontier lands of the two states before. In the 1960s, a number of armed groups were formed in the Ethio-Sudanese border. Although the Emperor was overthrown by his own army, there were a number of armed opposition groups supported by Khartoum; EPLF was one (Markakis, 1987:102). Reciprocally, the regime in Ethiopia supported the Anya-nya, southern Sudanese rebel group in the first Sudanese civil war. In 1972 the peace agreement signed between Khartoum and the southern rebels brokered by HaileSELLASSIE ended the civil war in southern Sudan and the reciprocal support the two governments use to provide.

²⁷ Romi David is a young Anywaa Female teacher at Karmi Primary School in Karmi *Kebele* of Gambella Zuria *Wereda*. I interviewed her on February 03, 2014 at Kermi *Kebele* which is 18 Kms East of Gambella city.

However, the change of regime in Ethiopia in 1974 produced a new configuration of armed groups that opposed the new ruling groups. Since the “men-in-uniform” that came to power did not brought solutions for the Eritrean problem, dissidents soon joined a host of armed Ethiopian opposition. EPLF, TPLF, EPRDF, and EDU established in Ethiopia but they conducted their operations from the Sudan. OLF conducted operations in Eastern Ethiopia and along the Sudanese frontier and receive support from Khartoum (Young, 1997: 124; Regassa, 2010: 99).

In retaliation for Sudan’s acceptance of Ethiopian rebels the Derg begun to assist Sudanese rebel groups. In the 1980s, Derg allowed SPLM/A to use Gambella as headquarters and training center. Gambella was effectively under the control of SPLM/A and full administration of the area was delegated to it.”²⁸ The presence of SPLM/A in the area had devastating impacts on the communities. In the local setting, Nuer dominated SPLM/A had frequently confronted with the local Anywaa community. SPLM/A had also supplied arms to Nuer which further antagonized the intense relations between the two communities.²⁹

Once again a change of regime in Ethiopia in 1991 led to a new configuration of armed groups in the western frontiers of Ethiopia. The change of regime in Ethiopia coincided with the coming to power of the National Islamic Front (NIF) in Sudan in 1989. The new regime in Ethiopia was backed by NIF and good prospects were on the expectation. The end of the Cold War was also another factor. However, the ideologically driven NIF begun a campaign to export its version of political Islam to Ethiopia. The unsuccessful assassination attempt against Hosni Mubarak in June 1995 heightened the Ethio-Sudanese relations once again. The old fashion dictum “my enemy of my enemy is my friend” was then resurrected and Sudan begun to host various armed groups fighting Addis Ababa and the later recalled SPLM/A to Gambella.

The outburst of Ethio-Eritrean war of 1998 changed relations between Addis Ababa and Khartoum once again. To fully concentrate on Eritrea’s war, Ethiopia reconcile with Sudan. Since then good relations exist between the two governments. However, in the turbulent regions of Horn of Africa, “where friends can become enemies and enemies can become friends with

²⁸ Chan Gatkhot, former National and Regional Security Advisor to the President. I interviewed him on December 29, 2012 at Gambella town and later on I interviewed him again on 20 February, 2014 in Gambella town. This time he is Deputy Chief of Regional justice Bureau.

²⁹ Field note, Gambella town, February 20, 2014

amazing rapidity, it is not expedient to comply severe relations with the various political and military groups that emerges as circumstances change” (Young, 2007: 31).

Today, there are plenty of armed groups along the border between Gambella and South Sudan. Some of them are just bandits and criminal gangs, at least for the government, benefiting from cattle raiding and arms smuggling³⁰ and the rest are with political agenda; EPPF, OLF and GPLM/F³¹. Recently, after independence of South Sudan, there are also armed groups fighting to topple the government in Juba. General David Youyou emerged as an armed group fighting Juba in Jonglei State of South Sudan backed by the North Sudan government. The Eritrean government continues to be the main supply of armament to these armed groups in Gambella. The Ethiopian government indicates links between the Anywaa armed group in Gambella, GPLM/F and other South Sudanese rebel groups in Jonglei³².

Anywaa opposition to the central government in Addis Ababa goes back to the early 20th century. Opposition during this time was sporadic and unorganized. Organized rebellion of the Anywaa started in the 1970s. Various factors are behind for Anywaa to engage in armed rebellion in the 1980s. The civil war in southern Sudan and the influx of refugees and resettlement programmes at home were grievances for the Anywaa. In the late 1970s a political organization named Gambella Peoples Liberation Movement (GPLM) was created by the Anywaa elites. The operation declares its goals to be freedom for the Anywaa from highlander and Nuer domination (Gatkhot, 2007: 41; Regassa, 2010: 213).

In the 1980s the organization became active in the region (Gatkhot, 2007: 43). According to Markakis (2011: 341) the organization seeks support from other groups fighting the central government in the time. However, these groups had had their own agenda and sometimes contradict to the goal of the GPLM that fought the domination of “highlander” that included Oromo and Tigray community settled in Gambella. A statement by GPLM leader illustrates clearly the detachment of the people in the lowland periphery from the political struggle fought on the highlands. The leader recalled (Dereje, 2003: 343):

³⁰ Annual reports of the Gambella Regional Security Bureau, August, 2013.

³¹ Ibid

³² Gordon Gong, former head of the Security and Administrative Affairs Bureau in Gambella. I interviewed him on January 09, 2013 in Gambella town.

We first approached the Sudanese government for assistance. They accepted our request but they defined us as a Sudanese and asked us to join their army... Then we approached the OLF. After initial welcoming, we disagreed. They defined us as a 'black Oromo'. They said "we do not have a separate political question." Then we approached the TPLF when they came to the Sudan in order to create a united front among rebels to fight the Derg. We also had contact with the EPLF. They said to us "the political problem in Ethiopia is Amhara colonialism." But we said our problem is with the Nuer and gaala. There weren't many Amharas in Gambella, except the safari [settlers] who came recently. What we know were the Oromo. Whatever happened in Gambella it happened through the Oromo. Besides, we do not make a distinction between the Amhara and Oromo. For us they were all gaala... The OLF did not like our position. They said "the main issue was the political system which was created by the Amharas." For some of us it was not even clear who is Amhara and who is not.

Political developments at national level in 1991 were significant to the Gambella region. The new groups, TPLF led EPRDE, controlled the ruins of state power in Addis Ababa in 1991. In the same year the group moved to southwestern parts of Ethiopia and was accompanied by "a small contingent" (Medhane, 2006: 11) of GPLM that later assumed political power in Gambella. In 1991 GPLM took charge of the region and installed an all Anywaa administration. The Anywaa held a monopoly of power and used it to reverse Nuer territorial gains made under the Derg (Markakis, 2011: 342). However, it was after a year that the GPLM felt out with EPRDF. The presence of considerable number of settlers, including settlers from the Northern region of Tigray, has then shaped the relations between GPLM and EPRDF.

For so long the Anywaa despised the settlers, accusing them of occupying their land. Since the beginning of resettlement by Derg in the 1980s, permanent occupation of land by the settlers is one of the structural issues in the inter-group hostilities between Anywaa and settlers in Gambella. When the Derg regime collapsed and its soldiers evacuated Gambella, the Anywaa started to attack settlers. Unlike those in the towns, settlers in rural villages were the first to incur the wrath of the Anywaa gunmen. Such a case is an incidence in 1991 in Ukuna, East of Abobo town where a bloody attack is made against settlers (Medhane, 2006: 21). Since then innumerable number of violent conflict happened in different districts of Gambella (Mossa, 2013: 55).

In 1991 EPRDF requested GPLM to demobilize its forces. Rifts begin to develop between former allies when GPLM refusing to demobilize its forces. The divergent political objectives of GPLM from the objectives at the center began to complicate the relations between Anywaa and

highlanders in Gambella and then by extension the central government at Addis Ababa. In 1995 the GPLM was obliged by the central government to change its name to Gambella Peoples Liberation Party (GPLP) (Mossa, 2013: 57).

Besides the role of the central government in Gambella, there has been chronic power struggle for leadership and senior posts since GPLM seized power in Gambella in 1991. It has been argued elsewhere in this study that there has been divisions and power struggle among the Anywaa elites. The struggle occurred on two levels: among the Anywaa who belongs to GPLM and between GPLM members and non-members. This is a long existing division among the Anywaa in GPLM between the Lull Anywaa and Oppeno Anywaa. Recent studies by the Ministry of Federal Affairs (2004) reveal that the split between Lull Anywaa and Oppeno Anywaa has brought far reaching political implications particularly in Anywaa-highlander and by implication Anywaa-central government relations in Gambella.

As mentioned elsewhere in this study, in the early 1990s GPLM was dominated by Oppeno Anywaa who had good relations with EPRDF and showed high regard for the highlander population. The highlanders in Gambella referred to these Anywaa as “Oppeno Boys” (HRW, 2005) whose government they regarded as “mother of the highlanders” (ibid). Many officials of “Oppeno Boys” including the regional president Okelo Oman were later detained and expelled from GPLM by the central government before the 1995 elections. This facilitated the road for the Lull Anywaa to control power in the coming election. As predicated, in the 1995 election the Lull Anywaa emerged victorious and began to pursue anti-highlander policy in Gambella. The Oppeno expelled from power and now pursued by the Lull went to the bush to play a role in the subsequent establishment of Anywaa armed groups³³.

The violent conflict in 1998 between the Anywaa and Nuer were stopped after a state of emergency was declared and the federal army intervened. The competition for political power between the two rivals in the region led the central government to apply the “standard political

³³ Otiang Ochan is a former Gambella Region Police Chief. I interviewed him on January 03, 2013 in Gambella town. Later on he was imprisoned accused by the central government of hiding the leader of Anywaa armed group Omat Odol Ojulu who was killed on March 10, 2013. I interviewed him again after he was released on February 13, 2014 at Green hotel, where most of Anywaa gathered, in Gambella town.

formula” by merging the GPLP and the Gambella Peoples Democratic Unity Party (GPDUP)³⁴ into the Gambella Peoples Democratic Front (GPDF) (Mossa, 2013: 61).

What is viewed by the central government “standard political formula” further angered large sections of the Anywaa elite, particularly the Lull Anywaa. For the next 2002 election, the discontented Anywaa established an opposition party called Gambella Peoples Democratic Congress (GPDC), in short Congress. Yet the EPRDF affiliated GPDF reacted fiercely to suppress the new party. The option for peaceful democratic competition among ethnic groups in Gambella was dashed as the motives of the GPDF was elimination of the Congress. Subsequently, in the run up for the 2002 elections, members of the congress were imprisoned and their election success in some districts were cancelled (HRW, 2005).

