# Youth livelihoods and the local conflict in North Kivu: A Case Study in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

by

Iiro Pankakoski

University of Tampere
School of Social Sciences and Humanities
Master's Degree in Peace, Mediation and Conflict Research
Master's Thesis
Thesis Supervisor: Eeva Puumala

## Acknowledgements

Firstly, I must admit that I found the research process much more arduous, than I at first anticipated, and so I must express gratitude to my supervisor, Eeva Puumala, for her endless patience, and for her guidance which allowed me to develop the thesis into its final form.

I'd also like to thank all of my interviewees, especially Marjo Mäenpää and Frederic Fessard from Finn Church Aid. I found our conversations extremely interesting, and they provided invaluable data, which constantly offered new points-of-view for my research. Furthermore, I would like to thank Risto Ihalainen, Celestin Kamori and Safiatou Alabi from Norwegian Refugee Council for letting me interview them. I'd also like to thank one researcher, who wished to stay anonymous, for his extremely insightful interview. Although I did not use these interviews as primary data, they provided extremely relevant background knowledge, so that I was able better understand the context of North Kivu before embarking on the journey of actual data analysis.

I also would like to thank my friends and family for their unwavering support, which filled me with determination to finish what I had started.

# Abstract

North Kivu in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has long been a hotbed of ethnic tensions, conflicts over minerals, as well as struggles over land and power. Multiple humanitarian and development actors, including Finn Church Aid who exited in March 2016, have been active in the region, due to it constituting a protracted humanitarian challenge, with forced displacement, violence and other human rights abuses taking place regularly. This thesis identifies the relations between youth livelihoods and the local conflict in North Kivu based on project narrative reports and staff interviews from Finn Church Aid. It uses Grounded Theory methodology to code the data, and scientific literature on youth, livelihoods and conflict to place the data into context, and to assist locating and conceptualising the relations between youth livelihoods and the local conflict. The conclusion is that the relations are complex. Youth under-employment is related to the local level conflict through various social processes with the involvement of other factors. Conflict generally is destructive to livelihoods, and it creates and exacerbates vulnerability through various ways, such as displacement or trauma. Livelihood development can be used to mitigate and address conflict drivers, although at worst it can also drive conflict itself, which means that interventions must be conflict-sensitive. In general, the thesis demonstrates the complexity of the relations as well as highlights how challenging it is to successfully design and implement development interventions in fragile contexts.

**Key words**: Youth, livelihoods, conflict, development programmes, North Kivu, Finn Church Aid

# 1. Introduction

The conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been described as one of the most complex and difficult conflicts, as it has persisted for so long and transformed into multiple local level conflicts. Although it is not one of the most deadly conflicts when considering the number of people killed as a result per year, it has a total death toll of 5 million, and so it was the most deadly single conflict till the civil conflict in Syria took place. There are also an estimated 1.7 million internally displaced persons in the region, a number which also includes refugees from neighbouring countries such as Burundi, Rwanda, CAR, Uganda and South Sudan (Weijs et al. 2012). Sexual violence is also endemic with some reports stating that one in three women have suffered sexual abuse of some kind, while the act of rape is also becoming normalised by men (Smith, 2012). Sexual abuse of men also takes place, stripping them of their masculinity and destroying communities (Storr, 2011). Furthermore, violence in general has become an everyday occurrence for civilians to the point that while rape and murder is generally condemned, child recruitment by armed groups is not recognised as a crime (Ojewska, 2015).

This description portrays the seriousness of the situation in eastern DRC (which will be referred to as 'Congo' hereafter). The violence no longer makes it into media headlines, which is not due to the fact that it is decreasing, but because it has been normalised by the international community. Even some foreign diplomats and humanitarian workers have begun to consider that violence is an intrinsic part of Congolese society (Autessere, 2010). While violence is not intrinsic to any culture nor people, there are multiple mechanisms at work that perpetuate the violence and conflict in this context, which need to be addressed if there is to be improvement in the humanitarian situation and economic development. This research delves into the nature of the relations between the local conflict and youth livelihoods, which will also uncover some of these mechanisms which are creating these vicious cycles of violence.

## 1.1. Introduction to the Research

This thesis focuses on the local level conflict in North Kivu and its relations to youth livelihoods in three specific contexts, which are three projects which were implemented by Finn Church Aid (FCA). Finn Church Aid is Finland's largest development cooperation NGO, and has a rights-based approach towards development. This means that it tries to secure the rights of rights-holders and to develop the capacities of duty-bearers to realise those rights (FCA, 2016a).

Finn Church Aid's DRC Country Office was opened in Goma 2009. Due to budget cuts in development assistance made by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there was a significant drop in the budget of Finn Church Aid (Davies, Venäläinen and Brusset, 2017). Hence, in January 2016 FCA was forced to exit North Kivu was made in January 2016, which meant an end to all humanitarian and development programmes in the country. Many of Finn Church Aid's interventions in North Kivu took a livelihood development approach, or incorporated some dimensions of it. For instance, during 2015 FCA's livelihoods approach in North Kivu "focused on enhancing agricultural production, support to small and medium business creation and improving the local business environment through advocacy" (Finn Church, 2016a: 57).

Although the conflict in North Kivu has been developing since colonial times and also post-independence under Mobutu, but it was the Rwandan genocide in 1994 that was a real watershed moment. The Rwandan genocide led to two million Hutu *genocidaires* fleeing to eastern Congo, which meant an explosion of the already mounting tensions between indigenous Congolese, Tutsis and Hutus into all out conflict (Court, 2013). Various armed groups developed mainly with the support of the central government in Congo, Rwanda and Uganda, which led to the First and Second Congo Wars (Van Reybouck, 2015). Although peace agreements have been signed the 'post-conflict' situation continues with over 70 armed groups in North Kivu alone, with ties to various ethnic groups, all trying to control territory to gain control over natural resources and other financing opportunities (Samset, 2002). The deterioration in the security situation, which already began under the governance of Mobutu's predatory government, means that communities support armed groups as a form of protection against other armed groups and even against the Congolese army (Stearns and Vogel, 2015). Hence, there is general insecurity in the region, making it fertile grounds for ethnic tensions, armed groups and the perpetuation of the war economy.

The local level conflict is often misunderstood or ignored in favour of national and regional level explanations to the conflict. However, many argue that the local level conflict dynamics are extremely important to grasp if we are to understand and design interventions to address the conflict. Most notably Severine Autessere even goes to state that the local level dynamics have always been the driving factors in the conflict, and that it is constructed from the 'bottom-up.' Although especially following the Rwandan genocide the regional level has had a large role in the conflict, it is tensions on the local level that have led to the birth of the conflict

(Autessere, 2010). The local level conflict in North Kivu, especially Masisi, is also the focus of this research, as the research scope is very localised looking at three specific locations.

Specifically, the thesis examines the intersections between the development programmes of Finn Church Aid, focusing on youth livelihoods, and the surrounding local conflict in eastern Congo, by gauging the connections between local livelihoods and the conflict. It examines Finn Church Aid project documents and two interviews of its staff, and so the thesis provides insight into the relations as envisioned by the NGO and its staff. The framework as envisioned by Finn Church Aid is then compared to dominating scientific literature on youth livelihoods and conflict. This is done to contextualise the FCA's framework of livelihood and conflict relations, as well as to potentially question the framework. Therefore, the thesis arrives at a kind of reconciliation between the data analysis and scientific discourse. To clarify the significance of the scientific literature to the data, the thesis presents the scientific literature and the data analysis simultaneously.

The thesis is structured as follows. Firstly, the research questions which were the focus of the data analysis are presented. Following that the conflict in the eastern Congo will be contextualised by delving into the history of the conflict, as well as some current trends and patterns concerning armed groups. Then the thesis proceeds to introduce the conceptual framework of the thesis, and presents the dominating theory on conflict and livelihoods, and youth livelihoods in the context of conflict settings. Next the research process will be outlined, which includes an explanation of the data and the research methodology, as well as the procession of the actual research and analysis. Secondly, the results of the thematic analysis are presented. Here different categories and central concepts which were found to predominate in the data are presented and explained. Following this we have a synthesis of the scientific literature on livelihoods and conflict, and of the thematic analysis of the data, to examine the relations between youth livelihoods and the local conflict. The data is analysed and examined through the prism of the scientific literature, which helps the researcher locate relations as well as question the data. This also allows the critical framing of FCA's conceptualisation of livelihood and conflict. Finally, the thesis finishes with conclusive remarks, some shortcomings of the thesis as well as further questions for future research.

## 1.2. Significance of the Research

Awareness of the connections between development and conflict is important, as development programmes have broader external effects, and do not only affect the lives of

those the programmes seek to empower. Since the 1990s the effects of development aid on conflict (and vice versa) have been studied, but there does not seem to have been much research of Finnish development policy on conflict, at least not in the Congo. Furthermore, there do not seem to be many academic studies specifically researching the relations between livelihood development projects and conflict, as that is usually done by policy papers and by development organisations themselves. Therefore, it seems that academia could also begin to research how a specific programme or intervention is related to the surrounding local conflict and environment.

Of course, it is beyond the scope of this research to assess the effects that the exit of Finn Church Aid has had on the local communities, as that would require another type of methodology and data. However, the significance of the thesis is that it demonstrates how development programmes are related to conflict in multiple ways, and so demonstrates the significance which these interventions have for communities beyond their intended outcomes and goals. Since the 1990s the scientific and policy communities have become increasingly aware that development and humanitarian aid can have both positive and negative effects on conflict, and therefore there has been a push for development programmes to become 'conflict-sensitive' (Gullet and Rosenberg, 2015). These effects can be both positive and negative, and so there needs to be more research into the nature of these relations, so that programmes can be better.

Furthermore, the thesis helps to demonstrate differences between the NGO's vision of youth livelihood and conflict relations and that of the scientific community. In this sense, the thesis has significance as it also demonstrates how different actors frame these relations differently, which may have real life effects on policy and programme.

The research has been able to conceptualise and theorise relations between development and conflict, or more specifically between youths' livelihoods and conflict. It shows firstly how complex relations between livelihoods and conflict are, and secondly how challenging development can be in dynamic fragile and conflict-affected environments. The thesis identifies multiple relations between youth livelihoods and livelihoods, such as conflict's destructive effect on human capital, how it exacerbates vulnerability and drives displacement. Furthermore, it shows how displacement can also drive conflict, how livelihood development can both decrease and increase conflict, and demonstrates the complexity of the link between youth under-employment and the local conflict in North Kivu. Therefore, the strength in the

thesis is that, although its scope is very localised, it encapsulates the situation fairly comprehensively through conceptualising the dynamics through the conflict-livelihood connection.

## 2. Research Questions

Following is the research question, as well as the sub-questions, which have been used to analyse the data as well as for guiding the interviews.

**Research Question**

- What relations are evident between youths' livelihoods and the local conflict in North Kivu, when using Finn Church Aid's development programmes and interviews as case studies? How do livelihoods relate to conflicts and vice versa?

**Sub Questions**

- Does the conflict destroy some livelihoods and promote others? How are social structures and relations changed in the conflict? Does displacement caused by conflict have an effect?
- Does the youth adapt its livelihood strategies to an insecure environment?
- Do programmes aimed to develop youths' livelihoods (e.g. vocational education programmes) have any relation to the conflict?
- Does youth unemployment or under-employment relate to the local conflict?
- Is joining an armed group or waging war seen as a way to gain a livelihood or to enrich oneself? Or are they due to frustration, experiences of overt violence etc?
- Is the conflict (partly) caused by some taking part in networks of accumulation, whilst other groups are being marginalised causing grievances among population groups? How do other factors, such as communal, ethnic or regional tensions tie into this?
- Do some civilians gain economic advantages from an insecure environment, e.g. communities close to Mai-Mai groups?

## 3. Background to the Kivu Conflict

### 3.1. The Conflict in the Kivus

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been ongoing at differing levels for over twenty years, and is often seen to be one of the most demanding crises due to its

complexity. What is more, the Congo has also "hosted the largest and most expensive peacekeeping mission in the world," and although the war has officially come to an end and Congo is now a post-conflict country, the international community has been unable to resolve the many structural issues underlying the conflict (Autessere, 2011: 56). The reason for this failure is probably due to its dynamic nature and its complexity, as it has been difficult to create a comprehensive and integrated approach with so many actors and levels at play. Although this research focuses entirely on the local level, it remains important to have an understanding of the background to the conflict to put the research into context.

Severine Autessere in her book *The Trouble with Congo* outlines the evolution of the local level conflict very well and in marvellous detail. Therefore, this thesis bases its understanding of the conflict in eastern Congo largely on this book, although the author of the thesis is also aware of the criticism the book has received. This is because although Autessere may exaggerate the role of local-level disputes on the development of the overall conflict to some degree, this does not take away the fact that for understanding the conflict dynamics on the local level of eastern Congo, this is the go-to book.

Although many may start the story of the conflict in eastern Congo with the Rwandan genocide, the conflicts between the indigenous Congolese and the Banyarwanda and the Rwandans actually originates already to the colonial era. The contemporary conflicts in the Congo can be seen as a conflict over "land, resources and power" exacerbated by migration, especially between 'indigenous' Congolese and Congolese with Rwandan ancestry (Autessere, 2010: 129). Although migration in the region can be traced to pre-colonial times, migration did not become problematic till around the time of colonialisation. Already in the 19th century Tutsi pastoralists, also known as the Banyamulenge, migrated into South Kivu, and many groups migrated to eastern Congo during the pre-colonial period. These migrants were absorbed into the local communities, as there was a customary system in place to allow for integration of migrants into the communities. Therefore, there was little ethnic tension and conflict at the time, although this migration did increase the population density of the eastern Congo (Court, 2013).

However, during colonial rule Rwandan Tutsis and Hutus migrated to act as labour in Congo. Since these migrants were not absorbed and integrated through traditional systems, this caused tensions between these migrants and their host communities, as they were not considered legitimately part of the local social fabric (Court, 2013). This integration usually

happened through the allocation of land by the customary leader. Land continues to be of extreme social and symbolic importance in Congolese culture, as it ensures the survival of one's family and provides you with the social capital to integrate into the community (Autessere, 2010). These tensions over land eventually saw the outbreak of small-scale conflicts during the post-colonial era under Mobutu, especially between the Banyarwanda (Rwandophones) and the indigenous Congolese even leading to 'proto-armed groups,' which defended the "traditional rural order," and were akin to self-defence militias who also profited from "pillage and cattle rustling." However, much like Congo's armed groups of today, "they ultimately terrorised the communities they had set out to protect" (Autessere, 2010: 131).

After independence although the state (now renamed Zaire) created national citizenship, it also retained ethnic citizenship, which cemented the divisions between the indigenous Congolese and the Congolese of Rwandan ancestry. This was worsened by relatively high numbers of migrants and refugees fleeing Rwanda to Zaire. For instance, between 1959 and 1962 about 60,000 Tutsis left after Rwanda gained independence to the Kivus (Autessere, 2010: 134). Local level violence continued in eastern Zaire till 1965 when Mobutu took power, and who then used the military to end the violence between the communities. When Mobutu nationalised all land with the General Property Law of 1973, this decreased the powers of the customary and traditional authorities, and increased that of the Rwandan Congolese. It also created a landless peasant class, which increased the tensions between various groups, as some became increasingly impoverished and marginalised. By now the Banyarwanda outnumbered the indigenous Congolese in Masisi, North Kivu, where the local Hunde group began to increasingly harass the Banyarwanda, who still felt excluded from political life (Autessere, 2010: 136). However, there were also tensions between the 'new' an 'old' Rwandan migrants, which further complicated the conflict in the Kivus and eastern Zaire (Autessere, 2010).

Finally, to further explain the perpetuation of the conflict, it is also necessary to explain the deterioration of the system of governance in the Zaire, which occurred under Mobutu. During the pre-colonial times kingship was considered sacred, and the local traditional leaders were considered to be legitimate rulers, receiving their power from the land and cattle which they owned. Their powers were eroded already during the colonial era, as the power of the colonial state grew stronger. This same process further continued after independence under Mobutu, who wanted to strengthen the Congolese state, whilst weakening the local traditional leaders. The undermining of the local traditional leaders' powers created a power vacuum in

some areas, which was then exploited by some groups, and which angered indigenous Congolese (Kyamusugulwa and Hilhorst, 2015).

Furthermore, during Mobutu's rule, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, economic and political life were informalised, meaning that government officials, civil servants and the military were paid only intermittently due to problems with government public finances and debt. This led to the state becoming increasingly predatory, as state officials and the military had to rely on bribes (and other illicit or informal forms of financing) to support their livelihood. Military personnel and state administrators were not paid their wages, and so the former had to resort to pillaging civilians and the latter into accepting bribes. This greatly decreased the legitimacy of the state and increased general insecurity and violence in Zaire (Marriage, 2007).

