

## ***Family and Ethnic Land Conflicts and Food Security in Lyantonde Rural Sub County-Lyantonde District –Uganda***

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study examined family and ethnic land conflicts and food security in Lyantonde rural subcounty Lyantonde district. Descriptive cross-sectional survey research design with mixed approaches of data collection and analysis was used. The study population comprised of community members, the RDC, Police officers, political and civil leaders of villages in Lyantonde Sub County, members of district and sub county land board and a sample size of 391 respondents participated. Data was collected using semi structured questionnaire and interview guide. Quantitative data collected data was analyzed by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) while qualitative data was analyzed by use of both thematic and content analysis.*

*The study established that people in Lyantonde occupied Mailo land, customary land, Freehold and a few on Leasehold land. Unresolved land ownership, incompatibility of cattle keeping with crop farming, unclear boundaries, population growth were leading causes of family and ethnic land conflicts which have culminated into death of animals, destruction of crops, killing of villagers, loss of originally owned land, reduced food production, reduction in income which have all affected food stability among conflicting families and community at large in the study area. The study established that there exist cases of land grabbing in Lyantonde rural sub county manifested through forceful evictions and dubious land deals though on a moderate rate. It was revealed that land grabbing is majorly conducted by rich local private individuals and state house operatives due to the presence of absentee land lords, poor land tenure system, corruption, poverty, connection to state house and poor implementation of land laws leading into mass displacement of people, landlessness hence food insecurity. The study established that majority of the people living Lyantonde Rural Sub County do not know land laws and had less trust in courts of law since they take a very long time with many procedures to give judgment over land conflicts and are very corrupt. The study recommends that; alternative source of livelihoods should be provided to the people, traditional institutions should be strengthened, land boundaries between clans or communities should clearly be defined, demarcated and documented and, also, there should be strong stakeholder collaboration in land administration (10 Italic)*

**Keywords** –Ethnic, food security, land conflicts, Lyantonde, Uganda.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Food security has always been on international development agenda, as stated in the Rome Declaration of the World Food Summit in 1996 and re-affirmed by the participants in the World Food Summit five years later (FAO, 2017). The MDGs made food part of the first Millennium Development Goal (UN, 2009). UN has echoed food security once again by making it Goal number 2 of the 17 Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) at the Rio+20 conference (UN, 2014). Food security is a fundamental human right (UN, 1997) and the most crucial of all basic needs (UN, 2009). It is upon this that 16th October every year is World Food Day and the World Food Day theme for 2014 was Family Farming: “Feeding the world, caring for the earth” (FAO, 2016). This shows how food security continues to be a major global challenge and the need to address it especially in Sub Saharan Africa where the levels of food production are declining (FAO, 2017).

Land-related conflicts are increasingly becoming a threat to rural economic activities such as agriculture in most sub-Saharan African countries (Deininger and Castagnini, 2006). The prevalence of these conflicts is escalating at a time when crop yields are stagnant or even declining for some countries in the region (Ssenyonjo, 2016). It is therefore apparent that, as governments grapple to enhance agriculture through modern technology adoption and revamp the agriculture sector's performance to meet the high and increasing demand for food, land tenure security becomes crucial in attaining this goal (World Bank, 2016). However, institutions governing land, including the protection of property rights, conflict resolution mechanisms, and enforcement of contracts are still weak in most African countries to curb the conflict threat (Marfo, Musah & Abukari, 2019). Coupled with population pressure and hence, land scarcity, land conflicts have raised concerns over likely food insecurity and high poverty incidence in the affected areas (Deininger and Castagnini, 2006). Also, land conflicts affect portfolio choice of crops and social capital (Azechum, 2017). In addition, small-scale land conflicts have a potential to turn into widespread civil wars, thereby threatening national security Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC, 2020).

In Uganda, Land conflicts continue create insecurity over ownership and accessed impeding land improvement translating into low agriculture output per hectare (Deininger and Castagnini, 2006). In Apac, in district Uganda, rural households experience land conflicts and have led to significant impacts on their agricultural productivity (Mwesigye and Matsumoto, 2013 & Auma, 2016). The prevalence of these unresolved land use conflicts creates a challenge for settlement upgrading and subsequently better land use management and this has been the main factor behind food insecurity. The problem of land conflicts is fueled by the fact that land does not expand while people and other living organisms relying on it for survival, keep on increasing, putting on an immense pressure on the limited available resources, resulting in land conflicts (Bahigwa, 2014). Uganda and specially Buganda region has been tinted with ever increasing land grabbing cases, conflicts of land ownership and conflicts between crop growers and pastoralists (Ssenyonjo, 2016).