The violent conflict that followed the 2002 election further brought another political engineering that dissolve the GPDF and replaced by another coalition, the Gambella Peoples Democratic Movement (GPDM). The new coalition comprises three nationality-based parties; the Anywaa Peoples Democratic Organization (APDO), the Nuer Peoples Democratic Organization (NPDO) and the Majangir Peoples Democratic Party (MPDP) (ibid).

Anywaa felt increasingly marginalized from the politics in Gambella when their party was violently suppressed and of what it could be a meaningful opposition to GPDF. The frustration of the Anywaa later converted to violent ambushes of highlanders and central government agents in Gambella. As mentioned above, there have been violent attacks on settlers in different districts of Gambella. The increasingly hostile inter-group relations between Anywaa and highlanders and thus central government lastly became more deadly in 2003 when countless number of people lost their life from both sides.

The hostile relations reached its climax on 17 November 2003 when five private contractors working on road construction project around Akobo were ambushed and killed. All five were highlanders and both in Addis Ababa and Gambella it was believed that the attack is done by Anywaa gunman. This particular incidence created fear and anger within highlanders in Gambella. Just after a month, on 13 December 2003, a similar and exceptionally horrible attack committed by allegedly armed Anywaa. When the amputated bodies of these workers displayed

³⁴ Nuer political organization established in 1992 to counter the Anywaa political dominance in the region

at the center of Gambella town, the highlanders immediately turned into an aggressive mob. The aggressive mob sparked a bloody three day rampage in Gambella and Itang in which members of the Ethiopian Defense Force joined highlanders in the killings and destructions of Anywaa villages³⁵.

Even though it is not new, the 2003 massacre of the Anywaa is a turning point in the Gambella conflict formation. The incidence is a landmark in the relation between Anywaa and highlanders, by extension, EPRDF led central government. The particular incidence in December 2003 led a large young population of Anywaa (between 5,000 and 8,000) to flee the country (Ministry of Federal Affairs, 2004). Most of them crossed the border into Pochalla of South Sudan where their ethnic Anywaa fellow lives and joined the new Anywaa armed rebellion based in Pochalla. The subsequent prosecution of the Anywaa by the central government combined with competing political struggle for land and oil by Anywaa elites and elites at the center led to the formation of another armed Anywaa political organization in 2005.

The new Anywaa armed group Gambella Peoples Libration Movement/Front II (GPLM/F II) was resurrected on 30 October, 2005 as an armed group fighting EPRDF (GPLM/F, 2005). The front, in its first press release, declared that its major objective is to fight for self-determination for Gambella region. The GPLM/F is led by Anywaa intellectuals in the Diaspora from where it receives its funds. Operationally, it is based in Pochalla and Nairobi³⁶.

GPLM/F II is not monolithic and the means and objectives of the struggle are not clear. Within the movement, there are hardliners who support armed struggle and there are elements who oppose violent ways such as Anywaa Justice Council. In addition, there are some who favor independence (associated with oil discoveries in Gambella) and there are others who want to join South Sudan where their small Anywaa settlements are found. The majority of them prefer to stay in Ethiopia under a fair representative political system. GPLM/F II is a member of the United Ethiopian Democratic Front (UEDF) and since recent times it aligned with Ethiopian Patriotic United Front (EPUF).

³⁵ According to Human Rights Watch report, an estimated 450 Anywaa civilians were killed between 13 and 16 December. The Ethiopian government puts the death toll at 65.

³⁶ Field note, Gambella town, January 09, 2013

Bonga to Pochalla that lies along the major rivers in Gambella are the main areas of oppression for the GPLM/F II. The major towns of Gambella such as Gambella, Itang, Abobo and Pinyudo are strategic places for the movement (Ministry of Federal Affairs, 2004) and it enjoys great support among the peasant associations such as Ukunna, Dabang and Terchari in Abobo and Pinyudo towns. Moreover, peasants in these Anywaa settlements are members and some of them have undertaken military training in Pochalla and upon return they give trainings to other peasants in the area³⁷. The Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) fought repeated battles against GPLM/F II along Pinyudo and Pochalla lines³⁸.

The central government has claimed that the SPLM/A Anywaa administration in Pochalla are supplying arms and training to the group. It seems low on the expectation that senior SPLM/A leadership would permit the Ethiopian opposition group to carry out attacks on the Ethiopian government installations. However, it is possible that lower ranking Anywaa commanders in the SPLM/A have loyalty to their Anywaa fellow that is being prosecuted by the Ethiopian government. An informant in Gambella security bureau indicated that the GPLM/F recruits members from Pochalla refugee camp that hosted Ethiopian Anywaa refugees fleeing the government's crackdown³⁹.

There are also links between the SPLM opposition groups in Jonglei and the GPLM/F and the later are getting weapons and military supply from the armed groups in Jonglei that receives military supply and weapons from the Sudan. The GPLM/F is also supported by Eritrean government that fought proxy wars with the central government in Addis Ababa. Besides the supply of armaments by the Eritrean and Sudan government, armed groups in the area manage to get weapons in stealing or raids. The challenges of disarmament in the nearby Jonglei State of South Sudan have also washed the border area with arms making weapons accessible for both civilians and armed groups in the frontiers.

Since 2005 the group carried out a serious of attacks in Gambella. The Ethiopian government has also blamed the group for ambushes in various parts of Gambella. There are isolated killings of

³⁷ Field note, Gambella town, February 13, 2014

³⁸ Field note, Gambella town, January 09, 2013

³⁹ Oguta Ukunge, deputy head of Security and Administrative Affairs Bureau. I interviewed him on January 02, 2013 at Gambella town.

individuals/highlanders in settler villages as well as in the forests⁴⁰. The horrific attack by the armed group on highlanders and settlers involve amputating and mutilating bodies aimed at terrorizing settlers and highlanders and thus to hasten their evacuation of Gambella.

Today the politics of land and oil in Gambella serve the Anywaa armed groups against the central government. The massive agricultural investment and the eviction of Anywaa from their land further pitted the central government with Anywaa elites in Gambella. The land lease conducted by actors at the center and that provide land for highlanders (local investors) further complicated the already tense inter-group relations between Anywaa and highlanders.

The discovery of oil in Gambella in 2011 is now also serving for the Anywaa dissidents to talk much about their “Eldorado” land. Surely, oil will add fuel on the explosive relations between central government, which is very much hungry for oil, and the Anywaa dissidents. Oil in Gambella is also carefully followed by Juba and Khartoum which are equally determined to fight for it. Given the very delicate status of Gambella as Ethiopian territory, the discovery of oil in the area will push actors in South Sudan to uncover their long awaited dream of annexing the region inhibited by the same ethnic groups in the other side of the border.

4.4. Uncoordinated disarmament: changing the balance of power in the frontier

Reducing the size of armies and militias and help former combatants to return to civilian life, known as Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), has become a standard part of international support for post-conflict states. According to Arnold and Alden (2007: 1), one of the most serious problems confronting transition from conflict to peace in post-conflict situation is the role of local armed groups and militias. The longest civil war in southern Sudan was a very complex one, involving a plethora of armed groups ranging from state armies such as Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), formal rebel movements such as SPLM/A and local militias. In South Sudan White Army militias are groupings of armed civilians, mostly youth, which during the course of the long civil war, notably during the 1990s, coalesced into village level formations.

The presence of these militias created a significant degree of instability in Jonglei and Upper Nile States of post-independence South Sudan. They resist rounds of disarmament by SPLA since 2005 and they remain major security threats for the borderland communities in Gambella

⁴⁰ Field note, Gambella town, January 02, 2013

and a source of armament as well. These are armed groups that raid and abduct the borderland communities in Gambella. The purpose of this study is not to provide a comprehensive understanding of armed groups and DDR in South Sudan. Thus, an overview of the disarmament programme is helpful to draw links between disarmament in Jonglei State and its implication to Gambella.

Regarding resistance by the armed communities, including the White Army to lay down their guns, Arnold and Alden (2007: 5-7) identified three interrelated factors. First, there is a strong fear and even hatred of SPLA. This case is apparent especially in Jonglei and Upper Nile States where most of the White Army (mostly Nuer) were resident. The Lou Nuer who formed the bulk of the White Army militia strongly resisted and well represented in other anti-SPLA actor in the South, South Sudanese Defense Force (SSDF). According to Arnold and Alden (2007: 7), Lou Nuer are still very worry of SPLA because it was fighting against it for many years. Armed groups felt that they could not trust SPLA to be the ultimate provider of security in South Sudan. Therefore, resistance to disarmament is caused by lack of trust to SPLA that claims the legitimate provider of it in the post-independence South Sudan. The presence of other spoilers like SSDF, backed by Khartoum, who agitated against SPLA, further complicated the programme.

Second, communities in Jonglei and Upper Nile States worry about a need for self-protection. As discussed before, the communities in the area has been raided for centuries and in the post-independence period, the trend is so tense that laying down arms would leave them exposed to attacks by neighbors. The Lou Nuer felt that to lose their weapons to an organization they did not trust (SPLA) would leave them defenseless in the middle of enemy neighbors (Murle) who still bear their arms.

Thirdly, the communities dislike the very idea of being disarmed. Besides the general feeling of how SPLA will threat them, the armed communities did not want to give them up since they are anxious about a peaceful future (Arnold and Alden, 2007: 11). The other factor for disliking being disarmed is associated with economic issues. The communities expect financial compensation for their weapons since these had been mostly acquired with their own resources in the form of cattle. "An AK-47 assault rifle could cost from 5-7 caws" (ibid). On the other

hand, the groups fear how to make a living without gun. This is because, gun make it easy to raid cattle from the neighbors.

The failure of disarmament in South Sudan and particularly in Jonglei State and now the continued anarchy and violence in Jonglei is changing the traditional balance of power among rival ethnic groups along the frontier. The Ethio-Sudanese border is proved to be porous and has been experiencing cross-border movements of people and army. These cross-border linkages and conflicts are especially for Jonglei States of South Sudan. The inter-ethnic relations along Gambella and Jonglei have been dominated by hostilities and conflicts as ethnic groups compete for resources backed by armed groups and governments with their political interests.

In 2005, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) and SPLA conducted disarmament in Gambella and SPLA was allowed to enter into Ethiopian territories to disarm pastoralist communities on the borderland⁴¹. Disarmament was found essential in Gambella region due to the supply of weapons in the area during the second Sudanese civil war and particularly in the aftermath of the 2003 incident in the region. The subsequent developments in Gambella and ambushes by the Anywaa dissidents linked to GPLM/F necessitated the control of weapons⁴².

However, the challenge of implementing disarmament on one side of the border is all more so when the other side is resisting to undertake such programme. The total lack of Ethiopian border patrol posts and lack of coordination between SPLA and ENDF in the disarmament programme remains challenging to conduct the programme on both sides of the border. Otherwise, one side concomitantly undertaking disarmament will not be effective if the other side failed to do. In this regard, one of the disarmament posts for the July 2006 exercise officially for the Akobo County in South Sudan was actually physically located in Gambella Akobo district⁴³.