Certain groups were marginalised while others prospered due to these practices, and this led to polarised and violent society, where it became increasingly accepted that violence can be used as legitimate means to gain political and economic control (Marriage, 2007). This all occurred while Mobutu and the political class lived an extravagant lifestyle. For instance, in 1993 he gave his daughter a $3 million necklace for her birthday, and even flew in a cake from Paris (Van Rebrouck, 2015). Therefore, this deterioration increased corruption and undermined state legitimacy in Zaire, as well as created a predatory and violent government system. The lack of trust that the Congolese have towards their state also partly explains the popularity of armed groups. This has been especially marked in the eastern Zaire, where there already existed conflicts over natural resources and between ethnic groups.

At the same time the Banyarwanda ("Congolese with Rwandan ancestry in North Kivu") attempted to consolidate their power on the local and national levels by aiding the immigration of Rwandans and by gaining positions of political power. This was supported by Mobutu who "favoured promoting ethnic minorities because they could help him govern without threatening his regime" (Autessere, 2010: 135). This further increased the antipathy that indigenous Congolese had towards the state, and the Banyarwanda. However, although there was low-level violence throughout this time, Mobutu's regime was able to stifle open conflict. During this time, in neighbouring Rwanda, the tensions between the Hutus and Tutsis were mounting, which also increased the tensions between them in Zaire (Autessere, 2010). Finally, a cataclysmic event in Rwanda would have everlasting effects in eastern Zaire, which still have effect to this day.

**3.2. The First and Second Congo Wars**

When civil war began in Rwanda in 1990 with the Tutsi-backed Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) conducting attacks against the Hutus, many Tutsi Congolese supported the RPF. This only further seemed to convince indigenous Congolese, that Tutsis "owed political allegiance to Rwanda" (Autessere, 2010: 140). Finally, with the 1994 Rwandan genocide and the influx of two million Hutu refugees and *genocidaires*, the tensions between Hutus, Tutsis, and the local Congolese erupted into open warfare. What made them worse was that the Rwandan government also became involved in the conflicts, as it would support armed groups to attack Hutu *genocidaires*, as the Rwandan (now Tutsi-dominated) government felt that the Hutu *genocidaires* threatened its security (Court, 2013). The new President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, supported the creation of the Alliance des Forces Democratique pour La Liberation (AFDL). The Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) and the Congolese Rally for Democracy-Goma (RCD-Goma) were also created, who also created 'popular self-defence committees' in the villages they occupied (Autessere, 2010: 143). The Rwandan army, AFDL, RCD and RCD-Goma invaded Zaire, which was the beginning of the First Congo War, which lasted from October 1996 to May 1997. With the support of Tutsi rebels in the Zaire, they took Kinshasha, the capital (Van Reybouck, 2015). This regionalised the conflict in the eastern Zaire, which then also further exacerbated it by drawing in more actors, and by making it a greater concern for the Congolese government in Kinshasa. Therefore, as can be seen from Severine Autessere's account, the local context in eastern Zaire and North Kivu was important in the development of the conflict in eastern Congo, which is usually attributed to regional developments. In truth, "bottom-up tensions caused the eruption of violence in the Congo long before regional factors," such as the Rwandan genocide in 1994 (Autessere, 2010: 141).

The head of AFDL, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, became the new president of Zaire, now renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo. At first the opposition and the Congolese welcomed Kabila, but he was just as authoritarian as Mobutu and quickly lost support (Van Reybouck, 2015). He even lost the support of Rwanda and Uganda, as he expelled their militaries from Congo, as the Tutsi were now widely unpopular among the Congolese. This then started the Second Congo War, which lasted a whole five years from August 1998 till June 2003 (Van Reybouck, 2015).

The Second Congo War was "an extremely complex conflict in which no less than nine African countries and thirty militias," and so was not widely reported in global media, as it was

considered too "incomprehensible and obscure" (Van Reybouck, 2015: 439-40). Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and their rebel armies moved towards Kinshasha, but they were stopped by the FARDC (the Congolese national army), and their allies, most notably Angola and Zimbabwe, the Mai-Mai and Rwandan Hutu militias (Van Reybouck, 2015). The Rwandan Hutus and the Mai-Mai shared a common enemy, the Tutsi, and so they often allied together during this conflict. However, the various armed groups had complex and often changing alliances, as the national, regional and local political goals of various armed group changed, which causes the conflict to be quite difficult to grasp at times (Autessere, 2010: 144). For instance, the Mudundu 40 Mai-Mai group supported the RCD-G, even though the Mai-Mai rarely allied with Tutsi-backed militias (Autessere, 2010: 144).

Although the Lusaka Peace Agreement was signed in July 1999, the conflict continued in the east with various armed groups, as well as the Rwandan and Ugandan militaries, plundering the natural resource wealth of eastern Congo. The armed groups also fought between themselves – the Rwandan rebels took Kisangani from the Ugandans, who experiencing infighting. The legacy of those conflicts continue even to this day, although on a smaller scale (Van Reybouck, 2015). In January 2001 Laurent-Désiré Kabila was murdered by one of his bodyguards, and his son Joseph Kabila becomes President. Joseph Kabila manages to negotiate peace with Rwandans and their allies, which led to the *Accord Global et Inclusif*, which included the complete withdrawal of all foreign militias as one of its demands (Van Reybouck, 2015: 467).

This began the two year transitional period where – again – things looked hopeful. MONUC was deployed as the largest peacekeeping force in history and plans were made to reform governance and security. However, the similar levels of corruption continued, and one of the first 'reforms' was the increase of the salaries for members of parliament. Furthermore, although all the militias were supposed to be demobilised and integrated into the FARDC, the integration was haphazard, the old animosities between militias remained and the officer class continued to eat up the soldiers' salaries through corruption (Van Reybouck, 2015).

Violence in the two Kivus and Ituri continued, albeit at lower levels, as the divisions between indigenous Congolese and the Banyarwanda persisted as there was pressure on land due to overpopulation, and mismanagement in land governance (Van Reybouck, 2015). The conflicts meant that intercommunal antagonism was at an all-time high – RCD-G was in control of North Kivu, and so replaced the local indigenous leaders with Banyamulenge. In the Kivus

the Mai-Mai and Rwandan Hutu militia, such as the FDLR, often allied to oppose the Banyarwanda, although local tensions meant that some Mai-Mai also fought other Mai-Mai communities over land, power or other resources. Furthermore, some Mai-Mai and the RCD-G would collaborate, such as when they controlled mines and mineral trade together in Walikale, North Kivu (Autessere, 2010). Although the indigenous Congolese were wary of Rwandan Hutus, the FDLR managed to establish some relations with local communities, which was necessary for survival, "as long as they refrained from the most blatant human rights violations" (Autessere, 2010: 157). These examples maybe help demonstrate how the local level political and economic interests have been a signficant factor in the Kivu conflicts, since the end of the Second Congo War. Although Rwanda continued to economically and politically support the RCD-G (which later evolved into the CNDP and then the M23), their support was minimal compared to previous levels (Autessere, 2010). The conflict still was generally between the Rwandan-backed RCD-G and the Mai-Mai, who would protect their own communities and consolidate power by making claims on land and provincial political positons (Autessere, 2010).

### 3.3. The Role of Natural Resources in the North Kivu Conflict

Therefore, local antagonisms were just as important, if not more important, as national and regional cleavages in North Kivu. Besides the land, political power and ethnicity the conflict in the Kivus has also been seen as a textbook example of a natural resource conflict. Abundant natural resources have acted as a catalyst for armed violence, as armed groups are able to finance their ambitions with gains from natural resources. It is argued that although ethnic tensions are used to mobilise and legitimise conflict, it is the presence of abundant resources that incentivise armed groups to take advantage of low levels of resource governance and the lack of security and state presence (Samset, 2002). The presence of minerals has especially increased conflict in the Kivus, as minerals have been a significant contributor to the Congolese economy since colonial times (Samset, 2002). However, although the role of minerals is greatly emphasised in the conflict, they actually seem to form a very small factor of armed groups' finances according to new evidence, and so may also play a smaller role in the conflicts than we have been led to believe. The conflicts are also financed by cross-border trade, land, taxation of local communities and other means, such as "hemp, charcoal, timber, taxes, the pillaging of livestock, and the general looting of the population." (Laudati, 2013: 33). Hence, the trade in other resources in North Kivu must also be taken into account in the local level conflict.

Furthermore, although national and regional causes of the conflict are often emphasised in policy and research literature, they were also very much caused by "longstanding bottom-up conflicts over land, resources and political power," and many of the regional problems had local aspects (Autessere, 2011: 58). These conflicts over land were related to the increase in ethnic tensions, as they involved disagreements over who legitimately owned the land. Furthermore, tensions between communities over land ownership has only been exacerbated due to the presence of armed groups, overt violence in the region and due to forced displacement caused by conflict, and so armed conflict over land and resources between communities and ethnic groups has thusly become much more common. Often forced displacement has been used as a conscious strategy by armed groups to force people from their land, so as to be able to command and control the natural resources (Autessere, 2010). Therefore, besides minerals and other natural resources, land continues to be a source of contention in eastern Congo, and fuels many of the local conflicts.

## 3.4. Recent Armed Group Trends

The conflict in eastern Congo and North Kivu has continued till this day. The levels of violence have oscillated, although they have reached nowhere near the levels of the First and Second Congo Wars. The most significant trend for armed groups has been their proliferation, and their subsequent fragmentation. Almost all of the current groups are splintered factions of previous ones. Whilst even in January 2008 there were most likely no more than twenty armed groups, at around 2015 there seemed to be at least seventy (Stearns and Vogel, 2015). The border between Walikale and Masisi (both in North Kivu) is a hotspot for armed groups, with nine different groups present, including APCLS and FDLR (Stearns and Vogel, 2015). This is quite close to where Finn Church Aid's projects are taking place, although far enough so that there were no serious security incidents at the project sites (11502, 11521 and 10603, 2015). The fragmentation is a result of the politicisation of these armed groups, counterproductive military approaches, and "the volatility of local conflict dynamics" (Verweijen and Wakenge, 2015: 1). The lack and failure of demobilisation programmes, the lack of security and the abundance of natural resources have also been identified as causes of armed group proliferation (Stearns and Vogel, 2015).

Verweijen and Wakenge (2015) argue in their report on armed group proliferation in eastern Congo that armed groups "claim to represent the communities from which they originated," and "voice unaddressed grievances, such as ongoing insecurity and conflicts

around territory, identity, local authority and resources" (Verweijen and Wakenge, 2015: 1). This allows them to mobilise communities to support them, which also mobilises other groups due to an apparent security dilemma, where another community must militarise to respond to the growing militarisation of other communities. Local and national political leaders also support armed groups to gain support with their local constituencies, as it allows them to increase their political power vis-à-vis their political opponents. This is also a reflection of the weakness of the political centre – Kinshasha – who is not able to control this complex web of power networks, and so power struggles get out of hand (Verweijen and Wakenge, 2015).

Secondly, the other main cause of armed group proliferation are the approaches by the FARDC and MONUSCO that seek to eradicate armed groups solely by military means. Ever since the failure of armed group demobilisation and integration into the armed forces programmes, the armed group problem is addressed through military force, which does not erase the need for armed groups, nor does it convince them to end their violent struggles (Verweijen and Wakenge, 2015). As a MONUSCO official admitted "if all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail," which is quoted from Timo Mueller's blog on armed groups in eastern Congo (Mueller, 2014). This military approach creates large numbers of displaced people, and does not foster economic development in the Kivus nor develop alternative livelihoods for the displaced or combatants, and so fails to create a reason for local leaders to invest in peace, rather than violence (i.e. does not create peace dividends). Furthermore, FARDC officers are not effectively held accountable to racketeering and cooperating with armed groups (Stearns and Vogel, 2015). However, somewhat paradoxically at the same time the lack of security governance architecture is also a factor in armed group proliferation, as the military and government cannot guarantee their citizens' safety and so they rely on armed groups to protect their communities (Verweijen and Wakenge, 2015)

### 3.5. The FDLR and APCLS

The two armed groups which are present in Finn Church Aid's documents are the Hutu-dominated *Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda* (FDLR) and the Hunde-dominated *Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain* (APCLS).

The FDLR are probably the strongest (and longest running) armed group in eastern Congo, now that the M23 has been defeated. According to estimates it contains about 1,000 to 2,500 members, and is quite influential in Masisi, which is our area of interest (Stearns and Vogel, 2015). Some elements of the FDLR are the Hutu perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide,

which is why they are opposed by the Rwandan government and Tutsi or Banyarwanda militias (BBC News, 2016). They have been accused of multiple human rights abuses "including murder, rape and recruitment of child soldiers" (The East African, 2016).

APCLS claims to represent the Hunde community, who are indigenous to Masisi, but who have been surpassed by the Hutu community in numbers. This had meant that the Hunde community "lost political power, customary authority and especially land" (Mueller, 2014). Some Hunde communities seem to have very close relations to the APCLS, although some members of the same community also expressed antipathy towards the armed group for extracting 'tolls' (Local Voices, 2013). They are mainly anti-Tutsi, although they also have had confrontations with Nyatura (Hutu), the FDLR (Hutu) and the MAC (Hunde) (Mueller, 2014).

The two armed groups have previously been both enemies and allies. For instance, they have collaborated at least in 2013 when APCLS and FDLR collaborated to exploit minerals in Walikale (Local Voices, 2013). They both have had the same enemy (the NDC) and so may have also collaborated for this reason (Stearns and Vogel, 2015).

The APCLS has also had a problematic relation with the FARDC – it assisted the FARDC defeat M23, but in February 2014 the FARDC and MONUSCO launched a tandem military operations against the APCLS, as it was seen as a security threat to the Congo and its citizens. However, many Hunde leaders perceive this to be part of a conspiratorial attack "by the Hutu and Tutsi communities to wipe them out," according to Mueller (Mueller, 2014).

## 4. Definitions

I will be employing a livelihoods analytical framework at this stage, and therefore it is important to define what exactly is the definition of livelihood:

*"**Livelihoods** are the means by which households obtain and maintain access to the resources necessary to ensure their immediate and long-term survival. These essential resources can be categorized into six categories: physical, natural, human, financial, social, and political. Households use these assets to increase their ability to withstand shocks and to manage risks that threaten their well-being."* (Livelihoods and Conflict, USAID)

The definition for a *sustainable* livelihood provided by Chambers and Conway (1992):

*"A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living; a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress*

*and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long-term.*" (Morse and McNamara, 2013: 21)

Livelihood as a concept is often used in development literature when studying households or micro-level development economics, or when trying to understand the dynamics of poverty (Rakodi, 1999). The concept of livelihoods will be useful simply because many of Finn Church Aid's interventions are directed at developing livelihoods, increasing community resilience or diversifying the sources of livelihood for households.

## 5. Conceptual Framework

First there will be a short introduction into international development in the context of conflict, and then a short introduction into the relations between conflict and livelihoods. Finally, there will also be a short introduction to youth livelihoods, and its relation to political violence.

### 5.1. Introduction to International Development in Conflict Contexts

The relations between development and conflict – otherwise known as the security-development nexus – have been under close scrutiny especially since the 1990s, when humanitarian assistance began to change in nature and complex humanitarian emergencies seemed to become more common. For instance, Mary Anderson's work *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – Or War* is considered quite a seminal work in this regard (Petrik, 2008). Many scholars picked up on this growing emphasis on the conflict-development relation, and have gone onto claim that the major cause of conflicts is economic poverty and inequality, such as Collier and Hoeffler (2004), Fear and Laitin (2003) and Krueger (2003), and that development aid can be used to alleviate conflict. However, the results are mixed and it seems that although some conflicts are driven by economic factors, many other conflicts are caused by different factors, such as political or sectarian divisions (Tahir, 2015). Not merely economic factors alone determine the success of peacebuilding and post-conflict peace processes, as there may be other structural causes of conflict (Suhrke and Buckmaster, 2006). In conclusion, the security-development nexus is being increasingly acknowledged, although the relations between the two appear to be rather complex, and they are not necessarily always positively correlated.

The complexities of development work in conflict and post-conflict settings have been acknowledged. For instance, Mary Anderson's book suggested that the solution to conflict is not necessarily *more* development aid, but better delivery of aid. In the words of Petrik (2008) Anderson helped lead development practitioners and policy-makers to realise that being "insensitive to political realities in the recipient communities can exacerbate existing tensions or even create new cleavages that can eventually erupt into open violence." (Petrik, 2008: 321). However, in many cases development actors and NGOs still continue to utilise harmful practices in recipient locations, which can be especially harmful in places where political tensions exist. For example, many development organisations and NGOs continue to use external goods and services instead of relying on local economy and labour, which would stimulate local economy (and develop local livelihoods in the process) and strengthen local capacities. Alternatively, NGOs may withdraw their support before they have ensured sustainability of their projects (Manning and Trzeciak-Duval, 2010). Therefore, although there has been much research on the relations between development and conflict, the relations are rather complex, and to add many development actors still continue to work in ways that can be detrimental to peace.