In Lyantonde, land conflict has emerged as a critical issue of concern today than before. Over time, with land getting scarce, land markets developed and some individuals started selling land from their native areas at a relatively higher price, acquiring more land in sparsely populated areas. Others just settled on unoccupied land without any permission and, given the land abundance, neither the government nor the absentee owners bothered to claim the land (Lubuka, 2019). With land value increasing, the original owners started claiming land from the immigrants, which has led to increased tenure insecurity and high incidences of eviction-related conflicts. In the host/receiving communities, populations were highly heterogeneous, the consequence of commingling of immigrants from different ethnic/tribal backgrounds. Tribal heterogeneity makes it hard to establish informal conflict resolution mechanisms common to all tribes in a community. Secondly, the mixing of tribes weakens and, in most cases, lead to a breakdown of previous ethnic-specific land customary tenure arrangements and commonly agreed-upon procedures of resolving conflicts found in the place. Coupled with the weak (almost non-existent) formal institutions, land evictions have escalated in those areas (Ssekabira, 2018).

These conflicts have created uncertainty amongst land users threatening their agricultural productivity and food security. As a result, the government of Uganda has endeavored to establish the land Act, land commission, District Land Boards however, the community still experience lots of challenges from land use even after several attempts on resolving land use conflict (Lubuka, 2019). There are several cases reported on land conflicts ranging from loss of properties, loss of lives, land grabbing, forced displacement of persons, insecurity, enmity, disharmony among disputants and continuous destruction of crops all of which have rendered the community food insecure (ACODE, 2019). However, the information ascertaining the extent to which land conflicts have impacted on food security in the area is scanty and thus the need for this study using Lyantonde rural sub county in Lyantonde District as the case study.

## II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In Uganda, 85% of Uganda's rural population depends on land for livelihood and survival (Bamugemerire, 2019). In Buganda, land is the way of life as the Kingdom's cultural aspirations are based on land hence titles like "Ssaabataka" for the Kabaka. Clan heads and elders in Buganda are known as "Abataka". However, this scenario isn't only prevalent in Buganda. Land is a major asset across the country. It is the biggest means of production since our economy is agricultural based. This has led to incessant conflicts over it in most parts of Uganda today. The most recent being skirmishes that led to the loss of lives in Apaa in northern Uganda (Mayiga, 2017). Land disputes are widespread in Uganda and are conservatively estimated to affect 7% of agricultural landholdings (Tatwangire, 2018). Demand for land required for public use, private sector-led development, and by speculators is on the increase in most parts of the country, including in Lyantonde district. As a result, land conflicts are threatening agriculture production and food security. These disputes, some of which have turned bloody, have displaced thousands of people, leaving them with no land for cultivation turning most parts of the country food insecure (Musumba, 2019). As a result, Uganda's food security situation remains

alarming with nearly half of Uganda's 7.3 million households being food Insecure (Ssewanyana&Kasirye 2010; WFP, 2015; OPM, 2017; IPC, 2017 & IPC, 2018). Food security is a major challenge facing Lyantonde District. More than 85% of the people in the district struggle to produce food amidst contestations over land (ACODE,2018). In the District, the food security situation is worsening as many households are unable to meet the nutritional demands of their family members that is; they consume less than the recommended food quantity that is; 2 to 3 meals per day. It's estimated that child wasting below 5years accounts for 6% and underweight in children at 13 % in the district (Lyantonde District LGDP11 2015/2016 - 2019/2020). This could be blamed on the increasing cases of ethnic land conflicts, land grabbing, family conflicts over land in the area (Turyahabwe *et al.*, 2017). However, the extent to which these land conflicts have impacted on food security is not clearly documented thus necessitating the study to examine family and ethnic land conflicts and food security in Lyantonde rural sub county Lyantonde district.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The general objective of this research was to examine family and ethnic land conflicts and food security Lyantonde rural sub county

### **III. THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

The study was anchored on the theory of entitlement which was developed by Sen in 1981. According to the theory, while people are entitled to production resources, inheritance and transfer, trade and own labour entitlements, food shortages arise mainly due to decline in exchange entitlements due to a number of factors including under developed infrastructure and limited income given differences in physical and natural endowment. Sen believed famine can exist amidst food availability as long as an identifiable group of people have limited access to available food or suffer a food exchange failure. That the struggle for land generates conflicts which limits resource use. Thus land conflicts become an inevitable aspect in influencing command over food for individuals' households'. Over years, Sen's theory of entitlement has attracted a lot of interest and criticism among different researchers. For example, while Sen (1981, pg 75-78) believe that income highly determines one's level of entitlement and hunger, Kula (1989) contend that famine can also occur in periods of high income as long as there is no food to buy. De Waal (1989) also notes that poverty has not got a significant relationship with famines. Osmani (1993) also shows that choices of people's entitlements depend more on one's test and preferences and not necessarily income. Anderson & Cook (1999) adds that achieving food security is a holistic approach. It requires having consistent safe foods available in stores, acceptability of food sources and anxiety of food availability or supply. An analysis of households' food security should therefore consider both demand and supply factors.