Disarmament should have been exercised simultaneously and thus risks of attack from other historically rival group would have been reduced. The communities in Gambella have been raided by Lou Nuer and Murle and further their children abducted by the later (further discussion about cattle raiding and child abduction is provided in 4.5). These groups are still armed after

⁴¹ Field note, Gambella town, January 02, 2013

⁴² Field note, Gambella town, January 02, 2013

⁴³ Field note, Gambella town, January 02, 2013

avoiding the various rounds of disarmament by SPLA. Disarming of Ethiopian communities while the other group from the other side of the border still bears their gun is now changing the balance of power along the border and creating serious security risks for the local communities. Disarming Ethiopian civilian communities in Gambella was deemed to maintain security. However, disarming the civilian communities on the border areas leave them insecure from the other armed groups across the border. This led to complication of security in the frontier that makes Ethiopian communities more vulnerable.

First, the communities in Gambella have been disarmed by the Ethiopian authorities. However, the pastoralist communities around the border in Gambella need weapon to protect themselves in the absence of government security in remote frontiers. Besides, these communities have been raided by Lou Nuer and Murle. The well armed Lou Nuer and Murle are the ever greater security threat for the Ethiopian disarmed communities. The absence of protection from the Ethiopian government in the frontiers is a double edge. The borderland communities are suffering from such insecurity environment. The issue seems unattractive for the government given the good relations at the national level between EPRDF and SPLM. It was in 2012 that the foreign ministry asks the regional government security bureau to report to it the magnitude of the attack by the Murle and Lou Nuer. This comes before two months of the joint ministerial committee meeting in Juba from February 27th to March 2nd 2012.

Moreover, when armed groups in Jonglei State hear that the Ethiopian side is disarmed, it becomes blessing for them to raid the communities with easy challenge. An informant from *Tata Kebele* of *Gog Wereda* told to the researcher that the Ethiopian government provided ten militias for each *Kebele* to maintain security. However, the militias are less armed than Murle and Lou Nuer. According to informant, “militias are meant to protect the people and their cattle but in *Wantwa Wereda* they themselves seek protection from the community whom they expected to protect as Murle advance to their village.”⁴⁴

Second, disarmed communities, which are not protected by the one who disarm them, search for weapons to protect themselves and their cattle. Due to the various factors discussed above, it is easy to smuggle weapons thus easy access for the community. Hence, this makes government

⁴⁴ Ochala Lock, *Tata Kebele* Administrator of *Gog Wereda*. I interviewed him on February 12, 2014 in *Tata Kebele*.

attempt to disarm the people in the area challenging. Weapons smuggled in and fall into the civilian hands is also used to intensify the local conflict and cattle looting. Furthermore, the smuggling of weapons is creating human security threats in the region. Easy access to weapons is a threat to human security in the area. The ambushes of the Anywaa gunmen in various areas of Gambella are the most human security threats in Gambella. Traveling to remote Woredas makes this sense of insecurity very high. As the researcher observed, feel of insecurity started from the check points of Baro Qella where our bus is accompanied by Ethiopian soldiers. Fear of insecurity, particularly for the highlanders increases as one moves further to the remote *Weredas* of Wantwa, Gor and Jog.

Uncoordinated disarmament on the borderland areas proved to be futile exercise since firearms are smuggled to and out in the border area where there is vacuum of control even after the disarmament exercise. Resistance to disarmament in South Sudan is now sources of weapons around the border areas. These weapons are reaching to the borderland communities in Gambella in different ways. In Wontwa and in remote areas of Jor and Gog arms smuggling is a challenge for the local security chief. Arms smugglers in the area smuggle weapons through exchange of cattle and armed groups crosses the border with their arms. There are reports that arms smuggled into Gambella are smuggled out to other regions in Ethiopia where it is sold in illegal arms market. According to the informant, weapons smuggled into Gambella sold up to 20-30 thousand Ethiopian birr in illegal markets in Amhara Region.⁴⁵

The unsuccessful disarmament program in South Sudan and particularly in Jonglei State has also greatly contributed to the flow of arms into Gambella region. Local armed groups and armed civilian in Jonglei State of South Sudan flee to the border areas into Gambella to avoid disarmament by SPLA which sometimes were forceful. Hence, these armed groups pass weapons to Ethiopian civilian in exchange for cattle.⁴⁶

Generally, the conflict prone nature of the frontiers and activities of armed groups in the area for so long washed the border with firearms. Supply of weapons by governments and arms smuggling combined with the absence of both ENDF and SPLA in the area further exacerbated the security situation to the borderland communities. Uncoordinated and lack of simultaneous

⁴⁵ Field note, Gambella town, January 02, 2013

⁴⁶ Field note, Gambella town, January 02, 2013

disarmament attempts in the area leaves the borderland communities in Gambella defenseless and thus forced them to look for weapons that they think will provide security. Disarming the communities by itself did not brought security. Security in Gambella is sought more than the territorial integrity assignment; it is a question of societal and political security matter. Particularly, for the Anywaa, curbing the eastward incursion of the Nuer into Gambella and holding back the coming of highlanders are priority agendas in their security conceptions.

4.5. Cattle raiding and child abduction along the Southwest frontier: security for whom?

The Ethiopian south western frontier has experienced cross-border movements and conflict since the early 20th century. These cross-border linkages have been characterized by conflicts over resources. Cattle raiding have been practiced for centuries in southern Sudan and communities have been raided each other for many years. The borderland communities in Gambella have been experiencing raiding and counter-raiding with ethnic groups across the border in South Sudan.

Cattle rustling are the major, even though not the sole, source of local violence in Jonglei State of South Sudan. The vast majorly of the population in Jonglei are agro-pastoralists combining agriculture with cattle keeping based on seasonal migration (Prendergast, et.al, 2012: 31). In both Lou Nuer and Murle culture cattle has special cultural value among the communities. Besides the social prestige of having large flocks of cattle, cattle also holds vital role in social activities. Cattle have special place in marriage arrangements among the Lou Nuer and Murle communities. In these agro-pastoralists community bride wealth is presented in the form of cattle. Of course, the number of cattle presented for bride wealth varies among communities. In Murle community a groom may present 400-500 cattle as a bride wealth. Despite the exact number of cattle a Lou Nuer groom may present as bride wealth, my informant indicated that a similar pattern exercised in the communities. These amounts of cattle are not enough for him since he needs substantial more cattle to sustain his new household⁴⁷. The same practice exists in Ethiopian Jikany Nuer. According to my informant, in earlier days, an Ethiopian Nuer should present up to a hundred cattle as a bride wealth. Cattle raiding combined with the economic hardship reduced the amount of cattle presented as bride wealth. The Ethiopian Nuer now presents 30-40 cattle as a bride

⁴⁷ Yong Dong, Nuer elder in Itang Town of Itang Special *Wereda*. I interviewed him on February 17, 2014.

wealth. In some areas, especially in urban centers, goats and cash are also paid as part of bride wealth these days⁴⁸.

Anthropological writers of ethnic relations in Gambella, including Dereje Fayssa and Kirmuto Eisei, did not show us when cattle raiding were started and how it might shape ethnic relations in the frontier. The different economic and social bases of the communities in Gambella might prevent cattle raiding among themselves in the early days. The early contact between Anywaa and Nuer in Gambella was dominated by resource competition in the form of water and pasture. Since the Anywaa are agriculturalists, they might not engage in cattle raiding with the Nuer which is mostly agro-pastoralists. However, the further advancement of the Jikany Nuer into Ethiopian territories has been caused by raids of other Nuer groups and Dinka from the west. Relations of the Jikany Nuer of Gambella and Lou Nuer of Jonglei State are also largely shaped by cattle raiding.

The annual reports of the Gambella Regional State Security and Administrative Affairs Bureau indicated that since the 1960 and 1970s Ethiopian Jikany Nuer communities and Murle and Lou Nuer of Southern Sudan engaged in rustling and counter rustling for many years. However, when the frontier was under the control of SPLM/A since 1980, the magnitude of cattle rustling was marginal⁴⁹. For military and security reasons SPLM/A controlled activities in the border with Sudan. Similarly, the other side of the border was also under a strong surveillance from Khartoum. Therefore, the magnitude of cattle rustling under SPLM/A controlled Gambella was marginal (Gatkhot, 2007: 45). SPLM/A itself confiscated cattle from the communities which were the major sources of grievance between the local communities and undisciplined militias of SPLM/A (ibid).

In the interval periods of relative peace in the southern Sudan after the CPA, cattle raiding dominated (in) security reports of the Gambella Regional State Security and Administrative Affairs Bureau. Despite the prevailing assumption that relative peace in the southern Sudan after the CPA brings peace to Gambella, cattle raiding began to dominate the atmosphere of insecurity in the region then. Understanding the links between developments in post-CPA and Post-

⁴⁸ Field note, Itang town, February 17, 2014

⁴⁹ Annual Reports of the Gambella Regional State Security and Administrative Affairs Bureau, August, 2013, Gambella.

independent South Sudan and the magnitude and scale of cattle raiding in Gambella is thus very essential to comprehend the security threats to the communities on the borderlands.

Various developments in the post-CPA and post –independence period are contributing to the increasing level of cattle rusting in Gambella. The first major factor is related to the end of civil war in South Sudan. The end of the war with the North helped former fighters to return to their village hoping for peace. Despite the intermittent ethnic violence that erupted later, a relative peace and calm was gained in the communities that have been military bases and battle grounds. Subsequently, areas like Jonglei and Upper Nile States now experience a relative peace and its young members begun to return from war fields. These young former rebel soldiers look for partners to establish families. A man stayed for a considerable time in a war front will not have the means to pay for bride wealth. In addition, marriage is a concern for the extended family with the groom usually receiving assistance from his father and relatives when collecting cattle and cash for bride wealth. As many lost their parents and paternal relatives during the war, this could have reduced their capability to mobilize resources for marriage (Rolandsen and Breidlid, 2012: 54). These are young former rebel soldiers that still bear their arms. They lack resources for marriage i.e. cattle or cash but they have the means i.e. weapons that can bring needed resources.

As discussed above, disarming of both civilian and armed groups in South Sudan was/is unsuccessful. Arms are still under the control of various armed faction groups and civilian that resists rounds of disarmament. On the contrary, communities in Gambella have been disarmed and hence disadvantaged in defending themselves and their cattle. Therefore, the armed youth in Jonglei (also known as White Army) raided disarmed Ethiopian communities with more causality. The porous nature of the border combined with the absence of government security on the border makes it easy for the armed groups in Jonglei to raid the communities in Gambella with high casualties.