One way to avoid such practices and policies is by maintaining close connections with local communities, so that development interventions are designed and implemented while taking local conditions into account. Finn Church Aid's development interventions seek to be localised and participatory in nature, as this is hoped to ensure that the interventions are appropriate to local needs and conditions (Finn Church Aid, 2016a: 10). Often large-scale development and peacebuilding programmes have often been critiqued as "top-down, technocratic, state-centred and externally-driven" (Hilhorst et al, 2010: 1077). For instance, in her book Severine Autessere criticises the international community for ignoring local level conditions sustaining the conflict in Congo, as there has been a tendency to look at the conflict from a national or regional perspective, whilst ignoring how the conflict is perpetuated by community-level disputes and conflicts (etc.) (Autessere, 2010).

However, Finn Church Aid's development interventions intend to address issues on a more localised level, following the 'development from below' concept, which has gained popularity since the 1980s (Hilhorst et al, 2010). This approach is thought to be able to engage local populations and civil society, so that the interventions could be suitable to local conditions, which is especially important in the Congolese context, where causes for the conflict are complex and where the conflict is very dynamic (Hilhorst, 2010). For instance,

instead of building structures from scratch, and replacing existing livelihood strategies and social structures, the aim is to find ways to support the existing ones and to strengthen them (Hilhorst et al, 2010). However, this requires close partnership with local communities and for research to be done on local conditions, at least before designing the programme, but preferably during the implementation as well, as "conflicts are dynamic and fast-changing," especially the conflict in eastern Congo (Gullet and Rosenberg, 2015: 720). Therefore, Finn Church Aid and other smaller NGO actors hope that working with local people and NGOs will naturally bring about more appropriate development and peacebuilding responses to the local problems, which would hopefully also de-escalate and work against local conflicts.

However, in reality such development programmes and projects are difficult to design and implement, and participatory forms of development are not unproblematic. For instance, due to resource and time constraints there can be difficulty in researching local contexts enough for designing and implementing development interventions effectively (Gullet and Rosenberg, 2015). Furthermore, the participatory and bottom-up approaches to development are not without flaws. Manning and Trzeciak-Duval (2010) actually criticise these kinds of participatory and bottom-up approaches for bypassing and weakening state structures and legitimacy, when strengthening them should be the primary focus in fragile contexts, such as Congo. By bypassing the state, bottom-up approaches to development are claimed to weaken state legitimacy among citizens, although they do admit that working through local NGOs and civil society can "provide an effective and legitimate form of service delivery" (Manning and Trzeciak-Duval, 2010: 111). Weakening the state, especially in the context of an already fragile state like in Congo, can be very counter-productive to national development and peace, as fragile states are prone to unequal economic growth and violent conflict (Manning and Trzeciak-Duval, 2010). Hence, the participatory or bottom-up approach should not be seen as a panacea for development nor peacebuilding, but should be used in conjunction with statebuilding, peacebuilding and other development approaches.

**5.2. What is Livelihood Development?**

The livelihoods approach to development arose from the post-developmentalist critique of the post-war mainstream development model, whereby the North led the development for the South through a set of Bretton Woods institutions. The mainstream development model was criticised, as it implied "a constructed sense of who is – and who isn't – developed and indeed what development actually means" (Morse and McNamara, 2013: 17). From this

critique arose the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, which sought to analyse communities' and households' current livelihood strategies, and to design interventions appropriate to enhance those strategies. Hence, the approach and its interventions were supposed to be based on the real conditions of the Southern poor, rather than designing interventions on what was *thought* that the Southern poor needed (Morse and McNamara, 2013).

Livelihood development can take many forms, such as strengthening existing livelihoods, diversifying livelihoods or supporting the development of alternative ('better') livelihoods for especially vulnerable populations. At its core livelihood development involves assessing the different capitals (physical, financial, natural, human and social) that a household or community possesses, and which act as a foundation for the livelihood, and then a plan to strengthen the livelihoods is designed and implemented (Morse and McNamara, 2013). What was also understood in this approach is that poverty was multidimensional, and that the aim was not to increase income, but also to improve access to health and education, as well as even to political participation (Morse and McNamara, 2013). The livelihoods approach has also been heavily influenced by Amartya Sen's literature on capabilities (Morse and McNamara, 2013).

According to Ijang and Ndikumagenge (2013) Ellis' livelihoods framework (2000) states that there are five types of assets, which are natural, physical, social, financial and human capitals (Ijang and Ndikumagenge, 2013: 377). Natural capitals include natural resource stocks and environmental services; physical capital includes infrastructure, production equipment and technologies; social capital includes networks, social claims, social relations etc; human capital includes skills, knowledge and labour (which also includes good health and physical capability); and financial capital includes cash, savings and other economic assets (Morse and McNamara, 2013: 28). Some scholars have a different set of assets. For instance, in his research of livelihoods in the Sri Lankan conflict, John Nigel has a sixth asset called 'political assets' (Nigel, 2009).

Assets (alternatively known as capitals) are resources that people use to sustain their livelihoods, and they give people the capability to practice "survival, adaptation and poverty alleviation." (Ijang and Ndikumagenge, 2013: 377). Some of these assets are tangible and quantifiable, such as land or cash, while others are less tangible, such as social networks. Individuals, households and communities may also make trade-offs between them, such as when an individual uses savings to invest in agricultural tools, or when a household decides

that a child should forego school to work on their farm (human capital for physical capital, i.e. the produce, such as maize).

These assets can also then be assessed to determine how vulnerable they are to external shocks, trends and stresses, and to the institutional context in which they are situated (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Different assets are affected to different degrees. For instance, a shock such as a drought would affect natural capital (the growth of crops), but have little immediate effect on other capitals. However, if the drought persists, people may emigrate or change livelihood strategy, again affecting other asset bases (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Similarly a protracted conflict (a stress) has different effects. During conflict or other disasters, assets which households have access to can be lost, as assets, households and communities are destroyed or displaced, while at the same time survivors are forced to adapt their livelihood strategies to new conditions (Ijang and Ndikumagenge, 2013). This means that the new social relations (or destruction of them) created by conflict can change communities' livelihood strategies, which shall be discussed in more detail below. Finally, it is important to take the *institutional context* into account, and to examine what rights and claims individuals have to certain resources (which may be limited by institutions), or what public services are extended to them (such as public education provided by the government or health centre services provided by NGOs) (Morse and McNamara, 2013).

Finally, it could be mentioned that livelihoods obviously have net effects, in the sense that they can be in competition with one another or they can have indirect effects or externalities (Chambers and Conway, 1991). A livelihood may be environmentally sustainable, but it may have adverse effects on other livelihoods, such as when there is an oversupply of labour in a market with few livelihood opportunities (Chambers and Conway, 1991).

## 5.3. Conflict and Livelihoods

### 5.3.1. Direct Effects of Conflict on Livelihods

Patricia Justino's (2011) working paper for the Institute for Development Studies titled 'Poverty and Violent Conflict: A Micro-Level Perspective on the Causes and Duration of warfare' systematically outlines the effects of violent conflict on the economic household. She divides the effects into direct and indirect effects. The direct impacts of violence and conflict on households is the destruction or displacement of physical assets (e.g. buildings, land, livestock), with individuals being killed or incapacitated, and with "farmers often suffering the worst losses." These can result in reductions of "income and consumption due to loss of

livelihoods and decrease in productivity and human capital" (Justino, 2011: 10). Furthermore, conflict can create displacement and refugees and internally displaced persons tend to possess fewer assets and to be socio-economically marginalised. However, at the same time conflicts also can create opportunities for individuals, households and communities, such as through looting, the redistribution of wealth or assets, preferential access to markets (Justino, 2011). These positive effects that a conflict can have on the economy of a household will be examined more closely later.

### 5.3.2. Indirect Effects of Conflict on Livelihoods

Besides the direct impact of violence on the economic household, there are multiple indirect effects. According to Justino (2011) violence impacts local markets, community relations, political institutions and economic growth and its redistribution. The evidence for conflict's impact on markets is unclear, but it is clear that conflict can influence prices of goods and services. Furthermore, evidence of what happens to community relations during conflict is also scarce, but there is evidence showing that some relations may strengthen while tensions increase between other communities. Furthermore, new relations can be created, such as when a displaced community is forced into "criminal and violent networks, or in semi-legal and illegal forms of activity," due to poverty traps caused by their displacement, loss of assets and economic marginalisation (Justino, 2011). Conflicts also tend to affect aggregate economic growth negatively, and drive economic inequality, benefitting some individuals or households, while driving vulnerable households into poverty traps (Justino, 2011).

What is more, the public goods that a political institution can supply may be restricted, which will affect households which are vulnerable to economic shocks and insecurity negatively. However, conflict also provides the opportunity "for new political leaders to challenge old political powers and for alternative governance structures to emerge in places where the state is absent" (Justino, 2011: 12). New organisations that practice rent-seeking, corruption or other destructive behaviour "will perpetuate dysfunctional economic, social and political relations," while organisations that promote the rule of law can have positive effects for households (Justino, 2011: 12).

### 5.3.3. How Conflict Restructures Social Relations and Livelihoods

As is evident above, conflicts have the tendency to restructure social relations, which also impacts livelihoods, which may cause some livelihood strategies to become more attractive, and others less so. Therefore, individuals, households and communities usually tend

to try to adapt their livelihood strategies to the new political economy created by the conflict situation. For instance, in Sri Lanka it was found that households tended to avoid building up their tangible asset base (e.g. buying new land) as they feared an uncertain future (damage, loss or looting). Households and communities often also migrate to a safer area, becoming internally displaced persons or refugees (Nigel, 2009). Therefore, people aim to adapt to the environment, and these livelihood strategies could also change throughout different phases of the conflict, if the social relations change or some assets are lost or become obsolete.

Changes in economic relations have also occurred in the context of North Kivu. For instance, some herders who can afford to hire security personnel have gained out of the current situation (Laudati, 2013). Another example could be how local Mai-Mai militias had to be on good terms with local populations and traditional authorities, and this often meant the integration of some of the population into their trade networks, which traded goods such as hemp, charcoal or timber (Laudati, 2013). So, besides the destruction of assets and social relations, insecurity and conflict can also change relations so that some groups can negotiate better livelihood strategies for themselves, and so may have to gain from this "hybrid political-socio-economic order" (Laudati, 2013: 42). In other words, some civilians are better equipped to benefit from "networks of accumulation," while others may experience "marginalisation, insecurity and conflict" (Laudati, 2013: 40).

## 5.4. Youth Livelihoods

The 'youth bulge' is currently a problem in Sub-Saharan Africa's economy, and will continue to be an even larger one in the future (Banks, 2016). The Democratic Republic of Congo is no different, as it is estimated that there were about 22 million youth (aged 16-24) in 2010, while there will be about 32 million in 2025 and 43 million in 2050 (IYF, 2013). Although youth are often resourceful and innovative, more needs to be done to enable them to secure and develop decent and sustainable livelihoods (Banks, 2016). However, the problem in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, and also the Congo, is not one of unemployment – as youth are rarely completely 'idle' – but rather the problem is *under-employment*. Often enough, even the 'unemployed' youth are engaged in some petty livelihood activities, and so is the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, 'under-employment' is a much larger problem (James-Wilson, 2008). In other words, the employment does not pay well enough to support their family. This "contradiction between their increased potential for agency and their inability to act on it leads to anxiety and frustration" (Banks, 2016: 440). In other words, although youth are willing to

work hard and improve their family's lives, there are not enough opportunities to do so, and so many youth are left feeling angry and marginalised.

Society places much significance on the transition from adolescence to adulthood, which allows the youth to attain the social standing of an adult in that society. This social pressure to make that transition also puts pressure on them to secure themselves a livelihood. According to Nicola Banks (2016) and her research on youth livelihoods in Arusha, Tanzania, where youth unemployment and under-employment is high, the youths' inability to provide for the family places considerable constraints on their step towards adulthood and marriage, especially for young men (Banks, 2016). Since they cannot provide for themselves and they cannot make the transition into adulthood, they are left in a "state of social and geographical immobility" (Eguavoen, 2010: 270). This is due to the fact that in some contexts, such as in Nigeria, a youth is defined as somebody "who does not (yet) have the material means and recognition to establish themselves as providers for others" (Eguavoen, 2010: 269). This is highly relevant for the youth's social standing, where society is regulated by patrimonial and intergenerational relations (Eguavoen, 2010). Hence, without a livelihood to support themselves and others, they are not able to make the transition to adulthood, and to gain acceptance and respect within their community.

## 5.5. Youth Livelihoods, Violence and Conflict

When youth cannot secure a livelihood and provide for their family, this leaves them in a limbo and feeling inadequate, which could cause frustration with their predicament and the conditions which have led to this (Hilker and Fraser, 2009). Moreover, in societies undergoing dynamic social change, youth may feel lost and may look for acceptance among their peers, which may drive them towards 'hyper-masculinity' and acts of violence (Plummer and Geofroy, 2010). Referring to the same phenomenon in North Kivu Lwambo (2013) also states that financial independence is central to achieving 'manhood,' and that failing to do so may lead to the need to exert their 'manhood' through hyper-masculine acts, such as violence.

These notions have also been expressed by Severine Autessere in her book about the local level conflicts in eastern Congo. She states that armed groups "offered leadership roles and social mobility," as they promised to "invert the social order." For the youth violence became a way to participate in society, and some academics, such as Acker and Vlassenroot (2000) have even considered the Mai Mai as some kinds of social "experiments with more egalitarian forms of social organisation for self-help and protection." While society was

disintegrating and a sense of normalcy had been lost in all the violence surrounding youth, these militias posed as 'alternative social systems,' which "were a means to recreate trust in the social world" (Autessere, 2010: 149). In a sense, although these militias were maintaining the violent society, they also offered a sense of refuge from it, and the possibility of escaping patrimonial and hierarchical structures into a more egalitarian society.

Therefore, there seems to be a marked link between youth livelihoods and political violence. Other scholars have also echoed similar notions, and stated that economic and political marginalisation of youth poses a threat to the peace and stability of countries, such as it has done in Sierra Leone (Bangura, 2016). Downing (2014) also confirms that poverty and the lack of education were huge factors in recruitment by armed groups in Colombia. This is echoed by Angela McIntyre in her essay about recruitment by armed groups in Africa's modern conflicts. She argues that major factors driving the mobilisation of young people into conflict is the "lack of education and livelihood options, of opportunities for peaceful participation in decision and policymaking" (McIntyre, 2010: 93). Disenchanted youth have been targeted for recruitment by various armed groups around the world, such as the RUF in Sierra Leone, as these armed groups are aware of the disillusion that the youth face, when they cannot provide for themselves (Bangura, 2016). Similar findings have been made in the Arab world. For instance, some researchers have found that youth under-employment, as well as their ambivalent social standing in society due to the experience of unemployment leaving them in the "pre-adult phase," has fuelled youth political violence during the Arab Spring (Muldering, 2013: 25). Furthermore, according to the International Labour Organisation youth who are educated and hold degrees are also affected, which exacerbates the disillusion with their predicament – what was the point of investing time and resources into education, if you are still unemployed (Muldering, 2013). Hence, the lack of opportunities and livelihoods is a force driving the frustration and violence of youth, which make them susceptible to armed force recruitment.

## 6. Data, Methodology and Research Process

The thesis made use of the Grounded Theory approach to gather and analyse the data – which consisted of three projects and two primary interviews – and to examine the links between youth livelihoods and the local conflict. The data is used to demonstrate the relations between youth livelihoods and the local conflict in the context of North Kivu, as conceived by Finn Church Aid, so as to offer some insight into the conflict dynamics in this region. Then the

thesis uses the scientific literature on these relations to make sense of the data, as well as to problematise it.

In Grounded Theory it is important to acknowledge the positionality of the researcher, as the analysis is based upon the researcher's interpretations of the data. Therefore, as a white male from a Northern European background, it is worthy to wonder to what extent can I really understand the predicament of the youth in North Kivu. However, I've tried to consider the problematic in the thesis from as many points-of-view as possible to make up for this.