#### ***Family land conflicts and food security***

In Uganda and many other parts of Africa, land is heritable once the head of the family dies; land conflicts normally arise as all family members struggle to get a share of the deceased's economic fortunes, including land (Kiwawulo, 2014). Consequently, as a conflict mitigation measure, the deceased's land is subdivided into small segments and distributed among all conflicting family members. Flintan (2011) describes land fragmentation as "Broken Lands: Broken Lives". Flintan argues that after splitting the land, pastoralist farmers find it hard to overcome the effects of drought due to the fact that small farms are sometimes owned by independent individuals who may not allow pastoralists to encroach on their farms or water catchments in their land. Eventually, it becomes difficult for the poorest pastoralists, without adequate land, to feed their herds of cattle throughout protracted drought seasons. This evidently lowers the dairy output, which worsens household income and food insecurity. Therefore, the more the pastoralist families multiply, the more the likelihood of land conflicts and land fragmentation.

Evidence from Uganda suggests that land fragmentation among family members severely affects commercial farming because when land is split into small plots, it becomes hard to use mechanized methods of farming, which drastically lowers the crop output potential of the land (Luyombya 2015). For instance, reports from Uganda's Kyenjojo District indicate that each home possesses an average of 1.5 acres to grow food crops, vis-à-vis seven acres ten years ago, (Kiwawulo, 2014). Subsequently, some farmers have resorted to either renting more land expensively or producing less quantities of food on their meagre plots. The factors contributing to low agricultural output include time losses incurred while travelling to different scattered plots of land, wasted space during border demarcation, insufficient monitoring of scattering pieces of land, and the failure to use certain kinds of machinery like harvesters (Raghebendra, Hari and Subbarayan, 2005; Sundqvist and Andersson 2006). Therefore, land conflicts lead to land fragmentation and eventual lowering of food production, all of which translate into food insecurity.

#### ***Ethnic land conflicts and food security***

The land conflict between Fulani Herdsmen and small holder farmers in Agogo area in the Ashante Region has brought untold hardship to many farmers. According to Opoku (2015), this rampant stand-off has resulted in loss of lives including breadwinners of families, destruction of crops and even reduction of

agricultural production, reduced income among others. There are instances the Fulani will deliberately destroy farm crops which lead to reduction in income and stifle family access to food. This also threatens the stability of food in the area and that of health care delivery as a clinic in Bebome community has to be closed due to the worsening security situation (Opoku, 2015). By far land conflicts are major drivers of food scarcity and diseases in the area and many areas.

The extent of damage and the impact on food security depend on the type of land conflicts. For example, individual-versus-individual land conflicts may not be as detrimental as inter-communal land conflicts. Intercommunal land conflicts tend to be more destructive than other conflicts because they involve many people. Normally when a community or tribe fights another, both sides lose lives and property. For instance, in 2013, communal land conflicts between the Nko and Oyadama tribes were among the most devastating inter-communal conflicts in Nigeria: farms were demolished, houses smashed, livelihoods ruined, and people injured and killed (Abul, et al. 2013). The situation is even more precarious when intercommunal violence erupts due to an unclear land boundary as each side seeks to extend its boundary (Otite and Albert 2001; Dunmoye 2003). For instance, the boundary between the Kuku tribe of Kajo-Keji County in South Sudan and the Madi tribe of Moyo district in Uganda has been one of the most fatal land conflicts. In 2014, during the census exercise in Uganda, South Sudanese authorities of the Kuku tribe arrested Ugandan officials including the Chairman, LCV of Moyo District. This sparked violence that led to heavy losses: 14 people died, 49 people were injured, 545 houses were set ablaze and 486 cattle were stolen (Muhindo 2015). Further, communal land conflicts tend to concentrate in regions where cultivable land and water are scarce, like the arid and semi-arid areas of the Sahel, Uganda and Kenya (Hendrix and Brinkman 2013).