The second factor is related to economic revivals and opening of markets in local areas in South Sudan. The influx of oil money to the South Sudanese economy in the post-independence period has increased the demand for cattle and there are indications that the cost of marriage for young men has increased significantly (Sommers and Schwartz, 2011: 17). In addition to this, the availability of market for looted cattle in the new state of South Sudan is another factor. Looted

cattle in some areas destined for meat market within South Sudan and across the international borders (ibid).

The third factor is related to various actors behind the scenes. These actors had their own political and economic interests. There are various militia groups fighting Juba and inflicting damage to the borderland communities. Addis Ababa has also plenty of out-law groups and organized armed movements in this region. The porous nature of the border is advantageous for these groups to hide themselves and organize subversive activities. They did not only participate in an ad-hoc manner. They conduct raids for profit and as part of their role in the complex conflict dynamics in Gambella region. With regard to conflict formation in the region, through sales of cattle in exchange for weapons and ammunition, looted cattle is facilitating large scale violence and contributed to the dynamics of conflict formation in Gambella. This situation is further complicated by the limited (or non-existence) capacity of the new South Sudan government security forces in maintaining border security and a similar absence of border guards and security personnel around the Ethiopian border that allows the lawlessness to continue unabated.

Today cattle raiding are the serious security concerns to the borderland communities boarding Jonglei and Upper Nile States of South Sudan. Cattle have significant social and economic values in pastoralist communities. The Murle and Lou Nuer communities of Jonglei State are pastoralist that has special sentiment to their cattle. Particularly the Murle has special attachment to the cattle. According to my informant in Methar, the Murle had an assumption that “all cattle in the world belong to them, and any attempt to rustle the cattle is to regain what has been lost from them before”⁵⁰. Murle further legitimizes their raids as “the Nuer [Ethiopian Nuer] tie their cattle with trees or hold them in a barricade is because they know that the cattle are not to them. If they untie them, the cattle will come to their natural owner i.e. the Murle”⁵¹.

These security threats are far pertinent to the community living in remote frontier areas where government did not reach. All communities on the frontier are not equally insecure by cattle raiding from the Murle and Lou Nuer. Given the social and economic bases of the Anywaa community, which is predominantly agriculturalists, cattle raiding is not a serious security

⁵⁰ Daniel Tut Pal, farmer in Lari, Lari *Wereda*. I interviewed him on February 17, 2014.

⁵¹ Ujulu Kwot, my facilitator, cited above.

concerns as their neighbor, the Nuer. The Nuer is pastoralist and its social and economic base is founded on cattle raising. The Nuer community is therefore the target of cattle raiding from both Murle and Lou Nuer of Jonglei State.

Inter-communal cattle stealing among the Ethiopian Nuer themselves persist for so long but the traditional social values and authorities manage to limit the magnitude. Cattle rustling by Murle and Lou Nuer are devastating in terms of the casualties recorded and the number of cattle raided. In one incident a group of armed Murle can raid up to 1000 cattle with deaths of people and burning down of villages⁵². Besides, uncoordinated disarmament that left our communities unarmed helps the armed Murle and Lou Nuer of Jonglei to raid the communities in Gambella with more causality.

Cattle raiding is therefore a serious security concern for the remote communities living in Gambella. This security threat affected mostly cattle keeping Nuer communities in Gambella. This however does not mean that communities other than Nuer are secure from other threats of armed Murle and Lou Nuer. Armed Murle and Lou Nuer kill people in their way for reasons of confiscating weapons and cloths. Besides cattle raiding and killings, Murle remains a source of another security threat for all communities in the frontier i.e. child abduction.

Murle abduct children that make it the most feared ethnic group among all communities on the borderlands. Murle's practice of child abduction is exceptional in the sense that such practice is not conducted by other ethnic groups in the frontier. In this case, the Anywaa and other agriculturalist communities are all insecure. Child abduction is therefore a major security concerns for both pastoralists and agriculturalists in the frontier.

Murle is reputedly notorious for its war culture and violent attacks on neighboring tribes. Pibor County of Jonglei State is their base which is 35 Kilometers from the Akobo District of Gambella. "Everyone in the community runaway when news of Murle's arrival is heard"⁵³. Murle cross the border into Gambella between December and May. They rustle cattle and burned down villages. But child abduction makes Murle source of multiple security threats to the borderland communities.

⁵² Field note, Lari town, February 17, 2014

⁵³ David Walwal, local security chief in Lari town of Lari *Wereda*. I interviewed him on February 18, 2014 in Lari town.

Children between the ages of 7-10 are the targets of Murle attacks. Girls are also preferred than boys⁵⁴. The question why Murle abduct children is very delicate one. Incredibly controversial associations are made by the local people and informants in Pochalla *Kebele* of Gog *Wereda*. An informant in the *Kebele* narrated:

“[A]n abducted child will be raised as Murle and integrated to the Murle culture. When he (if he is a boy) is ready for marriage, he will be sent to the community where he was abducted to rustle cattle. The girl will be given to someone else in the community when she become young, thus bring cattle to the family⁵⁵.”

In one way or another, the child abducted adds cattle to the family. If he is a boy he loot and rustle cattle and if she is a girl, she is a source of cattle when she is married that brings cattle as bride wealth to the family.

An ambiguous association is also made between Murle and its practice of child abduction. It is believed that the kidnappings are motivated by Murle’s low fertility rate which in turn is allegedly caused by widespread sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) with in the Murle community. Although some studies indicate a relatively low population growth in Murle society, there is no proven correlation with STDs (Riak Akuei, et.al, 2010: 53). Murle areas are among the most marginalized in South Sudan and a low population growth is likely to be attributed to livelihood related factors. (ibid)

The stigmatizations of the Murle and their alleged reputation have antagonized communities. It also exacerbated the Murle community’s perceptions of themselves as being politically and economically marginalized. Reinforced by the geographical isolation of Pibor country, this has resulted in a sense of insecurity and defensiveness among the Murle who appear to have limited trust in post-independent government authorities and security apparatus. Apparently, the negative sentiments towards the Murle community are arguably rooted in the civil war, when elements of the Murle youth were mobilized under the leadership of Ismael Konye into a Khartoum backed militia, called Pibor Defense Force (PDF) (Young, 2007). This group fought against the SPLM/A and other militia factions as part of Khartoum’s divide and rule strategy.

⁵⁴ Field note, Gambella town, January 02, 2014

⁵⁵ Ogalla Obang, farmer in Pochalla *Kebele* of Gog *Wereda*. I interviewed him on February 07, 2014.

In a nutshell, cattle raiding and child abduction are the major security threats to the borderland communities. These security concerns seems marginal to the national government at Addis Ababa. The ever changing concepts of security proved that strong adherence to national security may not led to security of the people living in the state. Good relations between Addis Ababa and Juba prevent them to look what is happening on the frontiers that both of them lost control. The absence of Ethiopian security forces on the border areas combined with defenseless position of the communities in Gambella left them situated to the severe raids of the armed Murle and Lou Nuer from Jonglei State.

My informant in Tenge *Kebele* of Abobo *Wereda* question “to whom these soldiers (members of Ethiopian National Defense Force stationed in Abobo, the *Wereda* capital) are providing security?”⁵⁶ He sadly answers his own question that the soldiers are here to provide security for the investors engaged in agricultural investment in Abobo *Wereda*. He added, “they killed our son who ask questions about the land that belongs to the Anywaa”⁵⁷. Members of the Ethiopian National Defense Force protecting the foreign companies engaged in agricultural investment and in drilling for oil do not provide security for the communities in Gambella. This could be a covert strategy of the central government to evade the local people from their land needed for massive agricultural investment and from potentially oil rich areas.

4.6. Cross-border alliance formations: “Nuer Empire in the making?”

Gambella region has experienced dynamic inter-ethnic relations and conflict over a century. Cross-border ethnic relations have been dominated by conflict and cooperation. The politics of “inclusion” and “exclusion” of the specific governments in Addis Ababa and Khartoum have largely shaped the conflict and cooperation landscape among ethnic groups in the Southwest frontier. To be “included” at the national government in Addis Ababa and thus legitimize their resource claims, the Anywaa and the Nuer of Gambella engaged in competing strategies of “historical relevance” and “numeric advantage” respectively.

⁵⁶ Kud Omad, elementary school teacher in Tenge *Kebele*, Abobo *Wereda*. I interviewed him on February 08, 2014 in Tenge.

⁵⁷ Field note, Tenge Kebele, February 08, 2014

The Nuer in Gambella for so long have been considered “late comers” in Gambella. With the introduction of ethnic federalism in the post-1991, the Anywaa and Nuer continue to employ different political strategy to access and legitimize resource claims. Dereje (2006: 953) argued that the Anywaa’s reaction to the problems created by the Nuer have crystallized into “the project of containment”, a strategy aimed at holding back the Nuer expansion into their territories. The politics of exclusion through depriving the Nuer of political offices and education were the methodology. On the other hand, the Nuer have crystallized into what Dereje called “catching up” aimed at inclusion into the political structure (ibid).

To challenge the political domination of the Anywaa, the Nuer established a political party called Gambella Peoples Democratic Unity Party (GPDUP) in 1992. The Anywaa considered this Nuer political organization as a serious threat to their political security. Thus they branded the GPDUP as an ally to SPLA Naser faction which planned and involved in the January and June 1992 violent attacks on the Anywaa village of Gambella⁵⁸.

Today, the two rival groups continue to employ different strategies to claim more representation that further exacerbated the violent conflicts in Gambella. The Anywaa who believed that they were the first-comers to the region claimed more than six of the nine districts based on historical grounds. According to Ragassa (2010: 208), the Anywaa dominated the regional council during the past four rounds of elections on the basis of land based political representation. On the contrary, the Nuer politics continued to be the politics of number as their ethnic majority status had proved to be an effective strategy of entitlements in the political developments at the center.

In 2002, due to various developments in the region and outside the region⁵⁹, a new power-sharing arrangement based on equal share of seats in the regional council and an ethnic based form of zonal administration were introduced by balancing the Anywaa land claim with the Nuer population claim. Obviously, the new power-sharing arrangement which increases the Nuer representation in Gambella is seen by the Anywaa as a serious threat to their political security in

⁵⁸ Chan Katkhot, cited above.

⁵⁹ The Nuer participation in the Ethio-Eritrean war of 1998-2000 increased their opportunity for political entitlements. In the aftermath of the war, they received eight additional seats in the regional council through the intervention of the federal government. The 2002 Anywaa-Nuer conflict has also pushed the central government to introduce the new power-sharing arrangement. The data is generated from my facilitator Ojulu Kwot.

the region they believe their homeland. The Nuer demand also seems unmet as they continue to demand more representation.