## 6.1. Data

Firstly, the three projects, which are the topic of study in this research shall be introduced. The title of the first project is 'Emergency nutrition, food security and psychosocial support for the vulnerable IDP and returnee communities in Masisi territory, North Kivu, DRC,' of which the project number is 11502 (11502, 2015). The second project is titled 'Emergency food distribution, contributing to livelihood and improved resilience for conflict affected communities in North Kivu, DRC,' and the project number is 11521 (11521, 2015). The third project document is in French, and the title can be translated to 'the socio-economic reintegration of vulnerable youth,' and the project number is 10603 (10603, 2015). The first two projects are in Masisi, North Kivu, and the third takes place in both Masisi and the capital of North Kivu, Goma. The key data of this study are these project narrative reports, which provided me with a strong basis for examining linkages between conflict and livelihoods through the NGO's programmes. The documents explain the aims and ethos of the interventions, as well as provide some reflection and self-evaluation of their success.

These three projects were chosen, as they contained different aspects of livelihood development, and also implied links and synergy between peace and youth livelihood development. Projects 11521 and 11502 both had elements of livelihood development and 10603 was an education programme, which aimed to provide vulnerable youth with vocational training and entrepreneurial skills. As the study focuses on these three projects, the study is already fairly limited in scope. The time limit of the research is from January 2014, when 10603 begins, to January 2015 when both 11502 and 11521 end.

To complement the documents, two staff from Finn Church Aid were interviewed, so that they could further explain some points in the documents, and so we could discuss points not covered within the documents. Firstly, Marjo Mäenpää, who acted as Country Manager for Finn Church Aid in the Congo, was interviewed on 23rd November 2016. Secondly, Frederic

Fessard, who acted as humanitarian coordinator for Finn Church Aid in the Congo from March 2015 to February 2016, was interviewed on 19th December 2016. The interviewees were asked about issues such as how they perceive development and livelihoods are connected to the conflict, whether they feel that youth under-employment has an effect on the conflict, and how well do they think that the NGO's programmes can respond to the conflict in the eastern Congo. Therefore, in a sense, the documents provided me the backbone of the analysis, while the interviews allow me to further delineate the linkages I am looking for as well as complement the documents. The interviews also provided the data much more depth, and in a sense there was also some 'discussion' between the project reports and the interviews, as in some cases the conclusions drawn conflicted.

Also, four other interviews were conducted as background to the research to better understand the dynamics in the conflict in the Kivus. However, it was decided in the end not to use these interviews as primary data, as the project reports and the two interviews proved to be enough. The secondary interviews were mainly used to understand the dynamics and the complexity of the context, as well as to prepare the researcher for the interviews used in the data, to design better interview questions and better knowledge of the context. Nevertheless, a few instances have been used from one of these secondary interviews, when it was seen that they could contribute to the data analysis or discussion. This interviewee chose to be kept anonymous, but they were a Goma-based researcher.

## 6.2. Research Design and Methodology

### 6.2.1. Grounded Theory: How it works

In the Grounded Theory approach the researcher forms linkages between issues found to recur in the data, and categorises these recurring themes through a process known as *coding*. Coding is used to "manage and organise data," and the idea is to conceptualise data into theory, to transcend from description to abstract concepts (182 and 266: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This is possible through constant comparison, where the researcher compares incidents or events in the data, so that they can "explain relationships between and across incidents" (20: Goulding, 2002).

### 6.2.2. Why Grounded Theory?

Grounded Theory was chosen due to a few key reasons. As the research features many different types of data, a method that can make use of different types of data was needed. The

methodology is also open-ended, which was deemed to be important (Goulding, 2002). In other words, the methodology allows the research to be based on empirical evidence and observation, and so it is based upon the themes that arise within the data, rather than a selected theoretical framework. Therefore, were other themes, besides youth livelihoods and conflict, have predominated in the data, then another theoretical framework would have been chosen as a frame of analysis. However, since my questions in the interviews revolved around the linkages between youth livelihoods and the conflict, the shift in themes in the research did not occur.

Nevertheless, it should go without saying that no researcher is 'tabula rasa,' and that they always bring their own subjectivity into the collection and analysis. Therefore, the researcher should try to be aware of their own "social locations as a raced, gendered, classed etc. research instrument" (247: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Furthermore, the researcher is also allowed to use scientific literature to aid themselves in the research process, as a literature review provides parameters of the academic discourse, which one hopes to join with the research (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007).

In this research methodology it is important to ground the research, which in effect means that you must describe the research process and explain the choices you have made in the research process (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Therefore, the researcher has attempted to be as transparent as possible when identifying recurring issues and creating concepts (Bringer, Johnston and Brackenridge, 2004). Of course, subjectivity can rarely be escaped even in scientific study. However, to allow readers of this research to see my subjectivity (and for myself to better acknowledge it), I will have to justify my choices and assumptions throughout my research, as this would help make any subjectivity apparent to myself and the reader.

Grounded Theory was also chosen, because it aims to understand the social processes underlying the data. Grounded Theory is able to:

*"... offer a conceptually abstract explanation for a latent pattern of behaviour (an issue or concern) in the social setting under study. It must explain, not merely describe, what is happening in a social setting. [It] explains rather than describes behaviour that occurs conceptually and generally in many diverse groups with a common concern (Glaser, 2003)." (272: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007)*

Therefore, the aim is not to merely describe social processes, but to explain them – to answer the 'how' as well as the 'what,' and through this also the 'why.' This is important, as then the methodology can assist in uncovering the relations between youth livelihoods and conflict present in the data.

### 6.2.3. Memos

Before the thesis outlines the research process, there should be some explanation of an important tool in Grounded Theory – memos. Using this methodology the researcher often also has to revisit the data a few times, and so the method of analysis can be time-consuming (Raj, Gomez and Silverman, 2014). Throughout the coding and analysis process the researcher also is constantly writing *memos*, which form the emergent theoretical and substantive codes found in the data.

Memos are notes based on the data, and they are used to draw conceptual relations between categories, to develop their properties and to gradually conceptualise the data into more abstract theorisation (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). They are also used by the researcher to process their own thoughts about the data and the research process itself, such as when they need to collect more data, or when a certain category is sufficiently saturated (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). When reading an excerpt from an interview about armed force recruitment of youth, the researcher asks questions of the data and tries to relate what has been said to other incidents of data to conceptualise relations between youth livelihoods and the conflict. For instance, both interviewees seemed to highlight economic necessity in youth joining armed groups in different parts of their interview, so it could be concluded that they both thought that a lack of proper livelihood played a major role in the decision for a youth to join an armed group.

Furthermore, memos are supposed to help the researcher to ask epistemological questions of the data, such as "*what* one knows, *how* such knowledge has been acquired, the *degree of certainty* of such knowledge, and what further lines of inquiry are implied" (165: Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). Hence, memo writing is integral to research process in Grounded Theory, as not only does it form the analysis, but it helps to guide the researcher in the analysis process, as it helps them answer difficult questions related to the process itself.

In regards to the analysis, the idea of memos is to capture "emergent social patterns," meaning that through memos the researcher begins to see what are the underlying social processes which are occurring within the data (245: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). At first memos can be "messy and incomplete, with undigested theories and nascent opinions," and they can be paralleled to the researcher conversing with themselves to process the social mechanisms and notions within the data (249: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This is necessary as the researcher needs to process the data, and much of this processing happens when reading

the memos themselves, or even subconsciously while the researcher is occupied with activities other than their research. The researcher should even write memos based on his earlier memos, as this will help to gradually lift the analysis to higher levels of abstraction. This is helpful, as writing memos themselves is relatively easy, but thinking *beyond* memos is more complex and requires more analytical effort (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Finally, when writing memos it is important to not "force closure on the data collection and analysis too soon," and to engage the data and the memos to the point of theoretical saturation (249: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This will ensure that the analytical process is completed, and that as many of the categories relevant for the research are discovered as possible.

Now that the basic idea of Grounded Theory has been explained, the thesis will more specifically explain the Grounded Theory research process, as well as simultaneously outline the actual research process.

## 6.3. Research Process

To relate the method to my research question at hand, I examined the documents and the transcripts of the interviews, and analysed their conceptualisation of the relations between youth's local livelihoods and the surrounding conflict. At the same time I read scientific literature on livelihoods, livelihood development, conflict's effect on livelihoods, displacement's effects on livelihoods, and similar themes, and examined the data in the context of this literature. Questions which were asked of the data included: what kind of relation is there between displacement and livelihoods in the data? Does displacement disrupt livelihoods? And why do youth join armed groups: is it for their own security, do they see it primarily as a means of survival or livelihood, or are they forcibly abducted? How do I reconcile scientific literature on the relations between unemployment, political violence and political marginalisation with what the respondents at Finn Church Aid said? These are the types of questions that can aid in finding patterns and forming categories from the data.

### 6.3.1. The Coding Process

There are different phases to Grounded Theory, and the coding process. Firstly, the coding process is divided into substantive coding and theoretical coding. In substantive coding the researcher works directly with the data, and codes it, beginning with a phase called open coding, till the emergence of the core category. After this the process of selective coding begins, whereby the aim is to "theoretically saturate the core and related concepts." (266: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Thereafter the researcher turns to forming the theoretical framework, and

begins to develop theoretical codes to integrate the substantive codes to one another – hence theoretical codes are like the links in the theoretical framework (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). The theoretical framework should be centred around the core category, and be able to explain the social processes that are being researched within the data.

## 6.3.2. Substantive Coding

In the first phase – which is called open coding – the researcher coded the data line-by-line and compares incidents within the data, asking questions such as: "What is this data a study of? What category does this incident indicate? What is actually happening in the data?" (275: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This process of constant comparison guided the development of emergent theory by ensuring that the data actually supports emergent categories (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007).

Therefore, the researcher went through the project reports and the interviews to identify different incidents which exhibited a potential youth livelihood-conflict connection. 'Memos' based upon the data were written, which asked questions like "what is happening in this incident" and "what are the social processes taking place here"? Through the process of constant comparison certain themes predominated, such as displacement, armed groups, youth livelihoods, education and livelihood development.

After comparing incidents to each other and forming emerging concepts, then these concepts were compared to other incidents, as well as to other emerging concepts" (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This process also made the researcher come to terms with "similarities, differences and degrees in consistency of meaning between indicators," which aided the development of categories and their properties, giving rise to a coded category (278: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This continued until 'theoretical saturation' was achieved (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). "Categories are saturated when 'no additional data" is "found whereby the analyst can develop the properties of a category" (185: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This phase allowed for the development of themes mentioned above into more generalisable concepts, so that properties of each theme could be determined, and continued until no new properties could be located.

After the point of theoretical saturation, the analysis process proceeded to the development of the 'core category.' The core category is meant to tie the different categories and concepts together, and so this core "becomes the focus of further selective data collection and coding efforts" (280: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). The core category is supposed to occur

frequently within the data, and it has to "relate to as many other categories and properties as possible" (280: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Although 'displacement' seemed to be an extremely pervasive and theme in the data, it was thought that having displacement as a core category would lead to a too broad of a research topic. Furthermore, the research question had been about the relation of youth livelihoods to the local conflict, so it made sense to focus on this, and to use 'youth livelihoods' as the core category. Other categories which were very relevant were livelihood development, conflict sensitivity, education, armed groups, psychosocial education and also gender.

### 6.3.3. Data Analysis: Theoretical Coding

After the discovery of the core category, the research needs to focus on the relations between the core category and other categories, a process which is called theoretical coding (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This began with selective coding of the core category. Data collection and coding was now centred round the "emerging conceptual framework," which in effect are "the core [category] and those categories which are relevant to the core" (280: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). All categories and concepts related to youth livelihoods were the focus of coding to determine the emerging theoretical framework.

In the end, the most central categories which were found to related to youth livelihoods, and which were the focus of coding efforts, were: (1) Livelihood Development; (2) Armed Groups and Recruitment; (3) Displacement; (4) Conflict Sensitivity and Do No Harm; (5) Education and Psychosocial support and (6) Gender. All of the categories were related closely to youth livelihoods as well as extremely inter-related, and so were deemed to be relevant to the research.

After this the individual concepts can be related to each other through the suitable 'theoretical codes,' and this is when the coding and conceptualisation can end, and when we are approaching the final theoretical framework. The so-called theoretical codes are codes, which are used to "conceptualise how the substantive codes may relate to each other" within the theoretical framework (283: Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). This meant that the relations between the categories outlined above were conceptualised, so that a theoretical framework framing the relations of youth livelihoods and conflict based on the data could be constructed.

## 7. Results of the Thematic Analysis

Whilst the previous section concerned coding and categorisation based on the data, the next section aims to present the results. Therefore, in this section I will outline the categories found through data analysis, as not all of the data itself is relevant from the point of view of the research question.

The relations between the local conflict and youth livelihoods were grouped under the following groups: youth and armed groups, youth livelihood development and education and how conflict affects youth livelihoods. Youth and armed groups contains data related to the motivations of youth who join armed groups: do they join due to lack of viable livelihoods, or due to other reasons (such as ideology, fear for their own safety, frustration with the political system or personal vengeance). Livelihood development and education of youth contains the potential relations between livelihood development and education and the surrounding local conflict. For instance, how does livelihood development supposedly affect the local conflict, and how can NGOs manage these relations. And finally, the effect that the local conflict has on youths' livelihoods or education. For example, how does displacement intersect with youth livelihoods, and how about ex-combatants youth? Another question to ponder is how does trauma from violence and conflict relate to their livelihoods? These are the general questions that repeatedly came up during the analysis phase of the project reports and the interviews.

Some categories are more closely related to certain groups, such as livelihood development and education are closely related to livelihood development and education of youth. However, some categories could be relevant for multiple groups. For instance, as women may face certain vulnerabilities in conflict which affects their livelihood prospects, the local conflict can have gendered effects on youth livelihoods. Furthermore, gender seems to be equally relevant to livelihood development and education, as in many of the projects women were one of the target beneficiaries, probably because women face discrimination in their society, as well as certain vulnerabilities in conflict contexts.

The sections are divided according to the different categories, and according to the type of data: project documents or interviews. First, we look at what the data says about the question of why youth join armed groups. Then we look at youth livelihood development and education and how that bears relevance to the surrounding local level conflict. After that the concepts of *resilience* and *conflict sensitivity* are discussed and presented, as they also recurred frequently

in the data. Finally, we discuss the relevancy of displacement in the context of youth livelihoods and the local conflict, as well as psychosocial support and gender.

While it was seen that conflict sensitivity should be a category of its own, as instances referring to it were easily distinguished, resilience was not seen to compose a separate category. This was because although it and *vulnerability* are important concepts in this research, many types of livelihood development do build resilience and many of the beneficiaries of Finn Church Aid are vulnerable. Therefore, it was difficult to distinguish livelihood development from resilience, and so resilience was kept under the category of livelihood development. Furthermore, the interviewees did not refer to resilience as a concept.

## 7.1. Youth Livelihoods, Conflict and Armed Groups

The key question when it comes to relations between youth livelihoods and conflict is whether youth join armed groups due to the lack of a viable livelihood, or whether the reason for joining armed groups is altogether something different. Although the project reports provided no insight into why youth might join armed groups, both of the respondents from Finn Church Aid thought that that major reason for youth joining armed groups was, indeed, a lack of a viable livelihood. However, at the same time Marjo Mäenpää stated that there could be other motivations for joining an armed group, such as ideological considerations, although the majority joined due to a lack of other livelihood opportunities. Frederic Fessard stated that the conflict in eastern Congo is "purely financial," and that most youth joined armed groups as there are few opportunities to for an income or livelihood in the region (Frederic Fessard, 19th Dec 2016). Marjo Mäenpää very roughly estimated that 90% of youth join armed groups because they are unemployed, or because they have nobody to support them (e.g. they are orphans). "It [joining an armed group] is seen as a livelihood opportunity," according to Mäenpää (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016).

However, both respondents acknowledged that the conflict has had political roots, and that youth may even join armed groups for ideological reasons. Fessard stated that many of the armed groups have political origins, and the leadership of the armed groups may still be politically motivated. Nevertheless, according to Fessard the 'rank-and-file' are most likely motivated to join for economic security, as there have been reports of the average footsoldier changing from one armed group to another, such as from the APCLS to the FDLR, if the pay is better (even though the pay is very little in both cases) (Frederic Fessard, 19th Dec 2016). This seems to suggest that the average soldier or rebel is more motivated to *stay* in an armed

group by economic interests, rather than by ideology or political grievances, although political grievance may be a contributing factor to *joining* an armed group. Furthermore, although many armed groups have origins in defending certain ethnic groups (e.g. FDLR for the Hutus or APCLS for the Hunde), over time they have become mixed of different ethnic groups, although the political leadership may be mostly dominated by a single ethnic group. This also suggests that the average combatant tends to be motivated by other factors than politics or ethnicity, which could be economic security, or even due to fear of what may happen if you don't join.