Furthermore, evidence from Uganda indicates that violence resulting from land boundary-related conflicts tends to be prolonged, thereby threatening potential agricultural investors (Rugadya 2009). In western Uganda, the Banyoro-versus- Bakiga inter-ethnic land conflict has lasted for a decade and could explode again. Recently, in northern Uganda, communities in Atiaka and Palaro sub-counties, in Amuru and Gulu districts respectively, prohibited each other from farming in Mede, a ten kilometre stretch of land at the border of two sub-counties (Komakech 2014). Similarly, in the neighbouring district of Pader, the Olet communal farming land is contested by the Awere and Puranga sub-counties. This conflict is exacerbated by the fact that individual land-grabbers have also started demanding or claiming certain parts of the same land. The contested land has been a communal grazing land for a long period of time. Therefore, individuals are also exploiting lack of clear ownership to grab some pieces of land. What aggravates the situation is the fact that politicians capitalize on land conflicts to gain political mileage at the expense of peaceful resolution of the conflict. Consequently, as Komakech (2014) recounts, over a hundred heads of cattle were stolen from Kraals in the disputed land, which further heightened the stakes and endangered the livelihoods of farmers who depend on dairy products.

Uganda has been a traditional host to refugees since the 1940s. Uganda is one of the countries that offered shelter to European refugees, especially from eastern Europe, during World War II (Lomo, Naggaga and Hovil 2015; Mwesigye, 2014). Following the independence struggles in Africa, Uganda received another batch of refugees. However, the recent and current batches of refugees are largely linked to Africa's internal political violence, such as in the DRC, South Sudan and Burundi. While the host communities warmly welcomed refugees associated with Africa's independent struggles in the 1960s and 70s, the current wave of refugees is harassed by the host communities that feel marginalized or neglected by their own government and perceive refugees as a threat to their livelihoods. Refugees are accused of occupying land while some Nationals are landless. They are also accused of degrading the environment; encroaching on gazetted forests and swamps in search of firewood (Bagenda, et al. 2003; Ahimbisibwe 2013).

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design with mixed approaches of data collection and analysis. Descriptive cross-sectional survey research design was used because it gives a realistic description of the existing phenomena and therefore making it capable of generalizing facts. Kombo and Tromp (2006) opine that a descriptive study is not a mere fact-finding mission, but also, may result in solving a problem based on the conception of valuable insights. Descriptive survey research designs are used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information and summarize, present and interpret data for the purpose of clarification. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the purpose of descriptive research is to determine and report the way things are, and it helps in establishing the current status of the population under study. Surveys are a self-report study that requires the collection of quantifiable information from the sample. They are useful for describing, explaining or exploring the existing status of two or more variables, (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2008). The employment of both research approaches allowed triangulation that enhanced the validity and reliability of the study.

**Summary of the Target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Methods**

Target population	Target population	Sample size	Sampling technique
community members	3929	335	Simple random sampling
Political and civil leaders	20	13	Simple random sampling
district and sub county land board members	09	09	Purposive sampling
RDC	1	1	Purposive sampling
Police Officers	5	5	Purposive sampling
<b>Total</b>	<b>3964</b>	<b>363</b>	

**V. STUDY FINDINGS****Duration of using land for food security**

Respondents were asked to describe the durations they have spent on land using it for food security.

**Table1: Duration of using land for food security**

Duration	Frequency	Percent
Less than 10 years	14	5
11-30 years	74	26.5
Above 30 years	191	84.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:Primary data, 2021**

Results as reflected in the above table reveal that 14(5.0%) had lived on the land for less than 10 years, 74(26.5%) had lived for a period between 11 to 30 years, while 191(68.5) had lived for a period of 10 years and above. These results mean that any person occupying any part of the land before the coming in force of the 1995 Constitution qualifies to be a bonafide occupant of that land and therefore cannot be evicted. Therefore any attempt to remove them would result into more land conflicts.

**Nature of land ownership in Lyantonde Rural Sub county**

Respondents were asked to describe the nature of land ownership of the land they were using for food production and their responses were as follows.