The Anywaa did not contest that there have been Ethiopian Nuer. What is difficult for them to accept is the larger number of Nuer in Gambella. The massive expansion of the Nuer into Gambella was a result of the longest civil war in the Sudan. Starting from the first civil war that lasted for more than a decade, many Nuer came to Gambella. After the end of the war many of them did not return to their homeland. The second civil war produced much more number of refugees, mostly Nuer in Gambella. The official figures of refugees in mid 1980s were 350,000 in the host population of not more than 80,000 at the time (Kurimoto, 2005: 12).

With the change of government in Ethiopia in 1991, the newly installed Anywaa administration in Gambella begun a campaign that Nuer are refugees from southern Sudan and they should return back as SPLM/A expelled from Gambella. The new Anywaa administration was suspicious about the increasing number of Nuer in Gambella. When SPLM/A was expelled from Gambella by the new government at Addis Ababa, GPLM similarly requested Nuer to go back. The new Anywaa administration also closed refugee screening centers not to accept anymore Nuer refugees from southern Sudan.

Now the Nuer are identified as refugees from southern Sudan and thus illegitimate in the new power arrangement in the regional state of Gambella. The Nuer, as a counter to the Anywaa's "containment" strategy, did not take much time to employ a "catching up" strategy. Tactically the Nuer begun exploiting the space crated out of the rift between Anywaa elites who wants to control their new regional government and the central government which wants to exert influence on the regional politics.

Finally after a long road with "catching up" strategy with the Anywaa, recently this year Gambella got Nuer president for the first time after 1991. For the Anywaa, the transfer of presidency from Omod Obang to Galgwat Tut creates a mix feeling of both relief and pain. Umod Obang is accused by the Anywaa of responsible for the 2003 massacre that led to the death of more than 400 Anywaa in three days in Gambella and Itang towns. He distanced himself from the Anywaa and he has been accused by the Anywaa of fevering the other ethnic groups particularly highlanders in Gambella. Now he is gone to the center Addis Ababa and thus sense

of relief for the Anywaa. Yet, even though there is a sense of relief with the end of Obang “massacre”, the Anywaa lost the most important power in the region that they were able to maintain for more than two decades. It may take them too long to regain their presidency.

For the Nuer it was a day of celebration of many years struggle. There have been celebrations in Lari and Wantwha⁶⁰. The celebration was not contained by the state boundaries. The alliance formations “who is with whom” is clear that their brothers at the other side of the border in Jonglei share the celebrations⁶¹. For the Nuer from the other side of the border, what happened in Gambella is fruits of their brothers’ long years struggle which now they want to do in their country of South Sudan⁶².

Besides the competing strategies, the Anywaa and Nuer engage in alliance formations with other minority ethnic groups in Gambella that could enhance their respective strategies. The Opo and Majang for so long have been with the sides of the Anywaa. The recent violent conflict between Majang and Anywaa in Godere district weakened, if not ended, the traditional ties between them. Komo is a traditional ally of the Nuer in the alliance arrangements in Gambella⁶³. Since recent times, the alliance formation in Gambella seems widening the territorial space by crossing the border into Jonglei State of South Sudan. The Nuer in Gambella and the Nuer in Jonglei State of South Sudan are in the process of identifying themselves in the “who is with whom” alliance formations.

In the newly erupted armed struggle in Jonglei between government forces and rebels led by former vice president Riek Machar, the local communities in the borderlands are mobilized to the war “Nuer against Dinka”. The actors in the civil war in South Sudan are mobilizing the communities in the frontier along their traditional alliance arrangements. This is how local conflicts are entwined into transnational conflict dynamics.

⁶⁰ Tesfay Getachew, previously settler and now teacher in Openo Technical and Vocational Training College. I interviewed him on the way to Lari on February 18, 2014.

⁶¹ Field note, Gambella town, February 20, 2014

⁶² Field note, Gambella town, January 02, 2013

⁶³ I come to learn about these alliances from my facilitator Ojulu Kwot.

For my Anywaa informant Otiang, the subsequent violence in South Sudan by the Nuer against the Dinka is motivated by what the Nuer had done in Gambella. For Otiang, the Nuer in South Sudan want to control the highest power of presidency as their brothers did here in Gambella⁶⁴. The violent conflict in South Sudan that started in late 2013 is not just sporadic. It is rather a conflict rooted in the Sudanese civil war. Besides the bigger wars as North and South, there has been what was called “South-South Confrontation” where ethnic and tribal based violence in southern Sudan fragmented SPLM/A. Militia groups, mostly of Nuer, fought against Dinka dominated SPLM/A supported by Khartoum. Moreover, the 1991 Bore massacre, immediately after the expulsion of SPLM/A from Gambella, is a recent memory about the violent conflict between Nuer and Dinka in South Sudan.

Now in 2013 a violent armed conflict erupted between the two conflicting political elites in Juba who finally want to decide their differences by violent ways. The Nuer attempt to control political power in the newly born South Sudan is a double political security threat for the Anywaa in Gambella. “They control power in Gambella and they want the same in South Sudan. These people [Nuer] want to establish Nuer Empire from Gambella to South Sudan”⁶⁵.

Sense of belongingness and affiliation between the Nuer of Gambella and South Sudan is something expected in the “who is with whom” alliance formation along the Southwestern Ethiopian frontier. What is even more unacceptable for the Anywaa is what is going on in Lari, Wanthwa and Akobo *Weredas*. These areas are dominantly Nuer settlement areas very much close to South Sudan. The security officials in Gambella are aware that armed Nuer including Nuer Police Members and Nuer Special Forces in Gambella have joined the war in South Sudan supporting their brothers at war with the Dinka⁶⁶.

Most importantly, the physical presence of Riek Machar and warm welcoming from the new Nuer administration in Gambella will obviously boost the morale of the Ethiopian Nuer. Reik Machar stayed in Gambella president office for some days after he fled Juba. In those guerrilla times, he spent much of his time in Gambella with SPLM/A and he is very well aware of the

⁶⁴ Field note, Gambella town, February 13, 2014

⁶⁵ Field note, Gambella town, January 03, 2013

⁶⁶ Field note, Gambella town, February 13, 2014

ethnic tensions and politics in Gambella region. He is very much influential among the Nuer including Jikany Nuer in Gambella. So, it is a foregone conclusion that he can mobilize the Nuer of Gambella in the fight against a Dinka man, Salva Kiir.

The Anywaa has accused the Nuer of failing to see South Sudan as an independent state. According to my informants, the Nuer did not consider South Sudan as another state but as their Nuer neighborhood where they can go to in time of difficulties in Gambella and come back as they wish⁶⁷. These accusations of the Nuer by Anywaa have long been there. The Nuer has been accused by the Anywaa of eating with two “knives” as shifting their identities as Ethiopian when they are in Ethiopia and South Sudanese refugees in refugee camps. But what is happening after the independence of South Sudan as an independent state may not be tolerated by the government at Addis Ababa.

The government of Ethiopia may not see the involvement of the Ethiopian Nuer in the conflict in South Sudan as good. EPRDF may tolerate controlled “violence” in South Sudan, but it will not be interested to see the new state descending into anarchy. Some level of violence may be tolerated but given the problem in Gambella, the Ethiopian government did not want another “failed state” in the west as its security is already occupied in Somalia in the East.

The conflict in South Sudan is no more a conflict of Dinka and Nuer in South Sudan. Many arms and finance has been sent to the conflict and regional leaders like Museveni of Uganda which share borders with South Sudan officially warns he will intervene. This is a transnational conflict that will entangle the local actors in Gambella into the regional one. This will further complicate the conflict formation in Gambella region. The Nuer has always been mobilized in the conflict in South Sudan and now the new violence in South Sudan involves them in one way or another. This is a dangerous conflict dynamics for the Anywaa who find themselves on the wrong side of the divide.

⁶⁷ Kero Okelo and Otaw Ugur, farmers in Abok Kiir *Kebele* of Gambella Zuria *Wereda*. I interviewed them on February 02, 2014 at Abol Kiir village.

Summary and Conclusion

The specific narratives developed above are significant that shows not only the local conflict dynamics but how these conflicts are entangled in national and transnational conflict dynamics. These are cases which indicate the blurred nature of the line among local, national and transnational conflict dynamics in the Gambella conflict formation. The disaggregated levels of conflicts presented above in each specific district in Gambella region now need to be synthesized and analyzed to understand the interlinked nature of the three-levels of conflicts.

The local inter-ethnic relations between the Anywaa and the Nuer have been characterized by conflict and cooperation as the balance of power oscillates between these two ethnic groups in Gambella. Yet, in these historic ethnic relations, the role of actors on both sides of the border could not be ignored. In earlier days, the imperial government in Ethiopia and the British administration in the Sudan manipulated the ethnic relations to their interest. Accessibility of firearms from the British administration in southern Sudan boosted the ambitions of the Nuer in their territorial expansion towards the East into Gambella that at the same time could benefit the expansionist British Empire. The Ethiopian imperial government, aware of the British territorial expansion in southwest, provided firearms to the Anywaa. Thanks to the firearms, the Anywaa attempted to recover the lost territories. Through this way, the local ethnic relations in Gambella have been moulded by actors outside the local arena.

The advancement of the Ethiopian state in the early 20th century accompanied by state and nation building agendas further entangled the local ethnic relations between the Anywaa and the Nuer into the national politics. The two ethnic groups were differentially “integrated” into the Ethiopian empire state. The more settled agriculturalist Anywaa, whose livelihood was comfortable for governance, was relatively preferred than the pastoralist and mobile Nuer. Yet, the type of “integration” here was different from what has been experienced in the North and South highlands. State and nation building agendas of the Ethiopian brought enslavement and appropriation that led to marginalization of the lowland Nilotic people in the empire state formation. The unequal integration made the lowland a periphery that the center relies for resource extraction. Since the early 20th century, there have been sporadic rebellions of the Anywaa against the imperial government.

It was starting from the second half of the 20th century that the ethnic relations in Gambella, which was already entangled into the national politics, became pawns in inter-state relations and conflict. Political developments at home in the mid 1970s brought a military government that later aligned itself with the socialist bloc. Similar developments in the Sudan in the same period strengthened pro-Islamic regime under Nimirie. The pro-Islamic regime in the Sudan is labeled as “enemy of the revolution” by the new socialist regime in Ethiopia and it accused the Sudanese regime of supporting rebels fighting the Derg from their base in the Sudan. Then the Derg resorted to the principle of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend” and look for armed groups fighting Khartoum. The socialist appeal and the slogan of united Sudan of the newly created rebel in the Sudan led by John Garang much to the Derg agenda. The ideological “love” between Derg and SPLM/A were given prominence that the consequences of the presence of Nuer dominated SPLM/A in Gambella was unseen. The fall of Gambella in the hands of Nuer dominated SPLM/A brought drastic changes in the balance of power between the Anywaa and the Nuer in Gambella. Now the ideologically preferred Nuer took the ladder of administration in Gambella by replacing the Anywaa whose relevance were ended with the end of the imperial government. Collusion was created between Derg, SPLM/A and Nuer in Gambella against the Anywaa.