Furthermore, although Mäenpää does acknowledge that youths' motivations to join an armed group may also be political, in her view the vast majority join due to economic interest. She also stated that the armed group offers a type of 'support network' ("tukiverkosto"), which may be missing for some youth, especially orphans, the unemployed and other vulnerable individuals (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016). Therefore, an armed group may be seen to offer a form of 'social capital,' which may make them very attractive when the youth has no livelihood and possesses few other forms of capital (e.g. financial or human capital, such as education or a useful skillset).

## 7.2. Livelihood Development and Education and their Relation to Conflict

One of Finn Church Aid's three themes – around which their development and humanitarian work is centred – is Right to Livelihoods (also known as R2L). In their Strategy for 2017-2020 it is stated that due to population growth youth unemployment needs to be addressed through vocational education, and that "it is important to continue working with rural communities to develop and diversify income generating opportunities" to take pressure off urban centres (FCA, 2016b: 8). Furthermore, Finn Church Aid aims to focus its livelihood development programmes on vulnerable populations, especially women and youth, whether it be through education, or supporting employment or entrepreneurship (FCA, 2017). Both of the interviewees also acknowledge that livelihood development contributes to peace, and that peacebuilding and livelihood development are often interlinked and mutually supporting (Frederic Fessard, 19th Dec 2016) and (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016).

The three projects, which have been chosen for analysis – 11521, 11502 and 10603 – also suggest links and synergy between peace (and consequently also conflict) and youth livelihoods, as did both of the interviewees. Projects 11521 and 11502 both had elements of livelihood development and 10603 was an education programme, which aimed to provide vulnerable youth with vocational training and entrepreneurial skills.

As its second objective project 11521 "aimed to improve the resilience of vulnerable host populations through improved agricultural production." This would be done by distributing food aid, financial capital (in the form of cash vouchers) and physical capital, such as seeds and agricultural tools, to IDPs and "vulnerable local residents" (2: 11521, 2015). The fact that the aim is to improve resilience of the community suggests that the livelihood development is meant to lower the risk of conflict, or at least to improve inter-communal ethnic relations. This is because conflict and ethnic tensions are arguably the greatest stresses and crises facing communities in the Kivus.

Project 11502 also distributed physical assets (agricultural tools) and attempted to improve human capital by providing training and farming and poultry techniques to returnee and IDP communities. Financial capital ($100) also was given to the 200 most vulnerable households to improve socio-economic living conditions "through income-generating activities" (2: 11502, 2015). It also contains a livelihood dimension in its psychosocial support for victims of SBGV and people living with HIV/AIDs (PLWHA). Although the Project Report did not explicate upon the relations that this livelihood development approach has with the surrounding conflict, it can be relatively safely assumed that at least one of Finn Church Aid's the aims was to lower the risk of conflict.

Finally, project 10603's aim is to support the socio-economic and sustainable integration of vulnerable youth through an education programme, which teaches vocational skills, promotes entrepreneurialism and includes psychosocial education. It also aims to have at least 50% of the target youth be female. It defines a 'vulnerable youth' as being one of the following: an ex-combatant, a street youth, an orphan without support, a youth with a disability, single mothers, SBGV victims or a youth responsible for a family (not necessarily a biological parent). They also have to be between the ages of 15 and 22 years old. How this education programme relates to the surrounding conflict is not explicated upon, but since one of FCA's aims in livelihood development is to support peace, it follows that one of its aims is to lower the risk of conflict. Furthermore, the education programme focuses on 'vulnerable' youth, and so seeks to address vulnerability. Vulnerability is created and exacerbated by conflict (among other factors), and most of the criteria for vulnerability in this project is related to conflict, and so the project seeks to decrease vulnerability created by a fragile and insecure environment.

As the projects did not, for the most part, explicitly explicate upon the relations between FCA's livelihood development and the conflict, the respondent's answers proved important

data to be able to understand these links. As envisioned by the two interviewees, the relation has largely been explained above in the section on why youth join armed groups. There it is stated that although the project reports did not elucidate upon why youth join armed groups, the respondents held the belief that the main motivating factor for youth to join an armed groups was economic security. In other words, livelihood development should lower the risk of conflict, as less youth would be willing to join armed groups, and so recruitment by armed groups would be made more difficult. This was stated most clearly by Fessard, who stated that "by solving the problem of livelihood, and actual income, then you would have a sharp decrease in youths joining the different [armed groups]" (Frederic Fessard, 19th Dec 2016). However, it was also acknowledged that livelihood opportunities and economic security were not the *only* reasons to join, but that addressing these issues will drastically lower the amount of potential recruits for armed groups.

### 7.2.1. Resilience

A term which was used and implied within the project reports was that of 'resilience.' Shortly defined resilience is a household's or community's capacity to "recover from shocks and stresses while retaining key functions," including their livelihoods (Ratner, 2015: 332). The project report for 11521 mentioned twice that one of the goals was to improve resilience through improving agricultural production of vulnerable groups (11521, 2015). 11502 seems to imply that one of the aims is to improve resilience, as the terms "food security" and "strengthening livelihoods" are used (11502, 2015).

Furthermore, improving resilience can also be framed as, removing 'vulnerability,' as will be discussed in the next section synthesising the conceptual framework and data analysis. This is because vulnerability can be defined as "how the poor develop strategies to cope with shocks through diversifying and mobilising their asset base, capturing how 'people move in and out of poverty…'" (McIlwane and Moser, 2003: 115). Both 11521 and 11502 have removing vulnerability as one of their aims at least. The youth education project (10603) also seeks to address vulnerability, as the criteria for eligibility to become a beneficiary is to be a 'vulnerable' youth (10603, 2015)

However, the interviews made no references to 'resilience,' although vulnerability was referred to. This is because no questions about resilience or vulnerability were specifically asked, as both concepts became more prominent after the data had been collected (after interviews), as they both aided the crystallisation of the relation between conflict and

livelihoods. Vulnerability is important in the scientific literature in livelihood development, and conflict exacerbates vulnerability. In a sense, vulnerability can be seen as a mirror image of resilience, as resilience-building aims to make households and communities less vulnerable to shocks and stresses, such as violent conflict, forced displacement and climate change. The relation between resilience and *conflict,* therefore, is that conflict is can act as a shock or stress on a household's livelihood, and so resilience building aims to increase households' and communities' capabilities to adapt to violent conflict, so that they can maintain and even further develop their livelihoods in such a destabilising context.

### 7.2.2. Conflict Sensitivity and Do No Harm

Conflict sensitivity is an approach whereby an international organisation designs and implements its interventions with the understanding that it can have both positive and negative effects on the conflict context, and in the worst case drive the conflict. Therefore, conflict sensitivity entails that the organisation understands the underlying conflict dynamics, and how its intervention can affect those dynamics, and aims to "avoid negative impacts and maximises positive impacts on the conflict" (1: Woodrow and Chigas, 2009).

Project 11521 stated that it "promoted conflict sensitivity," as it aimed to strengthen the livelihoods of both the vulnerable local residents as well as IDPs (3: 11521, 2015). Furthermore, it also referred to the Do No Harm principles, and it aimed to "avoid entrenching tribal tensions, as the majority of the residents in the IDP camp in Shasha are predominately from the Tembo tribe while the majority of the residents in Shasha are Hunde or Kinyarwanda speaking Hutu" (6: 11521, 2015). The project report, therefore, acknowledges the possibility that improving the capacities of one the ethnic group, and ignoring the other, can cause tensions due to the (in their perception) unfair treatment. Within this acknowledgement there is the implication that livelihood development can actually promote conflict, which is why the principles of conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm are important, so that development interventions do not have possibly negative repercussions. In the worst case, tensions between ethnic groups could lead to willingness on the part of the youth to join armed groups, such as the Hutu-dominated FDLR or Hunde-dominated APCLS.

Although the two other projects' documents did not refer to these, in her interview Mäenpää acknowledged the importance of these principles in development work, when she was asked about it by the author. She admitted that any possible ethnic tensions must be taken into account in development projects, but at the same time she exclaimed her surprise about

how good the communal relations in fact were, especially as most IDPs were living with host families within the community (and not in the camps) (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016).

## 7.3. How Conflict Affects Livelihoods and Education of Youth

We have discussed youths' motivations to join armed groups, and how livelihood development and education programmes for youth are thought to be related to the surrounding local conflict in North Kivu. Another direction of the relation is how the conflict affects youth livelihoods and education. Youth lives may have been directly affected by conflict, such as if they are ex-combatants, if they are IDPs or survivors of sexually-based gender violence. Moreover, the threat of conflict, violence or displacement may also affect the livelihood strategies employed by youth, which could possibly be maladaptive. Conflict can affect livelihoods in multiple ways, and some relations between conflict and livelihoods could be outlined based on the data.

### 7.3.1. Direct Effects

There was one explicit reference, which demonstrated that youth livelihoods can be negatively affected by conflict. In the youth education project 10603, some youth have to drop out of class, since they are suspected of having connections to the APCLS and so are persecuted by FARDC (10603, 2015). The conflict directly affected the youths' livelihood opportunities in this case.

### 7.3.2. Indirect Effect of Conflict on Livelihoods: Displacement

Displacement is the most obvious and pervasive effect of conflict on civilians, and on youth livelihoods, in the area of North Kivu. For instance, although the impact on livelihoods is uncertain, in project 11502 it is stated that the targets for addressing acute malnutrition were not met because of "the recurring and frequent movement of people in the area due to the clashes between FDLR and FARDC." Furthermore, the targets for increasing agricultural production were not met also due to heavy rainfall and these same population movements, i.e. forced displacement (7: 11502, 2015). Additionally, what also seems to be a testament to the pervasiveness of displacement in the context of eastern DRC, the project narrative report for 11521 states that it aims to support IDPs as well as local residents, "many of whom have also been displaced at some point" (2: 11521, 2015). The Project Proposal for 11521 also states that there is conflict between the FARDC and APCLS in Masisi, and this will probably worsen the humanitarian situation due to an increase in forced displacement. When looking at the project

documents, forced displacement seems to be the most pervasive effect on civilians lives, and consequently on youths' livelihoods (11521 Project Proposal, 2014). Although these examples do not exactly demonstrate the effects of displacement on youth livelihoods, it is probably safe to assume that youths were affected in some way by their displacement.

As mentioned above, displacement was also a major theme within interviews. Fessard underlined that displacement is a central problem in North Kivu, and the main obstacle to improving livelihoods in the rural areas. This was because insecurity and conflict made people leave their homes, which would mean that they might abandon their harvest, which was often then looted in the meantime. Therefore, NGOs like Finn Church Aid wanted to share and mitigate this risk by providing agricultural tools and training, so not all the risk is taken on by households. Projects themselves were also set back by fighting at times, which meant that fields could not be planted or harvested at the correct times (Frederic Fessard, 19th Dec 2016).

Mäenpää also stated that displacement (and the threat of displacement) made agriculture a less attractive livelihood option. Furthermore, she acknowledged how the arrival of IDPs and refugees in a community could potentially increase tensions, due to increased competition for livelihoods and scarce resources. However, the forcibly displaced could also have positive economic effects on local economies, as demand for products was increased and the economies may grow to become larger and more vibrant. An example was Mukuma refugee camp, which had 17,000 people and had been running for more than a decade, and which had developed into its own town and economy (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016)..

All in all, the interviews also underlined the significance of displacement in the lives of civilians in North Kivu. Displacement affects livelihoods, as people may have to leave their homes and livelihoods, and the threat of displacement affects people's livelihood strategies (or at least their preferences). According to one interviewee even the projects themselves were affected by fighting and displacement. Furthermore, the arrival of high numbers of IDPs can have effects on the livelihoods in a community, causing tensions, although positive effects could be distinguished in the longer run.

### 7.3.3. Psychosocial Support

Psychosocial education occurred in both projects 11502 and 10603. In 11502 it was part of a component to support 200 beneficiaries who were psychologically traumatised through SGBV or had HIV/AIDs, or who had "special needs." These beneficiaries were provided psychosocial support, as well as were trained to produce food products to generate

income as part of their recovery process (11502, 2015). In project 10603 all of the students were given psychosocial education to help overcome traumas and to recognise the symptoms of PTSD (10603, 2015). SGBV and HIV/AIDs can have conflict-related causes, and so it is fairly safe to assume that some of the beneficiaries' traumas are conflict-induced. Moreover, since there is a livelihood element to the psychosocial support, there is also a youth livelihood and conflict relation within the psychosocial interventions.

### 7.3.4 .Gender

In regards to gender, all of the projects had some dimensions which addressed gender at least to a degree. 11502 supported victims of sexual and gender-based violence, as well as assisted the beneficiaries to become economically self-sufficient. Furthermore, there were "large-scale awareness sessions on HIV/AIDs and sexual and gender-based violence" to sensitise the community to these issues. Project 11521 also ensured that 50% of the stakeholders who were consulted throughout implementation to "ensure transparency and ownership of activities" were women (6: 11521, 2015). Finally, project 10603 aimed to have 50% of the students be female to promote the education of women (10603, 2015).

Furthermore, in the interview with Mäenpää it was noted that some women were also trained in more 'masculine' professions, such as bricklaying and carpentry, and that they all were employed as a result. She also noted that women tended to be more responsible with finances than men, as in an unrelated micro-finance project, the women rarely defaulted on their loans, while it seemed to be relatively common for men (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016).

## 8. Synthesis of the Conceptual Framework and the Analysis

The thesis synthesises the results of the data analysis with research literature on conflict and livelihoods. The data is used to demonstrate how Finn Church Aid frames the relations between youth livelihoods and local level conflict, which are as outlined in the research literature, which are complex and context-specific. Different concepts, such as vulnerability and resilience, which are relevant to both the data and the scientific literature will also be discussed in light of the relations evident in the data. As a note, this following section has been organised differently to the previous section, as although the previous delineation made sense when presenting the categories, for purposes of the analysis and the discussion, another structure was found more appropriate.

## 8.1. Direct Effects of Conflict on Livelihoods and Assets: The Data

In the data there are some examples of direct effects of conflict on youth livelihoods, such as when the FARDC chase boys away from school in project 10603 (10603, 2015). This was probably part of the FARDC's new operation looking to rid the APCLS from Masisi (Mueller, 2014). Here the conflict had detrimental effects on an asset, namely human capital. Furthermore, although there are no direct references to livelihoods being affected by forced displacement, in the narrative report of 11502 it was mentioned that frequent population movements in the area has decreased harvests to some extent. Furthermore, both Frederic Fessard and Marjo Mäenpää acknowledge that displacement is especially threatening for farmers (Fessard, 2016) and (Mäenpää, 2016). Therefore, there are multiple references to direct effects of conflict on livelihoods, although these instances shall be analysed further in the sections about education and displacement.

## 8.2. Armed Groups, Livelihoods and Conflict

### 8.2.1. Armed Groups, Livelihoods and Conflict: Scientific Literature

Recruitment processes of armed groups vary from abduction and coercion to more subtle ideological manipulation, and depends on the armed group in question as well as the individual being recruited. Individuals themselves also join for very different reasons, ranging from poverty to political ideology to fear (Nadin et al, 2014). Often armed groups may also offer young people escape from traditional and patrimonial hierarchies, and they may offer the youth the potential for upward social mobility which the rural village cannot offer (McIntrye, 2010). Hence, young people may join armed groups for various reasons, and the groups themselves are aware of this, using various recruitment methods at their disposal.

Research literature also suggests that *depending on the context*, poverty and unemployment – or the lack of viable livelihoods – are major drivers of conflict. It seems that "when productive activities are scarce, unemployment is high and returns from agricultural work are low," then poverty can act as a conflict driver. Although the rank-and-file of armed groups receive minimum pay (while the leadership has most to gain in terms of economic and political power), the pay allows them "to guarantee survival and the fulfilment of basic needs" (Justino, 2011: 8). In Sierra Leone, although the reasons why youth and children joined armed groups were numerous, some central reasons were also "poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, [and] socio-economic and political exclusion." They claimed that due to the negative socio-economic context which they found themselves in "the power of the gun was their only means

of survival" (Bangura, 2016: 41). Moreover, related to livelihood, poverty and the lack of economic opportunities is economic or socio-economic marginalisation and exclusion, which also have been cited as causes for joining armed groups. This is noted by Bangura (2016) who states that for some violent political actors, "it was not the perception of *poverty* [per se] that led to their involvement, but their perception in being excluded and marginalised" (40: Bangura, 2016). In conclusion, both poverty and the lack of economic opportunities, or socio-economic marginalisation and exclusion, may lead to youth joining armed groups.

