

Impact of Violent Conflict on Food Security in Mt. Elgon Sub-County

Wapukha J. Precious and Fr. Rev. Dr. Kizito Muchanga

Abstract

The study is about the relationship between food security and violent conflict; it is evident that whenever there is conflict the social economic and political fields are affected. The study sought to find out the vicious link between food security and conflict, with particular emphasis on the Mt. Elgon sub county, the Effects of conflict on food security in Mt. Elgon sub-county, the role of food on security interventions in mitigating the risk of conflicts. The relationships between food security and violent conflicts are conditioned, mediated and influenced by the specific context in which they take place. In the case of Mt. Elgon, the main mechanism whereby the armed conflict has had a negative effect on food security is the mass forced displacement generated by the dispute over natural resources. Unlike other conflicts, in the case of Mt. Elgon there is a direct relationship between ethnic conflict and the escalation and deepening of hostilities, on the one hand, and forced displacement and food insecurity, on the other. The armed conflict has historically hinged upon control of territory and its use as a means of accumulation of wealth and social and political control. Conflict theory of change which stipulates that conflict drives social changes. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research design. Stratified sampling technique was employed. As in the majority of violent conflicts, the Mt. Elgon conflict has affected food security through its destructive and disruptive effects on production, distribution and marketing of food. However, unlike other experiences, this damage has not had a significant impact on food security nationwide but instead has been felt at the local and regional level. Damage to production was caused mainly by the strategies used to occupy and control rural areas rather than physical destruction caused by conflict and violence. This analysis shows that the effects of conflict on food security extend beyond the short term. Taking into account the high priority given to food security the Peace Accords, we suggest that food security policies and measures should be framed within the general context of implementing the Comprehensive Rural Reform involved in the Peace Accords, which must, in turn, be in line with the national development strategy implemented from the centre.

Keywords: *Marginalization, Conflict, Armed Conflict, Food Scarcity*