Thus, similar to other discontented nationalities fighting against the Derg, the Anywaa resorted to armed struggle to free their respective region. Yet it was clear how much the struggle in the lowland was so much detached from the struggle in the highlands. The problem in the lowland was not an “Amharatized empire state” which the struggles in the highlands were fighting. The problem here is the Nuer and highlander who are very close to the Anywaa than the far away and unknown “Abyssinian state”. Moreover, the category of highlanders in Gambella includes all people that came from other highland parts of Ethiopia during resettlement programme that includes Tigre, Amhara and Oromo. For the Anywaa it was not clear who was Tigre, Amhara and Oromo. They are all “Gala” that took the Anywaa land and are agents of central government.

Despite the divergent understanding of the aims of the struggle a “marriage of necessity” was later created between TPLF, an armed group fighting to liberate Tigray and GPLM, to liberate Gambella. At this time, the proxy arrangement was played out not only in the region of Horn of Africa but also in the local ethnic relations in Gambella. In the transnational conflict dynamics,

Derg and SPLM/A on the one side and Khartoum and various armed groups fighting against Addis Ababa on the other side engaged in proxy alliances and wars. Locally, the Nuer in Gambella were mobilized and recruited by Derg in the fight in the North against EPLF and TPLF. The Anywaa supported by the Sudanese and TPLF fought against the Nuer and SPLM/A in Gambella. Through these ways the local ethnic relations between the Anywaa and the Nuer in Gambella was shaped by the transnational conflict dynamics and proxy alliances.

When victory came in 1991, ethno-nationalities that were fighting against the Derg assumed the rein of state power in their specific territories. In national terms similar to that of TPLF (now controls Tigray), APDM (that controls Amhara) and OLF (that controls Oromia), GPLM was ambitious to assume power in the region it fought for. To make ambitions a reality, with the expulsion of SPLM/A from Gambella, GPLM requested the Nuer to go with their armed group. The new Anywaa administration in Gambella made the Nuer refugees and thus to go back to their homeland in southern Sudan. The administration also closed refugee screening centers to limit the influx of further Nuer refugees and thus reduce the Nuer's political space in the newly created regional government.

The new Anywaa administration in Gambella region later on resorted to get rid of highlanders, another usurper the group has been fighting against. In an incidence in 1991 known as "girgir" armed Anywaa killed more than seven hundred highlander in different settlement villages in Itang and Gambella. This has been a contradictory part in the "marriage of necessity" between TPLF and GPLM. The contradictory political vision soon led "comrades-in-arms" into a political conflict just a year after their victory against Derg. After the incidence, the government at Addis Ababa requested GPLM to lay down their arms. The request was unacceptable for the group trying to consolidate their power in their region. The political differences were further widened as the center's grip on power increases its monopoly in the regional government. GPLM wants to dominate the region which it feels belongs to them. The central government equally wants to exert significant influence and intervention in the region that has a considerable number of highlanders as well as potential resources for the new emerging business class in the regime.

The subsequent introduction of federalism and ethnicity as a major political organizing element in the post 1991 became another variable in the three level games between the Anywaa and Nuer in Gambella and the Anywaa and the central government at national politics and the Anywaa

opposition supported by transnational actors in South Sudan and Eritrea. Unlike the other ethno-based regional states in the country which federalism could work, Gambella region is a multi-ethnic regional state where one ethnic group could not claim dominance in administering the region. In the new arrangement in Gambella, the Anywaa wants to be considered as the dominant ethnic group, at least, to rule the region. Historical connections with the center and the recent “marriage of necessity” with TPLF are the competing legitimizing strategies for the Anywaa. The Anywaa still feels the region belongs to them and they comfortably control 70% of the land in Gambella. The political formula engineered by the center also helps the Anywaa to dominate the political space until recently. However, nowadays it seems that the Anywaa are losing their dominance in the regional politics. A more aggressive and expansionist Nuer is challenging the Anywaa in regional power play.

Despite the Anywaa’s long existing claim that the Nuer are refugees and thus illegitimate in politics in Gambella, the Nuer struggle for fair representation in Gambella started early 1990s. The Nuer are now the majority in number in Gambella region and they have been using their numerical advantage as a counter strategy for Anywaa’s historical connection with the center. What seems a more subtle move by the Nuer is associating their strategy with the much talked “democracy” in the center and in turn demanding more representation in Gambella region. To overcome the Anywaa’s claim of connection to the historic center, the Nuer participated in Ethio-Eritrean war of 1998 which boosted their image at the center. As a political reward for their role, they were granted by the central government more seats in the regional government. It is clear that the two ethnic groups in Gambella who have been fighting against water and pasture now engage in a conflict of another type i.e. for the control of political space. In the post 1991, the two ethnic groups fought for territorial space that will determine their representation in the power play in the region. The local level administration of *Wereda* is the most important one and thus the place political game is played out. The more *Wereda* one has, the more representation in the regional council, a decision making body in the region.

The conflict in 2003 is a landmark in the conflict formation in Gambella region. The subsequent political developments both at the center and at the region are bringing new dynamics and actors to the conflict. The “marriage of necessity” is debilitating that the Nuer are using as an opportunity to situate them with the center and have more representation in the regional council.

Today the conflict in Gambella is to do with the central government and the Anywaa opposition. The Anywaa for so long resist the central government. With de-centering the state it was believed that the long existed conflict in Ethiopia between the center and periphery will be resolved. In most parts of Ethiopia that previously experienced such conflicts, today we do not see many armed resistance against the center. The introduction of federalism detaches the center as an arena of conflicts. Local level governments like *Wereda* and region become arenas where competition and conflict are played out among competing ethnic groups for the control of regional power. Such horizontal conflict trends are also reflected in Gambella where indigenous ethnic groups in the region compete each other for the control of power in the region. However, unlike other parts in Ethiopia, the introduction of federalism does not end the vertical conflict relations between ethnic group and central government in Gambella. After the 2003 massacre of many Anywaa in Gambella and Itang, the Anywaa once again go to armed rebellion against the same enemy i.e. the highlanders that represent the central government in Gambella and the Nuer. In 2005 another armed group called GPLM/F II was formed which is similar in objective with the former GPLM.

The revival of the Anywaa opposition against the center is a result of accumulated grievance among the Anywaa. In the newly revived Anywaa armed struggle, highlanders and Nuer remains the problem to get rid of in Gambella. Highlanders in Gambella are believed to be agents of the central government who have strong political network with the center. Despite the fact that these category of people are not recognized as indigenous like other five ethnic group in Gambella by the regional constitution and thus constitutionally prevented from the regional politics, highlanders, who maintain strong political network with the center, are “king makers” in Gambella. They play significant role in the power play between the Anywaa and the Nuer. With connection to the center, relative advantage in business and education, highlanders are economic hub of Gambella.

The Nuer are another “trouble-maker” in Gambella for the Anywaa. Most of the Nuer settlements are established on traditionally Anywaa land and most of them were refugees who came to Gambella in the first and second Sudanese civil war but did not return after the end of the civil war. Citizenship that determines inclusion and exclusion in the national politics is the most contested concept in Gambella. Even in the post CPA period, the Nuer incursion into

Gambella is not curbed and now the violent conflict in the newly born republic of South Sudan continues to produce influx of Nuer refugees in Gambella. This is a serious concern for the Anywaa whose number is counting down in contrary to exponentially increasing Nuer population that will change the political formula in the Anywaa-Nuer political game in Gambella.

One of the grievances of the Anywaa against the central government is in fact the failure of the government to contain the Nuer incursion or deliberate intention to let them into Gambella. Recently in December, 2012, due to the inter-ethnic conflict between Murle and Lou Nuer in Jonglei, more than 150,000 Lou Nuer crossed the border into Gambella and displaced 21 *Kebeles* in Wantwa *Wereda* of which four of them were the Anywaa. Since November, 2013 the violent conflict in Jonglei State between South Sudanese government and rebels led by former vice president Riek Machar produced large influx of refugees in Gambella mostly of Nuer. Unlike the previous Anywaa administration, the new Nuer administration in Gambella is willing to receive more Nuer refugees.

Finally, in what seems to be a transnational conflict dynamics in South Sudan, the enter-ethnic conflict in Gambella between the Anywaa and Nuer are further intertwined as the ethnic groups are mobilized along the traditional “who is with whom” alliance formations in the frontier. The current violent conflict in South Sudan is no more a local conflict contained in the territory of South Sudan. Many arms and finance have been sent into the war and transnational actors are muddling in it. As presented before, the Nuer in Gambella are mobilized in the fight against the Dinka in Jonglei State of South Sudan. Many armed Nuer police in Lari and Wantwa joined their Nuer brothers at war with the Dinka in Bor County of Jonglei State. For the Anywaa who find themselves in the wrong side of the divide, a lose collusion once again is in the making between the central government and the Nuer against the Anywaa. No one knows whether it is by design or by default, there will be national elections in Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Sudan in 2015 that will further complicate the situation in Gambella. Given the turmoil situation in Gambella and South Sudan, the elections in Ethiopia and South Sudan will bring further complication in the Gambella conflict formation. This is a region where states are weak in their frontiers and similar ethnic groups living in their international borders are easily mobilized in transnational conflict dynamics.

References⁶⁸

- Arnold, Matthew and Chris Alden (2007). “*This Gun is our food*”: *Demilitarizing the White Army Militia of South Sudan*. Working Paper. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.
- Atta-Asamoach, Andrews (2011). South Sudan: origins and implications of emerging (in) security dynamics. Situation Report. *Institute for Security Studies*, Pretoria, South Africa.
- Axt, Heinz-Jurgen et al. (2006). *Conflict: A Literature Review*. Duisburg: Jean Monnet Group.
- Bahru Zewdie (1976). Relation between Ethiopia and the Sudan on the Western Ethiopian Frontier 1898-1935. *PhD thesis*. University of London, London.
- Berouk Mesfin (2010). ‘*The Horn of Africa as a Security Complex: Towards a Theoretical Framework*.’ <http://www.psa.ac.uk/journals> Accessed on 17/08/2012.
- Booth, Ken (2007). *Theory of World Security*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Borchgrevink, Axel and Jon Harald Sande Lie(2009). *Regional Conflicts and International Engagement on the Horn of Africa*. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI).
- Brink, Rogier van den, Daniel W. Bromley, and Jean-Paul Chava (1995) “The Economics of Cain and Abel: Agro-Pastoral Property Rights in the Sahel,” *Journal of Development Studies*, no.31, pp.373-399.
- Bruchhaus . E and Monika M. Sommer (2008). Hot Spot Horn of Africa Revisited. *Approaches to make sense of conflict*. Lit Verlag, Berlin.
- Buzan, Barry (1983). *People, States, and Fear The National Security Problem in International Relations*”, John Spiers publishers, Great Britain.
- _____ (1991). *People, States, and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War era*. Second Edition. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Buzan, Barry and Lene Hansen (2009). *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Buzan, Barry, O Weaver and J de Wilde (1998). *Security: A new framework for analysis*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Buzan, Barry and Ole Weaver (2003). *Regions and powers. The structure of international security*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

⁶⁸ Ethiopian and Eritrean authors are listed alphabetically by first name.