Therefore, there seem to be multiple drivers of violence, although generally authors highlight poverty, marginalisation, while some also mention the prevalence of violence and armed groups. Hence, it seems wrong to highlight that unemployment is solely the issue, and that what may be the issue is the perception of inequality and exclusion, both politically and economically. According to Cramer (2010) it is the experience of adverse working conditions (e.g. poor pay, exploitation), which increased political violence, instead of unemployment. Furthermore, Raeyamakers (2011) did research in Butembo (eastern DRC) and found that the governance of labour markets to formal labour were "highly exclusionary and deeply political," which seems to also suggest that it is marginalisation and inequality, rather than poverty, that drives violence (Mallett and Slater, 2012: 50). Besides unemployment there is vulnerability, bad working conditions, under-employment, as well as health issues, which are also conducive to conflict (Cramer, 2010). Even the World Bank is beginning to acknowledge that the linkage between unemployment and conflict is more complex than it has previously assumed (Fortune et al. 2015). Hence, the question seems to not be just about livelihoods, but about being able to practice a *dignified* form of livelihood, as the experience of exploitation may also create grievances among youth.

However, the extent to which violence is associated with poverty is contextual, and sometimes the correlation between economic opportunities and violence can even be positive. In the research of McIlwane and Moser (2003) various relations between violence, poverty and security were drawn, where violence "was seen as an outcome of various dimensions of deprivation," "as in situations where people were frustrated by the lack of opportunities in their lives, violence and/or crime became the next step in venting their anger" (McIlwane and Moser, 2003: 124). Furthermore, in some contexts unemployment has also been found to correlate negatively with violence. For instance, there was evidence that as a result of increased employment, there were increased attacks on government forces in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Philippines (Berman et al. 2011). Therefore, the correlation between violence and economic

development or employment seems to be contextual – at least to some degree. Hence, it seems that the association between poverty and violence can be complex and can depend on the context.

### 8.2.2. Armed Groups and Livelihoods: What Does the Data Say?

Therefore, both respondents emphasised a lack of economic opportunities for youth to join armed groups, and Mäenpää also brought up the importance of vulnerability of the youth. However, although the importance of economic opportunities were acknowledged, other contextual factors were not highlighted to the same extent, such as political marginalisation and exclusion, government mismanagement and adverse working conditions. Mäenpää does state that some youth acknowledged the hopelessness of the security situation, and that they used it to rationalise their violent behaviour. According to Mäenpää, a female ex-combatant had told her that in the past the girl "would shoot people, because if you didn't, then somebody else definitely would" (Mäenpää, 2016).Mäenpää supposed that the rationalisation was a way of dealing with the trauma and the stress that the girl had experienced. However, she then went onto further highlight that, although the violent environment was a factor, the main reason for youth joining armed groups is due to a lack of economic opportunities and vulnerability. In this sense, neither respondent considered political grievance to be a major factor for youth joining armed groups, and that the primary motive was that of livelihood.

### 8.2.3. The 'Security Dilemma' in North Kivu: The Data

Nevertheless, Mäenpää did recognise that the 'security dilemma' present in eastern Congo was also a reason that communities supported armed groups, as the security vacuum meant that communities needed to protect themselves. As the communities feel a need to support armed groups for their own protection, this closeness between armed groups and communities may act to lower the threshold for youth to join armed groups. She states that some communities openly support armed groups, as they offer 'protection,' and that they often consist of the "local boys" anyway. Some armed groups, such as the APCLS, can even freely move within communities – Mäenpää has herself seen members of the armed group present and going about their business freely in some villages (Mäenpää, 2016). She also stated that Mobutu told the army that 'you guys have the guns,' and that he encouraged predatory behaviour among his armed forces. This predatory behaviour in the FARDC means that it may pray upon civilians, and so there is no trust in the ability of the FARDC to protect communities (Mäenpää, 2016). There is arguably more trust between the local armed group and the

community, than between the FARDC and the community, although the FARDC has allied with some armed groups at times, and used them as proxies for operations. Some government officials have even promoted communities' reliance on armed groups. For instance, during when the RCD was in power in North Kivu, it "stressed that security is an entirely private matter and that population has to take care of itself" (Tull, 2003: 436). Therefore, the closeness between some armed groups and some communities means that it is relatively 'easy' for youth in some communities to join some armed groups. Although it is not a motivating factor to join – except for those youth who want to actively 'protect' their community in this way – it removes some social barriers or stigma to being in an armed group.

The 'security dilemma' was also referred to as a conflict driver in the secondary interviews, as the lack of security strengthened the relations between local communities and armed groups. One of the respondents, who were not part of Finn Church Aid, made multiple references to the security dilemma present in North Kivu. The lack of security governance means that communities arm themselves for self-protection, which then tends to become a vicious circle. It has also led to a state of 'rebel governance,' where armed groups govern whole areas, as they enjoy more support than the state. The state and local customary chiefs are also aware of this, and so armed groups may be used as security or in military operations (Researcher based in Goma, 2016). Therefore, it seems that the lack of security in North Kivu is another factor driving youth towards armed groups.

However, although there was some acknowledgement of the security dilemma probably affecting youths' decisions to join armed groups, both of the respondents from FCA still highlighted the lack of livelihood and vulnerability as being the main motivating factors for youth joining rebel groups. This is slightly problematic in light of some scientific literature, which has been outlined above, as although economic marginalisation is an issue, political marginalisation and disenfranchisement has also usually been identified as motivating political violence.

### 8.2.4. The Complexity of Problem of Armed Groups: Marginalisation, Disillusion and Livelihoods: Scientific Literature

Moreover, along with the lack of economic security that many youth face, many experts on the eastern Congo also consider the political and security context to be driving forces behind the conflict. According to Severine Autessere the AFDL armed group "consisted mostly of alienated individuals and groups," such as army deserters, displaced populations and the

unemployed. Furthermore, all the armed groups also contained large proportions of youths who wanted to "fight the marginalisation affecting them since Mobutu's policies had generated a land crisis, the collapse of the education system, and the destruction of the country's productive capacities" (Autessere, 2010: 148). She also states that "the lack of social opportunities for young and disenfranchised communities persisted as a motivation for enrolment in armed groups" (Autessere, 2010: 152). Other experts have also made similar observations. For instance, Paul Nantulya stated that the recent political crisis, with President Joseph Kabila refusing to step down from power, has exacerbated grievances and strengthened support for armed groups (Nantulya, 2017). Therefore, political marginalisation has certainly played a role in the conflict in eastern Congo.

However, this is not to undermine the lack of economic opportunities and youths' vulnerability as conflict drivers. Autessere also noted that civilians also joined armed groups, as "given the lack of economic opportunities in the eastern provinces, membership in an armed group was still the most profitable option." (Autessere, 2010: 155). Furthermore, as was mentioned above, many of the youth joining armed groups are from vulnerable backgrounds, such as displaced groups, the unemployed or army deserters. Therefore, the lack of economic opportunities and marginalisation seemed to play a major role in the success of the armed groups in eastern Congo, and they probably continue to do so. However, marginalisation is more than just employment or economic opportunity, but it also refers to a sense of exclusion of political and social life. Therefore, she also states that militias allowed its members to feel that they were part of a group, and it strengthen their own sense of belonging and identity. Furthermore, marginalised groups had an incentive to try to perpetuate this violent environment, as it gave them the opportunity to "attain a higher social status," as described above (Autessere, 2010: 152). Therefore, it seems that major motivations for joining armed groups in eastern DRC were the lack of economic, social and political opportunities to be able to participate in society, at least according to Autessere.

### 8.2.5. How to Reconcile Data with Scientific Literature Then?

Therefore, scientific research literature seems to suggest that the conflict in eastern Congo is driven by various conflict drivers, and that youth join armed groups for various reasons. Experts on the specific context of eastern Congo also seem to highlight the importance of *both* a lack of economic opportunities and the experience of political marginalisation, when considering motivations for joining armed groups. However, it seems that both interviewees

from Finn Church Aid seemed to agree that livelihood and employment were youth's foremost reasons for joining armed groups, due to a lack of opportunities as well as their vulnerability. This is in line with the idea that poverty can drive conflict in area where productive activities are scarce and the returns of agricultural productivity is low, which is the case in North Kivu. For rural youth there are few economic opportunities, and they may be socio-economically excluded from certain jobs. Mäenpää did also mention the importance of the prevalence of violence and the lack of security for communities, as making it easier for youth to rationalise joining armed groups.

However, issues such as social and political marginalisation, destructive government policies and corruption, and the collapse government services were not considered by the FCA interviewees as important reasons, or were not at least considered to be primary motivating factors. Arguably, these political factors would also create political grievances among youth. Although they may not motivate to join armed groups per se, they will definitely at the very least create an environment where joining an armed group seems justifiable, as they may be the most powerful actors with legitimacy in your locality. Furthermore, the militias may provide a sense of belonging, which especially more vulnerable youth may be lacking.

For contrast, one of the interviewees from the *secondary data* saw that, although under-employment and lack of income is a major factor in armed forced recruitment, it is not the only factor that drives youth to join armed groups. Political marginalisation, inequality, inept governance, high levels of corruption and an incredibly violent society leaves youth feeling disillusioned, and this can also drive them into armed groups, who take advantage of the youths' feelings of frustration (Researcher based in Goma, 2016). Although the lack of livelihoods were in his opinion a major driver of the conflict, there were also multiple other contextual factors which leads to youth joining armed groups. This seems very much in line with the research literature above, which states that the lack of livelihoods and income is an important driver of conflict under certain conditions.

Considering the fact that the linkage between livelihoods and conflict is complex and context-specific, and although many youth are probably driven to armed groups out of necessity, political grievances do still play a part in the conflict. It is therefore interesting that both Finn Church Aid respondents highlighted the economic factors in motivating youth to join armed groups. This could be a reflection of the framework that Finn Church Aid has adopted in approaching development, especially in fragile contexts, which is centred around three

themes: the right to peace, the right to education and the right to livelihoods (Finn Church Aid, 2016). These are envisioned as interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Improving education and strengthening livelihoods should consolidate peace, as a more stable and peaceful society has better potential for economic development. The respondents' views could be reflective of the NGO's framework for envisioning development and peace, and so this could be considered in this analysis.

However, Finn Church Aid's own strategy also emphasises the importance of promoting economic and political inclusion of marginalised groups, such as youth, to consolidate peace (FCA, 2016b: 12 and 15). Hence, within the strategy there seems to lie the notion that a livelihood alone is not sufficient for achieving peace, but rather broader social and political structures have to also be addressed. In this sense, perhaps the respondents' answers should be understood as emphasising the livelihood-conflict relation in favour of other relations, such as the one between conflict and political inclusion. It could also be understood as Finn Church Aid's strategic decision not to become involved in the challenge of political marginalisation and bad governance. Governance and democratisation are sensitive issues for fragile states, and addressing political marginalisation might politicise the intervention and make cooperation with Congolese local administration and the state more sensitive and difficult. This has also been acknowledged by the OECD, who stated in its report that sometimes political sensitivity to a state's sovereignty will have to take priority in some fragile contexts over the need to intervene in that state's policy (OECD, 2008).

However, Mäenpää also acknowledged that there was a need for more state-level cooperation to address wider systemic issues. She stated that while guaranteeing livelihoods was certainly important, there also needed to be changes in the governance and policy environment for these improvements to be sustainable (Marjo Mäenpää, 2016). Finn Church Aid has been involved in building the capacity of governance structures before, such as when it improved the 'peace architecture' in Somalia through the Religious and Traditional Peacemakers Network (FCA, 2016a). However, building state capacity does not yet at least seem to have been a major entry point for Finn Church Aid, which has been more focused on grassroots development and humanitarian intervention. This seems to also suggest that perhaps Finn Church Aid had simply not considered that addressing the wider political system, including political marginalisation and disenfranchisement, corruption and government mismanagement, were plausible avenues of intervention for the NGO. However, with the increasing understanding that state and societal fragility are major impediments to

development, perhaps Finn Church Aid will begin to consider state capacity development and increased cooperation with the structures of fragile states.

Hence, it is possible that the emphasis on livelihoods by the respondents of Finn Church Aid is reflective of the approach that the NGO has chosen in the case of eastern Congo. However, this does not undermine the importance that viable livelihoods have on conflict. As the research literature above states, poverty drives conflict if certain conditions are met. If these conditions, which are political and economic marginalisation, disenfranchisement, vulnerability, negative working conditions, lack of education and other socio-economic opportunities, are met, then poverty can be a major conflict driver. The eastern Congo would definitely be such a context, and so guaranteeing youth a dignified and fulfilling livelihood could actually prevent them from joining an armed group. In this sense, the respondents in Finn Church Aid were aware of the solutions to the challenges in North Kivu, at least according to the author of this thesis. However, it does seem strange that they did not – at least explicitly – acknowledge the importance of grievances, since marginalisation, exclusion and dignified livelihoods are also considered important according to FCA Strategy.

## 8.2.6. The Greed vs. Grievance Debate: Scientific Literature

Related to the discussion about the connections between poverty, marginalisation and violence is the 'greed and grievance' debate. The above discussions have touched upon the notion that maybe youth frustration, the lack of livelihoods and political marginalisation and grievances are all related, and that they are more interlinked than we think. This is related to the debate about whether conflicts are driven by 'greed' or 'grievance,' or whether this dichotomy is altogether too simplistic and unrealistic. As the discussion above seemed to suggest perhaps youths' political violence and their sense of political marginalisation is actually intrinsically linked to the lack of economic marginalisation.

Some scholars have also argued that so-called 'greed' is the main driver of armed groups and civil conflict, which is to say that conflicts are mainly driven by opportunities for economic gain, a view made popular by Collier and Hoeffler. They argue that civil conflicts are primarily explained by greed, as individuals and groups are motivated to rebel to capture resources, such as drugs, diamonds or oil, which would explain both the onset and continuation of civil wars (Collier and Hoeffler, 2000). In this early work they argued that greed was what led civil wars to continue, while political 'grievances,' such as ethnic or religious divisions,

oppression or economic inequality, were used at the onset of civil war to mobilise troops (Collier and Hoeffler, 2000).

There are also problems with this 'greed or grievance' debate, as the whole dichotomy has been criticised and even completely put into question by some scholars. Collier and Hoeffler's argument seems to imply that rebellions motivated by greed are 'criminal,' as the leaders become wealthy through rebellion, and although they mobilise using ideology, the rank-and-file also enjoy the 'spoils of war,' and are motivated by a (meagre) salary. Here the ideology and grievances are used to rationalise war, directed at both the external world (governments, NGOs and media) and inwardly towards the combatants (Sanin, 2004). However, Sanin (2004) states that in reality Collier and Hoeffler misrepresent the lack of opportunities and hardship as 'greed,' when in reality those who rebel are often "disenfranchised and/or poor people" (Sanin, 2004: 278). Therefore, he states that arguing whether conflicts are mostly motivated by 'greed or grievance' is not just over-simplification, but rather it masks the real issues, such as the lack of viable and dignified employment. Hence, it seems that trying to give conflicts a label is actually very much about how you *frame* the conflict and the motivations of armed groups.

David Keen also highlights the political economy context, and criticises and builds on the arguments of Collier and Hoeffler. Like Collier and Hoeffler he acknowledges that conflict is, indeed, not "irrational or… an aberration or interruption in development," but that it is the outcome of various forces at play in that specific political economy (Keen, 2000: 22). Often fighters in armed groups in DRC are not paid, but must live off looting and pillaging – the aim of the warfare is no longer about 'winning,' but it is about maintaining a state of insecurity, so that armed groups can continue to benefit. This gives the armed group freedom to loot households as well as force civilians to pay 'protection money' or 'taxes,' or into forced labour (Keen, 2000). For instance, within the FDLR the officers own the natural resources, while the troops "are told to loot to survive" (Nadin et al, 2014: 24). Other ex-combatants from the FDLR similarly state that they had to "survive on 'looting only'" (IRIN News, 2013). However, Keen argues that besides this economic dimension, there is also the dimension of 'grievance' within this same war, which allows mobilisation of political support for armed groups. He makes the point of Sierra Leone, where the anger directed at the government for its inability to provide education, economic opportunities and for its corrupt governance, is used by armed groups to mobilise support (Keen, 2000).

Hence, like Sanin, Keen argues that conflicts that are seemingly driven by 'greed,' are in fact also driven by contextual factors – political marginalisation, economic inequality and disenfranchisement, which are all forms of structural violence and tied to economics. These factors coalesce to form a context in which rebellion and violence seem like rational methods for 'survival' (Keen, 2012). Actual or perceived economic inequality and political marginalization caused (at least partly) by a lack of livelihood options makes it easier for the armed groups to manipulate and recruit the disenfranchised. In other words, social and economic inequalities (i.e. structural violence) are also key drivers of conflict. For instance, David Keen argues that especially in countries such as the Congo, one cannot see that conflict is only the fault of the rebels, who are keen to capture economic and natural resources due to their 'greed.' Therefore, one needs to also acknowledge that 'grievance,' or inequality among populations and human rights abuses by militaries, also foster conflict between communities and between the state and communities (Keen, 2012). Hence, the concept of grievance can be an added dimension in the relations between conflict and livelihoods, as if some communities are excluded from 'networks of accumulation,' or if they lose livelihood opportunities through conflict, this can foster grievances in the community, and which can then in turn cause part of the group to turn to violence to ensure a livelihood.

