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The Role of Radio Media in Conflict Prevention in Uganda: A Case Study of Local Radio Media Broadcasts in Mukono Municipality, Mukono District.

The study was about examining the role of radio media in conflict prevention in Mukono Municipality, Mukono district. It was guided by three specific objectives which were aimed at finding out whether radio media play any role in conflict situations; examining the main challenges radio media face in helping prevent conflicts; and suggesting new strategic roles that could improve the radio media in conflict prevention. Literature review was done in themes which were identified and developed in line with the objectives of the study. The case study design was chosen in order to locate valid representation of respondents as well as provide better understanding of the study area by focusing those few individual informants through in-depth interviews and by questionnaires. The study showed that radio media broadcasts could influence conflict situations negatively as well as positively. The study confirmed a strong correlation between radio media role and conflict prevention. It confirmed that radio media messages and programmes have the capacity to contribute to conflict prevention. It found that radio media was not so interested in uniting the society, even though it had the capacity to facilitate social cohesion. Respondents urged radio media to take prevention of conflict as a moral obligation. Likewise, the study found that although radio media had also the capacity to turn off public sentiments from turning violent, they were more interested in politics and antagonistic issues. Above all, the findings indicated that the main challenges that hindered radio media in conflict prevention were politics, unprofessionalism, and conflict of interest, among other things. The study further suggested eight distinct strategic media roles that would improve the radio media role in conflict prevention as: the role of facilitating dialogue, the role of early warning, the role of social cohesion, the role of sensitisation, the role of informing, the role of whistle blowing, the role of advising, and the role of being government‟s mouth-piece, hereby with an acronym „fessi-wag‟. This study finally recommended urgent integration and mainstreaming of radio media role in conflict prevention for improving national security environment framework and public policy making; the need for national language development as a unification tool for the country‟s security and social cohesion off tribal excesses; the media new outlook training and sensitisation framework incorporating the aforementioned strategic media roles „fessi-wag‟; the need for radio media messages and programmes censorship framework in order to avoid conflict escalation; the creation of a partnership framework that would enhance the smooth relationship between media practitioners and security personnel when handling conflict situations; the legal framework to handle media proprietors, advertisers, or politicians who use media to cause insecurity; to establish the Truth, Peace and Reconciliation body that would foreclose the imminent fears of bloody violence, wars and conflicts in Uganda.

Key Words: **Radio Media, Conflict Prevention, Broadcasts, Mukono District.**