**Table 2: Nature of land ownership**

Nature of land ownership	Frequency	Percent
Mailo land	111	39.8
Customary land	79	28.3
Freehold	68	24.4
Leasehold	21	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:Primary data, 2021**

Table 2. Indicates that majority of the respondents that 111(39.8%) occupied Mailo land. Most of the respondents who participated in the study noted they lived on Mailo land that belongs to the Buganda Kingdom and they were consistently paying obusuulu to the kingdom. Mailo ownership rights were well recognized by Article 237(1) of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda. The finding are supported by an extract obtained from the interviews where one of the local leaders said that, "*Ettakalyona mu Buganda lyaKabaka*" meaning all land in Buganda is for the Kabaka". This was in line with the 1995 constitution which recognizes Mailo land owners. Busuulu under the constitution were to be determined by the minister whereas the Busuulu&Envujjo Law of (1927) stipulates that tenants do not hold full ownership rights; they must pay rent to the Mailo owner, and face some restriction on what they can do on the land. This was a common phenomenon in Lyantonde rural sub county Lyantonde District where areas most land belong to the Buganda Kingdom and the sitting tenants pay Busuulu to the Kingdom. Such land could form a source of land conflicts in the area especially where the locals were greeted with messages of eviction. Nonetheless, respondents revealed fact that the tenants seemed not to understand the issue of land ownership rights. That kind of indifference meant that Mailo land tenants could be exploited leading to land loss in one way or another. As a result most tenants have not been able to grow perennial crops on these lands reducing their food security as a result of lack of tenure security.

During the study, 79(28.3%) of the respondents indicated that they occupied customary land. These respondents indicated that they inherited land from their parents. The finding can be supplemented by a qualitative extract obtained from the interview about customary land as communal that:

“Customary land here is commonly used by members of the group say a family, recognize that part or all of the land they hold, is occupied and used by only individuals and families for their own purposes and benefit.”. During the interview with the RDC, she noted with concern that “family land is often mismanaged in this area. Most people live on land claiming it is family land without any form of documentation. Families are found of fighting over ownership of this land with any written evidence. I think there should a law forcing everyone to register his or her land”.

This land ownership is related to Ugandan Constitution of 1995 and the Land Act of 1998 Section 23 (2) which stipulates that for purposes of customary land ownership, the family shall be considered as a legal person and shall be represented by the head of the family. Further still, scholars including Mwebaza and Zziwa (2011), highlight that land conflicts linked to customary land were handled in accordance with area specific customary land arrangements. However, due to ambiguous land laws, especially with regard to the relationship between land-owners and land tenants, the mandated institution failed to resolve the land conflicts. The families experiencing prolonged family and ethnic land conflicts end up experiencing worst hunger situations since these land conflicts disrupt food production.

During the study, 68(24.4%) held Freehold land in Lyantonde rural sub county. The study found that free hold land tenure system allowed owners of the land to have a deed to their land which allowed them to hold the registered land indefinitely. This statement was fully supported by some of the literature as laid in chapter two where, for example Article 26(2)(a) of the Constitution provides that, “The taking of possession or acquisition is necessary for public use or in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health.” In addition, to the above statement, the Land Acquisition Act (1965) states that land could be acquired for “public purposes and for matters incidental thereto and connected therewith. Uganda’s courts had interpreted these provisions narrowly to mean that the property must be used to promote the general interests of the community, not the particular interests of any private individuals or institutions. The above documentation clearly showed the importance of the Constitution and the Land Act of 1965 and their importance to the prevention of land conflicts. This trend of issues has presented a social dishonour and only increased chances of more land conflict within the district.

During the study 21(7.5%) of the respondents indicated that they occupied Leasehold land. Respondents in the study believed that Land use under the leasehold land tenure system, was usually for a specific period of time known to both parties. The statistics suggests that the respondents were aware that lease hold land tenure system involved having a lease from the freeholder or landlord (the Government for this case) to use the land for a number of years. The leases are usually long term running from 5- 49 and 99 years for the case of Uganda. In an interview held, with one of the religious leaders. He had this say;

“Something interesting about this tenure is that, when the term of the leasehold goes down to zero years, then the land reverts to the freeholder. A lease with a term of zero years is clearly worthless, and all other things being equal, the shorter the lease, the less it is worth. The value of long leases stays fairly stable, but the value of short leases can drop rapidly.” (A one religious leader in Biwolobo parish).

The statement above can be supported by the Uganda National Land Policy (2011) which stipulates that the incidents of leasehold tenure, which were basically standard, included the conferment of full power of disposition and the compulsory registration of title. The policy further reveals that public policy regards freehold as the property regime of the future, to the extent that the current law provides for conversion from leasehold tenure or customary tenure to freehold. The statistics obtained could be linked to the Uganda Land Policy (1998), which states that land ownership of each surveyed parcel be recorded in a formal land registry, and a title deed issued, which serves as proof of ownership. The title was important because it was the only legal and conclusive evidence one had of ownership. It also contributed to tenure security because it could be security against eviction. It minimized on land disputes. Nonetheless, a portion of the respondents who disagreed reveal transfer right weaknesses. During the study, it was revealed that by the time a land that had been leased is passed to another holder, it is already depleted without fertility which affects crop group growth. This is worsened by absence of money to buy fertilizers to make this land valuable which makes farmers to grow crops while producing low output making them food insecure as crops produced on this infertile pieces of land are less and of poor quality rendering household food insecure through most parts of the year.