Especially young men are prone to manipulation by armed groups, as they can use engendered grievances to mobilise support for their war efforts. As discussed earlier in the thesis, there is social pressure for young men, but also women, to provide for themselves and their families, so that they can transition into adulthood. Combined with political grievances from political marginalisation, the collapse of state structures, high levels of corruption and insecurity, joining an armed group may longer seem irrational, as it is a means of providing for your community. Furthermore, depending on the relations between the armed group and the community, the armed group may be seen as a 'protector' of the community, at least to some degree.

Youth may also join to escape patrimonial and traditional hierarchies, which is also suggested by Bangura (2016) who suggests that from the youth's perspective joining an armed group may provide the youth with social mobility, as they no longer have to listen to their elders, and so may join an armed group in hopes that the hierarchy will be less paternalistic. Therefore, being in an armed group may allow a youth to escape their limbo state, and to gain social standing in (an armed group) society, which is one factor for their continuing success.

The experience of marginalisation, the awareness of inequality and injustice, corruption, bad working conditions and poverty all need a scapegoat, which can be found in the political discourse of armed groups. For instance, the APCLS have "a strong anti-Rwandan and anti-Tutsi rhetoric," and seek to protect Hunde and other 'indigenous Congolese' from any real or perceived Tutsi or Banyamulenge threat (Local Voices, 2013). With this rhetoric they can then mobilise disenfranchised and angry youth to fight for them, as they are convinced that the source of their problems is increasing Tutsi influence, and by ridding Congo of the Tutsi, they could have the education and jobs they need. It is also common for armed groups to promise employment and education opportunities to the youth, if they join their ranks (Nadin et al, 2014). This is also subject to change, with the recent trend being that armed groups are increasingly using disillusion with Kabila's refusal to step down from power to gather support, instead of ethnic grievances (Stearns and Vogel, 2015).

This way of framing the greed and grievance debate does away with seeing it as a dichotomy, and rather fuses them into a more comprehensive view of the conflict. This also lets us see the interviewees' emphases on the connection between the local conflict and livelihood opportunities in a new light. A vulnerable youth without a livelihood is probably more likely to be marginalised from society, and to develop grievances towards society and the state. Having a livelihood does not solve the problem of government mismanagement and corruption, political marginalisation and security. However, through their livelihood they the youth may gain a sense of belonging and acceptance within their own society, as they can gain financial independence facilitating their transition into adulthood. The youth who join armed groups tend to be the disenfranchised and the vulnerable, so even if income inequality and poverty continue to exist on a broader scale, on an individual level having a fulfilling livelihood will decrease their vulnerability, and may help them feel less marginalised. Hence, having a dignified and fulfilling livelihood makes you feel you are part of society and may give you less cause for 'grievance,' making you less vulnerable to manipulation by armed groups. Furthermore, Marjo Mäenpää also acknowledged the need for more state-level cooperation to build the resilience of broader society, which seems to imply democratisation and better governance. This demonstrates that there is acknowledgement of the political issues affecting youths' lives, but yet there were few interventions addressing marginalisation in North Kivu.

### 8.2.7. Concept of 'support network': The Data

In regards to youth vulnerability and armed groups, one interesting comment from a respondent in relation to this was that an armed group can act as "a support network," for youth and children who may be extremely vulnerable and have nobody to depend on, such as orphans (Marjo Mäenpää, 2016). These vulnerable individuals have very few other forms of capital, such as finances, physical assets (e.g. a house, a farm, tools) or human capital (education and skills). In other words, they have few livelihood strategies available to them (Schafer, 2002). In a sense, an armed group thus offers a form of capital to the vulnerable individual, which could be conceptualised as *social capital*. An armed group is a microcosm where you gain new social relations, which you can use to earn a livelihood, albeit through rather dubious means. This is nothing revolutionary as social networks and personal contacts are already used in various ways to secure a livelihood, such as to find employment, to gain access into a market or to a loan (Banks, 2016). Framing an armed group a provider of social capital for a member is also echoed by an academic who stated that joining a violent organisation may enable the development of social networks. This social network could later be used, as these "individual contacts may translate into mutual networks that develop intergenerational, patrimonial features" (272: Eguavoen, 2010). One can also develop this and argue that a fighter can make use of his association with the armed group (social capital) to command resources through looting, for instance. In conclusion, it seems that an armed group works like any organisation, and can act as a form of social capital for vulnerable individuals, who may possess few other forms of capital.

## 8.2.8. The Problem Forced Recruitment or Abduction into Armed Groups: Scientific Literature

Although the theme of forced abduction into armed groups did not surface during the interviews, it deserves a mention. Abduction is somewhat problematic for the mainstream logic held by development practitioners and policy-makers – even if there is a drop in voluntary recruits what if armed groups simply kidnap all their new recruits and force them to fight. Especially young children are abducted by armed groups – for instance, 195 children were reported abducted in the Congo in 2016 to the UN. At the same time it appears that most children are not 'abductees' per se. According to the same report there were also 488 reported cases of child recruitment, with 89% of that taking place in North Kivu, whilst (United Nations, General Assembly, 2016). Therefore, it seems that some children are recruited 'voluntarily,' but since they are children there may be manipulation as threats of violence involved, and so it is possible that the line between abduction and recruitment can be blurry.

Another issue to be noted is that, although children are often abducted, after demobilisation they may rejoin armed groups due to economic hardship or stigmatisation they face from their community for being ex-combatants. For instance, 16 year-old Maurice stated that "the economic hardships the first time I was reunited with my family were so hard that I decided to go back to fighting" (Kakala, 2013). Justin Akili who was part of the team who designed Congo's 2003 DDR programme also stated that children often rejoin armed groups, due to "economic hardship and the persistence of the militia" (Kakala, 2013). Therefore, it seems that although abductions do definitely occur in the Congo, and that the line between abduction and recruitment is difficult to draw, especially in the case of children, livelihoods and poverty are a factor for children joining as well.

## 8.3. Displacement, Conflict and Livelihoods

In the context of eastern Congo and the Kivus displacement is central in understanding the conflict. Although there is also migration from rural areas to urban areas as people migrate for work, this thesis will focus on forced displacement within the Kivu conflict. Not only does displacement dispossess the individual or family, but it also has economic repercussions for host communities, and it tends to have a destabilising effect on the region (Justino, 2011).

### 8.3.1. The Effects of Being Displaced for Households and Communities: Scientific Literature

Displacement has very noticeable effects on households' economic status and their livelihoods. It also tends to exacerbate "existing vulnerabilities and create new forms," meaning that groups that are already socially or economically marginalised tend to become even more vulnerable when displaced (Jacobsen, 2002: 98). Displacement also means an increased risk, as displaced households and communities are more prone to recruitment by armed groups, due to loss of livelihoods (Jacobsen, 2002). Therefore, forced displacement tends to have negative effects on livelihoods and makes you more vulnerable, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, and acts as a conflict driver.

According to research done by Nathan Fiala on refugees and IDPs in Uganda, the immediate result of displacement for households is a fall in consumption and a loss of assets (also known as capital). However, over time the households slowly tended to recover their consumption levels and also slowly recovered their asset bases, although they did not reach previous levels before displacement (Fiala, 2015). However, it seemed that according to Fiala's

(2015) research the richer displaced population groups were able to recuperate faster than the poorer groups. Furthermore, the poorest groups did not recover, as they had the tendency to be locked into a poverty trap, from which they could not escape, and so remained a very vulnerable part of the population (Fiala, 2015). It was unclear what had caused the partial recovery, but it may have been due to education (human capital), which enabled the accumulation of other forms of capital, or it may also have been due to humanitarian assistance (Fiala, 2015).

Similar findings have been concluded elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to research on Liberian refugees in Ghana, many of the refugees had a low level of education and lacked employable skills. In other words, they did not possess much human capital. Often refugees also lack other assets, such as physical or financial capital, as they may not have been able to take their belongings with them as well (Teye and Yebleh, 2014). Therefore, they do not have many assets with which to develop their livelihoods, and so tended to be poor relative to other population groups, which led them to be economically and socially marginalised.

**8.3.2. The Effects of Being Displaced for Households and Communities: The Data**

That displacement can have a negative impact on livelihoods seems to be the implied by Finn Church Aid's responses to displaced groups, and the way that projects are designed to mitigate the effects of displacement. For instance, 11502 focused on supporting IDP and returnee communities. The projects also explicitly acknowledged this phenomenon at times, such as when it is stated in the narrative report of 11502 that frequent population movements in the area has decreased the expected harvests to some extent (11502, 2015).

According to the interviews, displacement was seen to be especially harmful for farmers, which is implied in the above statement, and was acknowledged by both Frederic Fessard and Marjo Mäenpää. This was because in an insecure environment armed groups could drive away farmers and seize their crop before harvest, leaving the farmers with no means of supporting themselves. Fessard noted that "fighting was usually occurring before harvesting season. So the people were leaving the fields and when they came back the rebels had harvested everything." (Fessard, 2016). One of the secondary interviewees also stated that "agriculture is a gamble," and that the risk was *one* of the reasons why some were moving from rural areas to more urban areas (Researcher Based in Goma, 2016). Furthermore, Mäenpää stated that livelihoods and education are disrupted when families must leave their homes (Mäenpää, 2016). According to Fessard one of FCA's aims was to mitigate some of the risk of agricultural

production by providing tools and seeds to vulnerable communities, so that not all the risk fell on the community (Fessard, 2016).

### 8.3.3. Displacement causing vulnerability: Data

Displaced groups are also associated with vulnerability according to the data, as the respondents acknowledged how displacement disrupts livelihoods, and the projects tended to focus on displaced groups due to their vulnerability. As explained above, displacement causes the displaced to become more vulnerable, as they lose assets and livelihoods, and must relocate to build new lives. Vulnerability is a reoccurring concept in this research, as many types of vulnerability are present which these livelihood programmes are trying to address. This thesis refers to both the vulnerability of livelihoods – when the household's asset base is narrow – as well as to vulnerability in a broader sense, such as the vulnerability that women possess towards sexual and gender-based violence.

### 8.3.4. The Coping Mechanisms of Refugees and IDPs: Scientific Literature

Because refugees and IDPs are often economically and socially marginalised or they may not have a skillset which is appropriate for their new surroundings, the livelihood strategies available to them are often quite limited. Furthermore, their livelihood strategies may often also be limited because they may possess few other assets. However, they often make use of their social networks (i.e. social capital), such as family ties, and so can command resources through social networks in various ways (Teye and Yebleh, 2014). Nevertheless, not all are able to do this, and some displaced households and individuals may have to resort to maladaptive coping techniques, such as crime or prostitution (Devictor, 2016). This has also been confirmed in research on IDP livelihoods in Darfur, Sudan. There it was found that refugees and IDPs need to resort to maladaptive livelihood options, as they lack few other opportunities. The livelihood strategies that are available to them might be, for instance, environmentally unsustainable or they might be dependent upon humanitarian aid provided by the international community (Young and Jacobsen, 2013).

### 8.3.5. The Effect of the Arrival of Displaced Persons on Host Communities: Scientific Literature

Finally, it is central to consider the effect that the arrival of refugees and IDPs can have on a host community, as this will affect the relations between the hosts and the displaced, which may also have an effect on the conflict. The arrival of a large group of displaced people is

"essentially a demographic shock, which disrupts pre-existing equilibria and creates mismatches in supply and demand markets" (Devictor, 2016: xv). Although the local economy will eventually return to an equilibrium, this process can be quite difficult, and the resulting equilibrium may not necessarily be conducive to poverty reduction or development of the host community. Hence, the arrival of displaced persons can cause tensions between the host community and the displaced. Even if the refugees or IDPs are not the source of many of the problems, which the host community is facing, the displaced people do provide a convenient scapegoat and they may be the causal factor in the deterioration of the local economy, at least in the minds of the host community (Devictor, 2016).

The host community's economy and society can be affected by the influx of displaced persons, and the effects can be unevenly distributed throughout the host community. The arrival of refugees and IDPs – and the humanitarian workers that usually accompany them – can distort the market by increasing the price of housing and pushing up rents (Helen and Young, 2013). Although this can have economic benefits to certain members of society (e.g. landlords and landowners), this has negative effects for those who do not own land or property, which can cause strain in communal relations. The arrival of IDPs may also lead to increased demand for goods and services and create employment. Therefore, the "employers and people whose skills complement those of the forcibly displaced tend to gain; but the people who have a similar skillset to the forcibly displaced may lose out" (Devictor, 2016: xvi). Furthermore, land tenure and the sharing of natural resources can also constitute a problem and create divisions between the host community and displaced groups (Young and Jacobsen, 2013).

Therefore, it seems the effects *tend* to be positive for wealthier groups and negative for more vulnerable groups, as property owners gain as do those who own businesses, but due to increase in labour force, those with few skills and other assets are forced into fiercer competition for jobs. Although this is somewhat of a simplification, and effects of an arrival of a large number of displaced persons can be various, although it seems that the effects tend to be positive for poorer households in the host community, while the effects can be positive for the richer households.

### 8.3.6. Tensions Between Host and IDP Communities: The Data

The data also demonstrated how there could be tensions between host and displaced communities. According to Marjo Mäenpää the arrival of large numbers of IDPs and refugees can cause tensions between the displaced populations and host communities, due to

competition for livelihoods and resources. However, she stated that she was surprised how peaceful communities were in the projects she was responsible for, and that there did not seem to be major tensions between the host communities and displaced groups (Mäenpää, 2016). This may have been due to the fact that often the IDPs and refugees lived within the host families and households, and not in a separate camp, so this may have prevented group boundaries solidifying and tensions simmering. This seems to suggest that development policy should further support such arrangements, as this could potentially be an effective way of preventing conflicts from escalating on the local level. However, she acknowledged that the possibility of tensions between groups forming, in such environments where resources are scarce, do exist.

## 8.4. Livelihood Development, Conflict-Sensitivity and Community Resilience

Finn Church Aid's response to the poverty and insecurity in eastern Congo has been wide ranging, but the three projects chosen for analysis in this research focus on the theme of livelihood development. Although it is generally accepted that livelihoods and conflict are interlinked, some researchers argue that there is not enough evidence to prove positive correlation between peace and livelihoods, and some argue that in certain contexts the correlation may even be negative. Nevertheless, livelihood security and inclusive economic growth are not only seen to improve people's economic well-being, but it is generally accepted that they are conducive to peace (Mallett and Slater, 2012). For instance, Jon Barnett has theorised 'peace as freedom,' where one of the dimensions of peace is the "equitable distribution of economic freedoms" (Barnett, 2008: 75). Also, according to the WDR 2011 "the average cost of civil war is equivalent to 30 years of gross domestic product growth" (International Alert, 2015: 4). According to Edward Miguel "the correlation between civil conflict and low income levels and negative income shocks is clear, but the direction of the causality remains contested" (Miguel, 2011). Other scholars, such as David Cortright and Paul Collier also attest to the strong links between peace and the economy, although the exact nature of the relationship is still yet to be conclusively proven (Cortright, 2016).

Hence, strong correlation between economic development and peace have been found, although the exact causation is still being debated. However, many international actors have based their policy on the idea that peace and development are mutually supporting, and it can

be seen in the discourse of the World Bank, the UN and multiple NGOs, such as Finn Church Aid.

Finn Church Aid bases its strategy upon three themes, which are viewed to be mutually supporting, as well as both a means and ends of development and humanitarian assistance. These themes are the Right to Peace (R2P), Right to Livelihood (R2L) and Right to Quality Education (R2QE) (FCA, 2016b). These three themes are considered to have considerable synergies according to Finn Church Aid's strategy, and that on a more general level development in one theme should strengthen development in the others (FCA, 2016b). Hence, livelihood development is a one of the three major focuses of Finn Church Aid, and it can also be legitimately considered a part of the other two themes R2P and R2QE.

However, although a link between conflict and poverty has been established, there still needs to be *more* research, and in *some contexts* correlation between the two has even been negative. So, the strength of the correlation between peace and economic and livelihood development is dependent upon context (Berman et al. 2011). At the moment it seems that "high-quality evidence" linking "livelihood and economic recovery" programmes to peacebuilding are scarce, and that most evaluations of such programmes are process or output-focused (32: Mallett and Slater, 2012). Furthermore, there also needs to be more research into the types of livelihood development interventions that work, as there has been insufficient research into how local livelihoods are affected in the long-term by development interventions (Mallett and Slater, 2012).