- Center on International Cooperation (2001). *Regional Conflict Formation in the Great Lakes Region of Africa: Structure, Dynamics and Challenges for Policy*. New York University and the African Peace Forum, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Central Statistic Agency (2010). *The 2007 Population and housing Census of Ethiopia. Results for Gambella Region*. Addis Ababa: FDRE Population Census Commission.
- Chan Gatkuoth Yoam (2007). *The Impact of Sudan's Civil War on Ethiopia's South Western Frontiers Region of Gambella*. Unpublished in Gambella Regional Administrative and Security Bureau.
- Clapham, Christopher (1999). "The Foreign Policy of Ethiopia and Eritrea" in Wright, Stephen (ed), *African*
- Cliffe, Lionel (1999). "Regional Dimensions of Conflict in the Horn of Africa." *Third World Quarterly*.
- Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler (2002). "On the Incidence of Civil War in Africa." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- Collier, Paul (2007). "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy." *Leashing The Dogs Of War: Conflict Management In A Divided World*. Ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen O. Hampson, and Pamela Aall. Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Creswell, W. John (2009). *Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Method Approaches* (2nd Ed.). London: Sage publications.
- David, Bloomfield (1997). *Peacemaking Strategies in Northern Ireland: Building Complementarity in Conflict Management Theory*. New York, St. Martin's Press.
- Dawit Byazen (2011). "Center-Periphery Relations in the Context of Post-1991 Ethnic Policy and Relations: Experience from Gambella." *In Anthology of Peace and Security Research*. Institute for Peace and Security Studies and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Addis Ababa.
- de Costa, Diana Felix (2012). "Responses to inter-communal Violence in Jonglei State." *In Year One of Nation: South Sudan's Independence*. e-International Relations. www.e-ir.info/wp-content/uploads/Sudan-publication.pdf. Accessed on 19/12/2012.
- Debay Tadesse (2012). *Post-Independence South Sudan: The Challenges Ahead*. Working Paper. ISPS.
- Deng, Francis M (1995). *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

- _____ (1998). Africa's Dilemma in the Sudan. *The World Today*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (Mar., 1998), pp. 72-74. Royal Institute of International Affairs.
- _____ (2006). 'Sudan: A Nation in turbulent search for itself'. Journal of Annals of the American Academy of political and Social Sciences. Vol. 603, published by Sage Publications Inc. Foreign Policies, Westview Press: USA and UK.
- Dereje Feyissa (2005). *Making Sense of the Conflict Situation in the Gambella Region in National Terms*, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/S 2005.
- _____ (2006). "The Experience of Gambella." In Turton (eds) *Ethnic Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience in Comparative Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____ (2009). "A National Perspective on the Conflict in Gambella". *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies: Trondheim*.
- Deutsch, Morton (1991). 'Subjective Features of Conflict Resolution: Psychological, Social and Cultural Influences', in Raimo Vayrynen (ed.), *New Direction in Conflict Theory: Conflict Resolution and Conflict Transformation*. London, Sage Publications.
- Edward, Jane K. and Amir Idris (2007). 'The Consequences of Sudan's Civil Wars for the Civilian Population' in ed. John Laband *Daily Lives of Civilians in Wartime Africa: From Slavery Days to Rwandan Genocide*. London :Greenwood Press. 227- 252.
- Ellingsen, Tanja (2000). "Colorful Community or Ethnic Witches' Brew? Multi-ethnicity and Domestic Conflict During and After the Cold War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. No. 44(2) pp. 228-249.
- Evans Pritchard, E. (1940). *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political institutions of a Nilotic People*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Farrell, Theo and Olivier Schmitt (2012). *The Causes, Character and Conduct of Armed Conflict, and the Effects on Civilian Populations, 1990-2010*. Legal and Protection policy Research Series.
- Galtung, Johan (1975). "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research", in idem: *Peace: Research, Education, Action*. Essays in Peace Research. Vol. I. pp. 109-134. Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers Forlag,
- Gates, Scott and Brian D. Humes (1997). *Games, Information and Politics. Applying Game Theoretic Models to Political Science*. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.
- Gerring, John (2007). *Case Study Research. Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Getachew Kassa (2001). *Among the Pastorals in Ethiopia: Tradition, Continuity, and Socio-economic Change*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. OSSREA.
- _____ (2002). "The Garri and Borena Conflict in Southern Ethiopia: Past and Current Attempts of Mediation and Settlement" in Alfred G. Mehma (ed.) *The Quest for Peace in Africa: Transformation, Democracy and public Policy*. Addis Ababa: OSSREA. Pp. 51-55.
- Gleditsch, Kristian (2003). *Transnational Dimensions of Civil War*. Human Security Project, Harvard University.
- GPLM (Gambella people's Liberation Movement). 2005. Press release No.1, 30 October
- _____ (2006). Press release No. 3. 14 January.
- Hovi, Jon (1998). *Games, Threats and Treaties. Understanding Commitments in International Relations*. London, Pinter.
- Johnson, Douglas H. (2003). *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*. Oxford University Press.
- _____ (2009). *When Boundaries Become Borders. The Impact of boundary-making in Southern Sudan's frontier Zones*. Rift valley Institute.
- Kassahun Berhanu (2013). "Conflicts in the Horn of Africa and Implications for Regional Security." In Bereketab (eds) (2013). *The Horn of Africa. Intra- and Inter-State Conflicts and Security*. 71-94. London: Pluto Press.
- Kothari, C.R (2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques* (2nd Ed.). New Delhi: New Age International Ltd.
- Kurimoto, Eisie (1996). People of the River: Subsistence Economy of the Anywaa (Anywaa) of Western Ethiopia, in Shun Sato/Eisei Kurimoto (eds.), *Essays in Northeast African Studies*, Senri Ethnological Studies No. 43, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka 1996.
- _____ (2005). Multi-dimensional Impacts of Refugees and Settlers in the Gambella Region, Western Ethiopia. In Itaru Ohta and Yntiso D. Gebre eds. *Displacement Risks in Africa: Refugees, Settler and their host population*, Kyoto University Press.
- Kydd, Andrew (2004). "The Art of Shaker Modeling: Game Theory and Security Studies", in Detlef F. Sprinz and Yael Wolinsky-Nahmias (eds.): *Models, Numbers and Cases. Methods for Studying International Relations*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press.
- Leenco Leta (2004). *The Horn of Africa as Common Homeland: The State and Self Determination in the Era of Heightened Globalization*. Wilfrid Laurier Univeristy Press, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

- Markakis, John (1990). The Political Economy of Conflict in the Horn of Africa, *Survival* Vol. 32. No. 5. pp. 403.
- _____ (1994), 'Ethnic Conflict and the State in the Horn of Africa' in Fukui Katsuyoshi and John Markakis, eds. *Ethnicity and Conflict in the Horn of Africa*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- _____ (1996). "Environmental Degradation and Armed Conflicts in the Horn of Africa." *Environment and conflict project, ENCOP occasional paper*. Center for security studies, Zurich.
- _____ (2011). *Ethiopia. The Last Two Frontiers*. James Currey.
- Marshall, Catherine and Gretchen B. Rossman (1991). *Designing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publication.
- Meckelburg, Alexander (2006). Changing Ethnic Relations. A preliminary investigation of Gambella, Southwest Ethiopia. In Working paper. Available at <http://www.anyuakmedia.com/Changing%20Ethnic%20Relations%20in%20Gambella.pdf>. Hamburg: Asien-Afrika Institut der Universität Hamburg.
- Medhane Tadesse (2004). *Turning Conflicts to Cooperation: towards an Energy- led Integration in the Horn of Africa*. Addis Ababa: Friedrich- Ebert- Stiftung.
- _____ (2006). *Gambella: The Impact of Local Conflict on Regional Security*. Centre for Policy Research and Dialogue, Pretoria.
- Mitchell, Chris (1991). 'Recognizing Conflict,' in Woodhouse (ed.) *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Miyandazi, Faith(2010). *Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers. A Global Challenge to Child Rights Realization: The Case of Sudan*. A thesis Submitted to Global Studies a European Perspectives. University of Leipzig, Germany. Found at: http://othes.univie.ac.at/11107/1/2010-09-10_0868191.pdf. Accessed on 09/23/2012.
- Moller, Bjron (2003). *Conflict Theory*. Development Research Series, Working Paper No. 122. Research Center on Development and International Relations (DIR).
- Mossa Hamid (2013). The Secession of South Sudan and Its Security Implications to Ethiopia: the Gambella Experience. M.A. thesis, Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa University.
- Ojulu, Ojot Miru (2011). "The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Reconciliation and Rebuilding the Social Fabric of Communities Fractured by Protracted Conflicts: Case Study of Gambella Regional State of Ethiopia (2000-2006)" in *Human Security perspective*.

European Training and Research Center for Human Rights and Democracy. Found at: http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/139425/ichaptersection_singledocument/55f97e2f-80fa-47e9-b01b-f2c228a00db0/en/14OJULU_Artikel.pdf. Accessed on 10/15/2012.

Raymond C. Kelly (2005). *The Nuer Conquest: Tribal imperialism.* In Dereje Feyissa *Making sense of the Conflict Situation in the Gambella Region in National Terms*, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/S 2005.

Patman, Robert G. (2006). *Globalization and Conflict. National security in a new strategic era.* Routledge. Taylor and Francis Group. London and New York.

Paul, D. Williams (2008) (ed.). *Security Studies. An introduction.* London: Routledge.

_____ (2011). *Horn of Africa: Webs of conflict and Pathways to Peace.* Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University.

Prendergast, John (eds) (2012). "Dealing with Inter-Communal violence in South Sudan." in *Year One of a Nation.* e-International Relations. Found at: www.e-ir.info/wp-content/uploads/Sudan-publication.pdf. Accessed on 19/12/2012.