#### **Respondents’ involvement in land conflicts**

Respondents were asked if they had ever been involved in land related conflicts and their views were presented in table 3 below

**Table 3: If respondents had ever been involved in any land conflicts**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	297	100
No	00	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100</b>

Source:Primary data, 2021

During study, all the respondents 279(100%) showed that they have ever been in land conflicts. During the interview with land board member, he was quoted saying

*With the value attached to land in Lyantonde and with invasion of statehouse operatives and members close to the first family whom you cannot accuse anywhere, everybody in Lyantonde rural sub county and the district in general has a story to tell about land conflicts”*

#### **Nature of land conflicts ever involved**

Respondents were further asked to identify the nature of land conflicts and their view were summarized in table below

**Table 4: Nature of land conflicts ever involved in**

<b>Duration</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Dislocation of land boundary	119	42.7
Grabbing by a family member	19	6.8
Grabbing by a member of another clan	44	15.8
Taking over land forcefully by government	21	7.5
Farm boundaries	76	27.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **Source:Primary data, 2021**

From table 4 above, majority of the land conflict cases relate to dislocation of land boundary while the minority are related forceful acquisition of land by government. During the interview with one of the church leaders was quoted saying

*“we don’t know what is currently wrong, the new Buganda kingdom chiefs in the area are very corrupt , they are currently relocating boundaries of people who paid fully their busulu to the kingdom to other rich men. This is the main factor causing conflicts in this area”*

#### **Existence family and ethnic land conflicts in the area**

Respondents were asked if there could be family and ethnic land conflicts in the area

**Table 5: Ifthere could be family and ethnic land conflicts in the area**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	279	100
No	00	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **Source:Primary data, 2021**

From table 5, all the respondents 279(100%) had witnessed family and ethnic conflicts in the area. This was confirmed by the RDC who indicated that *“most family heads in this area believe that one should write a will when he is totally bedridden and when he dies, conflicts arise among children. However we have taken time to sensitize community members to get documents about their land and always write will and give them to people they trust or government agencies because nobody knows when he will die as they normally that children should also toil to buy their own land before being customary land”*.

This implies that that as a result of family and ethnic conflicts in the area, most time that would be devoted to agriculture for increased food production is wasted in fights and settlement of land conflict cases which families’ food security of conflicting families.

#### **The factors leading to family and ethnic land conflicts in the area**

Respondents were asked to drivers or the factors leading to family and ethnic land conflicts in the area and the responses were recorded on table below

**Table 6: Reasons for family and ethnic land conflicts in the area**

<b>Causes of family and ethnic land conflicts</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Unclear boundaries	99	35.5
Break down of traditional institutions	19	6.8
Population increase	61	21.9
Unresolved land ownership	21	7.5
Incompatibility of Cattle keeping with crop farming	62	22.2
Nepotism	17	6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **Source:Primary data, 2021**

From the study, 99(35.5%) of the respondents indicated that family and ethnic conflicts unclear boundaries. During the interview with one of the local leaders in Lyantonde rural sub county, he had this say“*The major problem in Lyantonde is unclear boundaries between the Mailo and free hold land. People*

*don't know where the Mailo separates with the land under free hold. Most people believe that they are living on kabakasland ” (Interview, November 2021).*

*Another local leader was quoted saying “the balaro in this area assume that crop growers have no contribution to the economy of Uganda. Even when there boundaries, they always to expand their formally small farm lands to accommodate their animals, they don't consider them relevant which forces farmers to fight for their lands to support their families”*

The above findings are in agreement with Bagenda et al, (2002) that most land in Uganda is not formally demarcated. In line with findings, Walker (2003) found out that the allocation of land, rights, power and entitlements can be cited as the cause in conflicts ranging from ethnic conflicts in the Balkans to civil rights movements. The findings are consistent with Holden et al., (2018) who urge that land conflict emanates from the small size of land holding and individuals want to expand their farm land through building extension on private land. Furthermore, there is no modern and clear boundary among the plots of the farmers. Exposure to encroachment by neighbors is more common in areas where plot borders are poorly demarcated. Deininger and Castagnini (2004) in Uganda and Yamano and Deininger (2005) in Kenya came across with the same finding. Large numbers of farm land disputes reach to the local land administration are caused by exceeding boundaries. The result are consistent with Sackey (2010) who said that, unclear boundaries are another cause of land conflict particularly in the unplanned areas. Un-surveyed plots normally do not have clear boundaries and may lead to land disputes. She added that in such areas people indicate these boundaries with landmarks such as stones and growing trees and after sometimes these marks get destroyed or transferred and it results into boundary disputes.

