

AKELLO MONICA (2012-M161-10011)

Ethnic Land Conflict in the Rwenzori Lowlands: towards a Peaceful Land use between the Bakonjo and the Basongora in Nyakatonzi Sub-county, Kasese District

Conflicts over land are common throughout history in most human societies more especially in Africa. This is because land is more than just land since it has economic, cultural or religious and social significance in their lives. More to this in Africa, land is also a major point of independence. So, these various attached significances to land make land conflict very common among African societies. This study, however, was geared towards exploring possible means of enforcing peaceful land use of the Rwenzori low lands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora. In light of this, the study also established the factors hindering the peaceful land use of the Rwenzori low lands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora; it also assessed the impacts of the land conflict on the Bakonjo and the Basongora, and also examined the interventions that have been taken to stop the ethnic land conflict between the Bakonjo and the Basongora. Given the nature of the study which required exploring possible means of enforcing peaceful land use of the Rwenzori low lands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora, a qualitative research approach was used. The study also used case-study research design. With regards to sample techniques, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used. For the data collection tools and instruments, the researcher used a focus group discussion where a focus group discussion guide was designed to collect the data. The second tool and instrument which was used was interviews where the researcher designed an interview guide to collect data from the respective respondents. As regards to exploring the peaceful means of enforcing the peaceful land use of the Rwenzori low lands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora which was the major objective, the respondents suggested that the Basongora should be taught zero grazing to minimize on the movements which they believe is fueling the land conflict. Other respondents argued that there should be a separation of the district so that the Bakonjo and the Basongora are separated. The respondents also suggested that the government should hand over some government controlled land to the people in order to increase the little land available. The study also found that there was need for re-demarcation of the land to separate the Bakonjo and the Basongora's land. The respondents also called on the use of dialogue between the cultural leaders of the conflicting parties so that the conflict can be resolved. Finally, in enforcing peaceful land use of the low lands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora, the study found out that there is need for good governance to prevail. It should be noted that in the study, much as exploring the peaceful means of enforcing the peaceful land use of the Rwenzori low lands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora is the main objective of the study, the researcher presents it last for easy follow up. The researcher thought it better to first establish the factors hindering the peaceful land use of the Rwenzori low lands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora, then assess the impact of the ethnic land conflict on the Bakonjo and the Basongora and also examine the interventions that were taken in trying to resolve the land conflict between the Bakonjo and the Basongora and finally explore the peaceful means of enforcing the peaceful land use of the Rwenzori low lands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora. It should also be noted that in the study, the factors hindering the peaceful land use of the Rwenzori lowlands between the Bakonjo and the Basongora are also referred to as the factors fueling the ethnic land conflict between the Bakonjo and the Basongora.

Key words: Conflict, Ethnic, Rwenzori, Bakonzo, Basongora, Land