Raymond C. Kelly (2005). *The Nuer Conquest: Tribal imperialism.* In Dereje Feyissa *Making sense of the Conflict Situation in the Gambella Region in National Terms*, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/S 2005.

Redie Bereketeab (2013). Introduction. In Redie Bereketeab (ed.) *The Horn of Africa. Intra-State and Inter-State Conflicts and Security.* 3-25. London: Pluto Press.

Regan, Patrick (2000). *Civil War and Foreign Powers.* MI: University of Michigan Press.

Regassa Bayissa (2010). *War and Peace in the Sudan and Its Impact on Ethiopia: The Case of Gambella 1955-2008.* Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press.

Rasmusen, Eric (2007). *Games and Information. An Introduction to Game Theory.* 4th Edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Reimann, Cordula (2005). *Assessing the State-of-the-Art in Conflict Transformation.* Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.

Riak Akuei (et.al)(2010). *Child Abduction in Jonglei and Central Equatoria States.* Rift Valley Institute, South Sudan.

Roba S. and Berouk Mesfin (2011). *Regional Security in the Post-Cold War Horn of Africa.* Institute for Security Studies. Pretoria, South Africa.

Rolandsen H, Breidlid Marie(2012). A critical Analysis of Cultural Explanations for the Violence in Jonglei State, South Sudan. *The African Center for the Constructive Resolution*

of Disputes (ACCORD). Found at:
http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/142827/ichaptersection_singledocument/0a5c7d77-3432-4abb-9ad4-a0c3bfdd50bf/en/ch_7.pdf. Accessed on 17/01/2013.

Jok, Jok M. (2012). Insecurity and Ethnic Violence in South Sudan: Existential Threats to the State? Issue paper No.1 found at www.suddinstitute.org. Accessed on 27/01/2013.

Schmid, Herman (1968). 'Peace Research and Politics'. Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 217–232.

Sommers, M. and Schwartz S. (2011). *Dowry and Divisions: youth and State Building in South Sudan*. United States Institute of Peace.

Strauss L. Anselm and Juliet M. Corbin (1998). *Basics of Qualitative research: Grounded Theory, Procedures and Techniques*. London: Sage Publications.

Swanstrom, Niklas and Mikael Weissmann (2005). Conflict, Conflict Prevention, Conflict Management and Beyond: a conceptual exploration. Central Asia-Caucasus Institute. Silk Road Studies Program.

Tadjbakhsh, Shahrbanou and Chenoy, Anuradha (2007). *Human Security: Concepts and implications*, Routledge: London and New York.

Theodore, L. and Bernhard Stengel (2001). Game Theory. CDAM Research Report. LSE-CDAM-2001-09.

United Nations Development Program (1994). *Human Development Report*.

Wallensteen, Peter (2002). Understanding conflict resolution: war, peace and the global system. London: Sage publications.

Yin, Robert K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. London: Sage Publications.

Young John (2007). Armed groups Along Sudan's Eastern frontier: An Overview and Analysis. *Small Arms Survey*.

_____ (2010). Jonglei 2010: Another round of disarmament. Situation Report. *Institute for Security Studies*. Pretoria, South Africa.

_____ (1997). *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia: The Tigray People's Liberation Front, 1975-1991*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____ (1999). 'Along Ethiopia's Western Frontier: Gambella and Benishangul in Transition', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 37(2).

Appendix I

Oral informants

Key informant interviews

No.	Name	Place and Date of Interview	Remarks
1	Ojulu Kwot		My personal friend and facilitator
2	Olenge Okach	Pukadi-Alwero <i>Kebele</i> , Abobo <i>Wereda</i> , 06 February, 2014	Anywaa elder in Pukadi-Alwero village
3	Oman Ungere	Tenge <i>Kebele</i> , Abobo <i>Wereda</i> , 08 February, 2014	Head of Tenge Village
4	Romi David	Karmi <i>Kebele</i> , Gambella Zuria <i>Wereda</i> , 03 February, 2014	Female Teacher at Karmi Primary School
5	Chan Gatkhot	Gambella town, on 29 December, 2012 and on 20 February, 2014.	Former National and Regional Security Advisor to the President, now Deputy Chief of Regional Justice Bureau
6	Otiang Ochan	Gambella town, on 03 January, 2013 and 13 February, 2014	Former Gambella Region Police Chief
7	Gordon Kong	Gambella town, 09 January, 2013	Former head of Security and Administrative Affairs Bureau
8	Oguta Ukunge	Gambella town, 02 January, 2014	Deputy head of Security and Administrative Affairs Bureau
9	Ochala Lock	Tata <i>Kebele</i> , Gog <i>Wereda</i> , 12 February, 2014	Tata <i>Kebele</i> administrator

10	Yong Dong	Itang Town, Itang Special <i>Wereda</i> , 17 February, 2014	Nuer elder
11	Daniel Tut Pal	Lari town, Lari <i>Wereda</i> , 17 February, 2014	Farmer
12	David Walwal	Lari town, Lari <i>Wereda</i> , 17 February, 2014	Local security chief
13	Ogalla Obang	Pochalla <i>Kebele</i> , Gog <i>Wereda</i> , 07 February, 2014	Farmer
14	Kud Omad	Tenge <i>Kebele</i> , Abobo <i>Wereda</i> , 08 February, 2014	Elementary School teacher
15	Tesfay Getachew	On the way from Itang to Lari, 18 February, 2014	Came to Gambella as settler but now teacher in Openo College
16	Kero Okelo	Abol kiir <i>Kebele</i> , Gambella Zuria <i>Wereda</i> , 02 Febraury, 2014	Farmer
17	Otaw Ugur	Abol Kiir <i>Kebele</i> , Gambella Zuria <i>Wereda</i> , 02 February, 2014	Farmer
18	Den Yong	Lari town, Lari <i>Wereda</i> , 17 February, 2014	Nuer elder
19	Hoth Neyon	Lari town, Lari <i>Wereda</i> , 17 February, 2014	Nuer civil servant in Lari

List of Focus Group Discussion participants

FGD 1: among the Anywaa in Gambella city Green Park, 13 February 2014

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Educational Level
1	Udog Ugulu	M	35	No education
2	Umod Kiro	M	30	10 complete
3	John Oman	M	25	Grade 9
4	Kud Umad	M	27	10+3 complete
5	Romi David	F	25	Diploma
6	Bedo Jag	F	37	Diploma
7	Ajulu Umad	F	29	First Degree

FGD 2: among the Nuer in Gambella city Frost Hotel, 15 February 2014

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Educational Level
1	Chan Ogalla	M	26	10 complete
2	Tuwol Luarlew	M	29	Diploma
3	Tuwal Tut	M	25	Diploma
4	Chol Diwot	M	29	10+3 complete
5	David Chan	F	28	Diploma
6	Peter Young	F	37	Diploma

Appendix II

Interview questions guide for Key informants

Woreda: _____

Kebele: _____

Name: _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Educational Level: _____

General information about the conflict

1. For how many years you live in this area?
2. What type of conflicts did you experience while living in this area?
3. Could you please explain more about types of conflicts in terms of ethnicity, resource?

Anywaa-Nuer Conflict

4. What do you think are the causes of the conflict?
 - 4.1. What do you think are the causes of conflict between Anywaa and Nuer?
 - 4.2. How do you see the dynamics of the conflict?
 - 4.3. Could you please tell me more about the trends of the conflict?
 - 4.4. What factors are aggravating the conflict?
 - 4.5. How do you see the role of government (regional and central) or National Defense force in the conflict?
 - 4.6. How did you see the role of the central government in escalating the conflict in the area?
 - 4.7. What are other external factors aggravating the conflict in the area?
 - 4.8. What are the roles of the central government in managing the Anywaa- Nuer conflicts?
 - 4.9. What needs to be done to resolve the conflict?

Anywaa-Highlander conflict

5. Could you please tell me about the Anywaa-Highlander conflict?
- 5.1. What are the causes of the conflict?
- 5.2. Could you tell me more about the trends/dynamics of the conflict?
- 5.3. What are the roles of the central government in Anywaa-highlander conflict?
- 5.4. How did you see the role of the national defense in escalating/deescalating the conflict between Anywaa and highlander?
- 5.5. How did you see the agricultural investment and conflict in Gambella? What are the roles of the central government?
- 5.6. What do you think needs to be done to resolve the conflict?

Cross-border dynamics

6. How did you see factors across the border in South Sudan and the conflict in Gambella?
- 6.1. How did you see the situation in South Sudan and its implication to Gambella?
- 6.2. Could you please tell me more about the situation in South Sudan before and after the independence and impact on the conflict in Gambella?
- 6.3. What are new factors to the conflict in Gambella with the independence of South Sudan?
- 6.4. Who do you think is benefited from the independence of South Sudan?
- 6.5. How did you see the security situation in South Sudan and its implication to Gambella?
- 6.6. What are the roles of other factors in the conflict?
- 6.7. What needs to be done to reduce the dynamics of cross-border factors?

Appendix III

Interview questions guide for Focus Group Discussion

Participant's profile

Age range _____

Sex _____

Level of education _____

Main points of the discussion

Anywaa-Nuer Conflict

- ✓ What do you think are the causes of conflict between Anywaa and Nuer?
- ✓ How do you see the dynamics of the conflict?
- ✓ Could you please tell me more about the trends of the conflict?
- ✓ What factors are aggravating the conflict?
- ✓ How do you see the role of government (regional and central) or National Defense force in the conflict?
- ✓ How did you see the role of the central government in escalating the conflict in the area?
- ✓ What are other external factors aggravating the conflict in the area?
- ✓ What are the roles of the central government in managing the Anywaa- Nuer conflicts?
- ✓ What needs to be done to resolve the conflict?

Anywaa-Highlander conflict

- ✓ What are the causes of the conflict?
- ✓ Could you tell me more about the trends/dynamics of the conflict?
- ✓ What are the roles of the central government in Anywaa-highlander conflict?
- ✓ How did you see the role of the national defense in escalating/deescalating the conflict between Anywaa and highlander?
- ✓ How did you see the agricultural investment and conflict in Gambella? What are the roles of the central government?

Cross-border dynamics

- ✓ How did you see factors across the border in South Sudan and the conflict in Gambella?
- ✓ How did you see the situation in South Sudan and its implication to Gambella?
- ✓ Could you please tell me more about the situation in South Sudan before and after the independence and impact on the conflict in Gambella?
- ✓ What are new factors to the conflict in Gambella with the independence of South Sudan?
- ✓ Who do you think is benefited from the independence of South Sudan?
- ✓ How did you see the security situation in South Sudan and its implication to Gambella?
- ✓ What are the roles of other factors in the conflict?
- ✓ What needs to be done to reduce the dynamics of cross-border factors?