From the study, 61(21.9%) of the respondents suggested that land conflict in the area are as a result of population increase. The study revealed that the population in the area had increased overtime but the land has remained the same exerting pressure to get land for cultivation, animal grazing and development which has resulted into conflicts.

During the interview with the RDC she was had this say;

*“People in this area cannot be stopped from producing, we have sensitized to use family planning but all in vain. Majority are poor, they can get land to support their family livelihood but they continue to produce year after year. As these people are producing, the land to support their families has not increased at all. This has led to unending straggles over land”.*

The study findings are supported by Bogale et.al, (2008) who noted that increased scarcity of cultivatable land, which can support a family of rural households provokes for action by households towards protecting their interest. This findings are in agreement with Mosore, (2011), Siyum et al., (2015) that population growth is linked to land use conflict by the additional land that is required for livelihood. The findings concur with Kamoga 2016) who attributed land conflicts to the surge in population which inevitably leads to a reduction in the land available per capita because land does not increase. In the 1980s and the 1990s, when Uganda was sparsely populated, citizens owned large portions of land and rarely conflicted. However, with uncontrolled population growth that needs food daily, controlling land conflicts is a big mountain to climb. A hungry poor person is likely to be angry and capable of using all measures available to survive, regardless of whether they are legal or illegal. This is in line with the study done by Kolers, (2001) who comments that, increase of human population and increase of diverse human needs of people contributes to higher demand of land which results to scramble for land and hence creation of land conflicts in the community.

From the study, 62(22.2%) of the respondents urged that land conflicts in the area are as a result of incompatibility of cattle keeping with crop farming. The study found that land conflicts also exist between pastoralists and cultivators. It was reported that pastoralists wittingly or unwittingly let their cows graze on and destroy crops belonging to fellow residents. The conflict between Balaro and cultivators in the area is almost legendary. Therefore, this competition for land reignites old inter-ethnic rivalries. The cultivators accuse the Balaro of despising them, being arrogant, selfish, and careless. The cultivators struggle to put the arable land available under cultivation which land the cattle keepers want to keep as pasture land for grazing their cows. The struggle between the cattle keepers and crop farmers was seen to be one of the causes of the land conflict in the area. Bagenda et al (2003) indicated that livestock were often wandering into gardens and destroying crops occurred and cultivators were settled amicably through compensation to the affected party. Therefore the situation has been complicated by the land conflict because each party treats the other as an enemy.

The study also show that 21(7.5%) of the respondents indicated that land conflicts in the area have been fueled by unresolved land ownership. Findings have revealed that the desire of villagers to own large pieces of land has led to farmer pastoralist conflicts. It was explained by respondents that many pastoralists who have a large number of livestock, tend to take land by force so as to avoid overgrazing and sustain their cattle's. This likewise applies to farmers who ambitious in increasing production. This was echoed by one chair person who noted that

*“in this area balalo are a very big challenges especially closre to the first family, theyhave money, guns and power. They graze large hears that destoy crops of cultivators. When accused they use all means that be to*



ensure that these cases are never resolved. If they cultivators do not leave and accept to incur losses. These cases remain unresolved”

These revelations are consonant with the findings of Ahimbisibwe (2013) who also concluded that unresolved land ownership was fermenting tensions among contesting parties over land.

#### Households' food insecurity situation in the area

Respondents were asked if they always have enough food throughout the year and the responses were recorded in table 7.

**Table 7: If there are household experiencing food insecurity in the area**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	297	100
No	00	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data, 2021**

From table 7, all the respondents 279(100%) noted that there household in the area experiencing food insecurity. Majority of people in the area understood food security as the ability of all families to be able to get enough food from either farm production or buy enough grains from the market to feed the family from the time of harvest to the next harvest.

During the interview with district agriculture officer, he had this say.

*“To say you are food secured depends on the ability of your farm produce to feed your family from one harvest to another or your ability to buy enough food to stock for the family which can feed them all year round”*

This is contrary to earlier reports that households in Uganda have sufficient grains from farm production to their food security (WFP, 2016).

#### Taking all meals throughout the year.

Respondents were asked if there was a time in a year when their household skipped a meal and responded as follows.

**Table 8: If there was a time in a year when the respondents' household skipped a meal**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	182	65.2
No	97	34.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data, 2021**

In response, to if respondent had ever missed any meal, 182(65.2%) noted to have ever missed while 97(34.8%) denied. During an interview with one of the community leaders she indicated that most community members are food insecure in that some do not have where to grow food, are poor and others depend on food from the market. She continued to narrate as follows.

*“ ..... I may not be able to tell that so and so often miss meals but what I know most people in this area wake up take porridge and then wait for around 4 to 5 pm to take their meal that acts as both lunch and super. There are families that experience this throughout the year.....”* This implies that the area experiences food insecurity.

Respondents were asked to explain how family and ethnic conflicts have impacted on food security in the area.

#### Effects of family and ethnic land conflicts on food security in the area

Assessing the effects of family and ethnic land conflict on food security, majority of respondents believed that land conflicts have negative effects on food security as reported in table 9.

**Table 9: How family and ethnic conflicts have impacted on food security**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Reduced food production	66	23.7
Reduction in income	42	15.1
Crop and cattle destruction	56	20.1
Killings of villagers	43	15.4
Poverty	39	14
Loss of originally owned land	33	11.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data, 2021**

From the study, 66(23.7%) of the respondents indicated that family and ethnic conflicts have led reduced food production. In an interview with sub county community development officer, he was quoted saying

*“...land conflicts have fully touched on the survival of mankind in this area. Community members living in contested pieces of land only grow crops that mature shortly and annual in nature due to the fear of their crops being destroyed. This has affected long term food security situation in the area. People are still having memories of what Obey, the former employee of the office of the prime minister did to all three villages that were forced to leave the contested land making them leave their food in the gardens that were un claimable.”*

*Another respondent said ‘Land conflicts have led to reduction in output and income of crop farmers as a result of the destruction of crops by cattle. The balalo intentionally this ’* The findings are in line with Oladele et al, (2011) who noted that conflicts affect farmers negatively. This is mainly due to loss of farmland, reduced capital investment and time wastage. Since rural community, rely on their produce mainly for home consumption, reduced production result into food scarcity / insecurity. The victims of land conflict are therefore vulnerable to malnutrition, as result on inadequate food, which in Uganda are known to affect women and children most and is a main factor for 60% death of children under five years of age (USAID, 2010). More so, in the course of conflict resolution, the victims has to spent money or saving which reduces the capital investment. Sometime, as was pointed out during the interview, they failed to pay for family needs such as school fees for their children and some food stuffs. Reduced production also undermine potential for future growth (Deininger&Castagnini, 2005). To this end, it is important to highlight that a broad ranging interventions by the government to prevent land conflict is necessary. This in the long term may reduce food insecurity, which lead to malnourishment especially of children. Managing malnourished children is expensive in terms of provision of food supplements. *From the 43(15.4%) of the respondents indicated that land conflicts have resulted Killings of villagers especially the bread winners which have facilitated food insecurity in the area. Killings have also affected production and development in the society. The death of brad winners from land conflicts often affect the agricultural productivity of the household because agricultural activities of the household are not accomplished and worked on time.* The findings are in line with Msuya(2013) that as men comprise the majority of warriors, they suffer to a greater degree from direct conflict, injuries and killings from fight. *Furthermore, Zikhali (2008) found that agricultural productivity is very sensitive to labor availability, particularly household labor. Moreover, in absence of the household head there are problems in relation to management and controlling activities. This implies that family and ethic land conflicts negatively affect food production consequently leading to food insecurity in the study area.*

## VI. CONCLUSION

Despite the numerous interventions by both governmental and non-governmental agencies towards improving the food security situation, there is still high prevalence of food insecurity in the area. Notwithstanding the fact that majority of the people are food crop farmers, food from own farm production is not always enough to feed the families all year round. There is however sufficient food in the market, but a vast majority of household are poor which has affected their ability to access food from the market.

The study established that people in Lyantonde occupied Mailo land, customary land, Freehold and a few on Leasehold. Unresolved land ownership, incompatibility of Cattle keeping with crop farming unclear boundaries, population growth, fragmented land and land tenure system are the main cause of farm land conflict which many of the farm household respondents regarded on it but these are not the only causes of family and ethnic land conflict. Furthermore, scarce high value land, high demand for land, inheritance problem have led to family conflicts in the area which have led to death of animals, destruction of crops, Killings of villagers, loss of originally owned land, reduced food production, reduction in income which have all reduced of food stability among conflicting families and community at large in the study area.

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