### 8.4.1. Vulnerability: Scientific Literature

Vulnerability is an important category in this research, as Finn Church Aid seeks to support vulnerable beneficiaries, and so is referred to in the project documents, as well as seemingly *implicitly* recognised by the interviewees. Vulnerability– as it is defined in this research – is inextricably related to livelihood, and it encompasses different aspects of poverty. McIlwane and Moser (2003) have a helpful description of the relevancy of vulnerability to livelihoods:

*"The nature of vulnerability lies in how the poor develop strategies to cope with shocks through diversifying and mobilising their asset base, capturing how 'people move in and out of poverty…' The vulnerable are therefore those with few assets to prevent hardship in the long term. Indeed, they may be relatively well off in income terms, yet vulnerable in other ways."* (McIlwane and Moser, 2003: 115)

Therefore, it seems that vulnerability can be more than just being poor, as if you do not have the right types of assets to endure in the long-term, then you may also be considered vulnerable. So, it is not just income which determines vulnerability, but the combination of the household's assets, and whether those assets can allow the household to sustain during a shock or stress.

It should also be noted that households may be vulnerable in certain political climates if they belong to a religious, ethnic or other group, which may be undergoing persecution in that space and time. In the context of conflict or chronic political instability vulnerability "is closely related to powerlessness (i.e. political and economic processes of neglect, exclusion or exploitation) (Le Billon 2000), and to the particular livelihood approach or strategies they pursue." Thus, there is an interaction between "local livelihoods and people's coping or survival strategies" and the surrounding political economy, which may also be in flux (Schafer, 2002: 30). Therefore, whether a household is vulnerable or not also depends on social and politico-economic developments taking place at the time, which may increase or decrease their vulnerability, depending on the identity categories they are a part of or the assets they possess.

If a household is able to cope, then it is not considered vulnerable. However, if they cannot "cope without damaging loss" – whereby loss refers to "becoming or being physically weaker, economically impoverished, socially dependent, humiliated or psychologically harmed" – then are to be considered vulnerable (Obrist et al. 2010: 326). Psychological harm can also cause vulnerability, as it may impede the individual's ability to earn a living, as they may lack the self-confidence to do so, or they may face stigmatisation from the community. For instance, in the World Bank's report on displacement, they give the example of the trauma that many displaced people may suffer, and the consequent difficulty that this may have on them finding employment or becoming an entrepreneur (Devictor, 2016).

### 8.4.2. The Multifaceted Nature of Vulnerability and its Relation to Conflict: The Data

Conflict can cause livelihood vulnerability in a number of ways. Through conflict-induced sexual abuse you may contract HIV, be stigmatised and find it difficult to manage a livelihood. Furthermore, certain livelihoods and assets are vulnerable during times of conflict, such as farmers and their crops during this specific conflict in the Kivus. These examples are at least indirectly present in the data. There is mention of single-parent households, displaced families, ex-combatants and individuals who have HIV/AIDs. Furthermore, the data displays how farmers are more vulnerable to the conflict, as their harvest may be seized by armed groups – vulnerability can also be determined by the political economy.

Furthermore, it seems vulnerability can be 'intersectional' in a sense. A young IDP who has contracted AIDs is in a more vulnerable position, than a young IDP. Furthermore, a young IDP with AIDs is vulnerable in a different sense than a young orphan IDP. Although they are both vulnerable, they face specific challenges – one faces stigmatisation from the community, while the other may have trauma from having lost their parents and may have to provide for themselves.

Removing vulnerability is also one of Finn Church Aid's central aims in these development interventions. In 11502 psychosocial support, agricultural tools, training and financial support were offered to different types of vulnerable groups, such as SGBV victims, people with HIV/AIDs and IDPs (11521, 2015). In 11521 support was provided to vulnerable IDPs and host community residents (11521, 2015). In 10603 youth were admitted to the education programme on the basis that they fulfilled the criteria of being vulnerable (10603, 2015). This is no surprise considering that Finn Church Aid's *2016 Annual Report* also stated that livelihood development programmes would focus on vulnerable populations, such as women and youth (FCA, 2015a). However, interviewees made no reference to the *term* vulnerability although its different manifestations were referred to, such as orphans and displaced groups. This may have also been due to the fact that the interviewer (who is also the author of this thesis) did not present any questions related to vulnerability, but this should be nevertheless noted.

Furthermore, it seems that focusing on high-risk groups (i.e. young men) would create the best returns on lowering conflict, while livelihood development interventions focusing on women seem to have the largest effects in terms of improved incomes and other indicators (Blattman and Ralston, 2015). Hence, Finn Church Aid's focus in livelihood development on vulnerable populations, especially women and youth, seems to make sense. Focusing on vulnerable groups also should mean higher 'returns' on livelihood investments, as these households and individuals should benefit the most from capital and training. This also has the benefit of poverty alleviation, and supports vulnerable populations to avoid maladaptive livelihoods, which could be unsustainable as well as harmful to themselves or society. There could, however, be more focus on men as well, as men are more likely to participate in political violence. *However*, in the context of North Kivu, women are also present in armed groups, and therefore targeting both men and women, as FCA does, seems appropriate.

### 8.4.3. Vulnerability as Connecting Concept between Conflict and Livelihoods?

Vulnerability seems to be that connecting concept between conflict and livelihoods, and also between conflict and youth livelihoods. For instance, if a boy's arm is mutilated by an armed group, then as a handicapped individual he can be said to be vulnerable. This is not to take his agency from him in any way, but refers to the fact that he may face some specific challenges in regard to earning a living for himself, that a boy with both arms would not. Although this concept of vulnerability is not necessary to understand why he faces these challenges, but it is useful as we can group different conflict-induced states (amputation, displacement, being an orphan, or having HIV or violence-induced trauma) under the same concept – vulnerability. This is because "the vulnerable are those that have few assets to prevent hardship in the long-run," and refers to their ability to "develop strategies to cope with shocks through diversifying and mobilising their asset base" (332: Ratner, 2015). An SGBV victim may suffer from depression and a lack of self-confidence, which can be conceptualised as 'damaging loss,' and thus they are regarded as being vulnerable. This can also mean a lack in human capital, and may manifest in difficulty acquiring a livelihood. In conclusion, vulnerability is quite a useful concept connecting livelihoods and conflict, as it contains a broad spectrum of conflict-induced debilitations.

### 8.4.4. Social Resilience: Scientific Literature

What is also important to consider and understand is the mirror image of vulnerability – resilience (also known as 'social resilience' so as not to confuse it with psychological resilience). This use of the term resilience can be defined as:

*"The capacity of socio-ecological systems to recover from shocks and stresses while retaining key functions…Critically the social and ecological components of the system are seen as parts of the whole,"* e.g. capacity of fisherman to provide for themselves and community depends on the *"status and productivity of the [natural] resource itself, as well as the social institutions that govern who can access the resources" and how they are distributed*" (Ratner, 2015: 332)

This definition also refers to ecological resilience, which is also relevant, as rural livelihoods are often dependent on the ecology, and so hence, the importance of *environmentally sustainable* livelihoods.

Thus, when we are reducing vulnerability to shocks and stresses through livelihood development, we are actually *building resilience*. As, the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework can be used to assess what capitals or vulnerabilities individuals and households have, the framework can also be used to assess what forms of social resilience households possess. To

assess resilience, we must not only look at "the capacity of actors to access capitals in order to… adjust to adverse conditions (i.e. reactive capacity)," but also at their capacity to "*search for and create options (i.e. proactive capacity), and thus develop increased competence (i.e. positive outcomes) in dealing with threats*" (Obrist et al. 2010: 327). Therefore, besides the household's reactive capacity to adjust to the environment, we should also assess their capacity to proactively develop their own resilience. In this sense, "resilience-building is a combination of individual and social learning to strengthen competencies in dealing with threats" (Obrist et al. 2010: 327). The household's adaptation to the shock or stress occurs after the event, while resilience building implies the strengthening of resilience in preparation of (before) the shock or stress factor occurs (Obrist et al. 2010). Therefore, resilience-building not only involves increasing the household's capacity to react to shocks and stresses, but it also involves building their capacity to learn and develop themselves.

There are many ways of building resilience, but one central aim is to diversify livelihoods. This helps households and communities to protect themselves against risk, and avoids supporting maladaptive livelihood strategies. "Rather than providing a uniform package, such as seeds, tools, or food, the idea is to provide a 'basket of choices' for more diverse, complex and risk-prone livelihoods" (Schafer, 2002: 26). This is confirmed by Blattman and Ralston (2015) who state that poor households in developing countries have a variety of sources of income, not a 'job,' as it helps to mitigate risk and seasonal work, and because incomes are low. Households may also diversify into other livelihoods due to push factors, such as poverty, or pull factors, such as new emerging forms of livelihood (Banchirigah and Hilson, 2009). Therefore, when there is a drought, if a household is not solely dependent on agriculture, then they have a better chance of not falling back into poverty, or suffering 'damaging loss,' if they practice livelihoods which are alternative to farming.

### 8.4.5. Social Resilience: The Data

Finn Church Aid seeks to improve communities' resilience in a number of ways, especially by supporting vulnerable populations, by providing physical assets (e.g. tools, seeds, chickens) and human capital (training), so as to strengthen livelihoods. This occurred in projects 11502 and 11521, although 10603 could be said to increase resilience by providing vulnerable youth with the skills to be able to adapt to their changing circumstances (11502, 2015); (11521, 2015) and (10603, 2015). However, although it was not explicitly

acknowledged by Finn Church Aid, farming associations – which feature in two of the projects – have also been found effective means of increasing rural communities' resilience.

Both 11502 and 11521 included setting up farming cooperatives or farming associations, which would then receive training, sell their produce together and even to promote gender equality and empower women (11502, 2015) and (11521, 2015). Fessard also acknowledged the potential for farming cooperatives to benefit from economies of scale, promoting economic growth in the longer term (Fessard, 2016). Cooperatives can provide benefits of economies of scale, as well as support livelihood diversification, which would also promote resilience (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009). The resilient nature of rural cooperatives in Malawi have also been explored by Alexander Borda-Rodriguez and Sara Vicari (2013), and they could assist in accessing external markets, and that they were reflective in their actions and capable of responding to external crises through internal dialogue and cooperation. Hence, these farming cooperatives also assisted in strengthening community resilience.

However, it seems that some of the potential for social cooperatives to increase community resilience through social safety nets, for instance, was not acknowledged by the project documents nor respondents. The UN General Secretary Ban-Ki Moon said that social cooperatives could strengthen social resilience, as they can provide a social safety net (UN News, 2013). Therefore, rural cooperatives seem to have much potential in increasing resilience of rural communities, which Finn Church Aid could also ponder researching into.

Resilience-building also means to develop communities' proactive capacity to deal with threats to their livelihoods, but besides of the provision of agricultural training (or training for other livelihoods in 10603), there does not seem to be other ways that communities' proactive capacity to adapt is improved. The importance of improving the adaptive capacity of communities is also underlined by Ratner (2015), who states a solution could be community-based resource management systems, which "enable self-organisation, learning and adaptation" (333: Ratner, 2015).

There has recently been research taking place in refugee communities to see how they can be innovative, and proactively develop their own livelihoods. One of the main research networks in this field has been the Humanitarian Innovation Project, who have undertaking research in refugee camps to find out how 'bottom-up innovation' takes place. Poor and vulnerable people need to be extremely resourceful and innovative, when searching for solutions to their everyday problems, and this fact is often over-looked by the humanitarian

sector, which this research project wants to begin changing (Betts, Bloom and Weaver, 2015). There also needs to be better understanding of the barriers and constraints on bottom-up innovation from occurring, and on how to overcome them. For instance, in Uganda a young person had started a computer game shop and another Rwandan refugee a cement plant. There needs to be better understanding of the specific challenges faced in these environments, as well as the opportunities for development, and local solutions need to be supported (Betts, Bloom and Weaver, 2015).

### 8.4.6. Types of Livelihood Development Interventions: Scientific Literature

There is a wide range of livelihood development interventions, which can be applied in conflict situations. Traditionally, international humanitarian interventions in conflicts have been in the form of food assistance. However, increasingly other programme choices are being made, as livelihood support is being used to complement humanitarian responses during conflict, as are other more 'development-oriented' approaches (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009). Richard Mallett and Rachel Slater (2012) separate livelihood development in conflict settings into three separate types of interventions: (1) livelihood provision (2) livelihood protection and (3) livelihood promotion. Livelihood provision is when actors directly meet the basic needs of beneficiaries and contribute to their safety, such as through the provision of food aid, sanitation or water. Livelihood protection involves protecting the assets of beneficiaries and preventing negative outcomes in livelihoods. And finally, livelihood promotion is the improvement of livelihood strategies, and includes "improving strategies, creating assets, improving access to markets and supporting appropriate institutions and policies" (Mallett and Slater, 2012: 34). Some specific actions can be used for more than one type of interventions. For instance, the distribution of vouchers can be used as livelihood provision, livelihood protection and even livelihood promotion, as vouchers can be used to buy food, recover assets or to rebuild trust in local markets.

Evaluations of the actual impacts of livelihood interventions are still rare, and so there are not many policy recommendations for appropriate responses in different scenarios. However, there are some takeaways, although the appropriate livelihood interventions tend to be highly dependent on conflict context, and must be tailored to local political economy or conflict dynamics. Nevertheless, Below are some guidelines on applying livelihood development interventions to different contexts.

The first type, *livelihood provision,* is mostly used in the contexts of humanitarian emergencies (Mallett and Slater, 2012). It includes food aid, vouchers, cash transfers and also reducing the expenditure of beneficiaries (Jaspar and Maxwell, 2009). Food aid primarily meets basic needs by preventing hunger, but food can also be sold to acquire other assets (Mallett and Slater, 2012). However, in settings where food is available, then cash can be more appropriate (Jaspar and Maxwell, 2009). Cash transfers are a social protection mechanism, which can promote livelihood recovery in some contexts, as it can be used to meet basic needs or to even recover lost assets (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Vouchers are sometimes preferred to cash, as they are less likely to be looted by armed groups, and so vouchers "reduce the risk of diversion." For this reason vouchers are used in cases of acute conflict as well as with displaced groups, who may fear further displacement due to conflict. (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009: 10). Finally, the subsidisation or the reduction of beneficiaries' expenditures can be considered a form of livelihood provision (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009).

As explained above *livelihood protection* aims to protect the assets of the beneficiaries and prevent negative livelihood outcomes. To be more specific, it is meant to assist livelihood recovery, increase resilience, and guarantee that accrued assets are not depleted by conflict or environmental factors. It has proven to be especially useful in rural areas and especially in agricultural livelihoods (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Measures could include livelihood diversification, the protection of agricultural assets and livestock through services, the provision of agricultural inputs, and supporting vulnerable populations to stabilise regions. Although livelihood protection primarily aims to directly support beneficiaries, there may also be other positive externalities, such as stabilisation of conflict by decreasing migration and decreased armed group recruitment (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009).

According to research by Mallett and Slater (2012) although many NGOs provide seeds and agricultural inputs, there is little evidence supporting their utility, as needs assessments were rarely carried out (although this is now increasingly becoming a requirement). For instance, in the context of the Congo, falls in agricultural productivity has tended to be due to the lack of access to land and "the disappearance of agronomists to assist local farmers," rather than a lack of other assets (Mallett and Slater, 2012: 40). This is especially true for displaced populations who may not have any claims to land access in the area where they have been relocated. However, at least up until 2012 few NGOs have focused on land issues or other structural problems related to the access of land (Mallett and Slater, 2012). In the future NGOs

will need to pay more "attention to how local systems of agricultural production and land distribution change in conflict situations" (Mallett and Slater, 2012: 40).

Finally, distributing agricultural inputs may even have long-term negative effects, as it may increase reliance on these external inputs, which can affect and distort local markets. Therefore, instead of distributing agricultural assets, vouchers and fairs have been organised to rebuild faith in markets and exchange, which have often been eroded during conflict. The strengthening of markets falls under livelihood promotion, which shall be discussed below. Furthermore, in places like the Congo, where looting still occurs on households and storage units, vouchers can be a way of preventing the negative effects of looting and insecurity (Mallett and Slater, 2012).

Finally, the third type of livelihood intervention is that of *livelihood promotion*. Livelihood promotion aims to improve livelihoods on a more fundamental level, and aims to "improve assets, strategies and supports the strengthening of policies, institutions and processes" (Mallett and Slater, 2012) (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009: 9). It could include the generation of new assets (e.g. training), supporting market access and services, strengthening governance and civil society, increasing the access to information and policy advocacy (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009). It also includes value chain development and 'making markets work for the poor' (M4P), which both exemplify how some livelihood promotion interventions "are premised on the primacy of the market," which reflects the current favourable view that development parlance has of the private sector (Mallett and Slater, 2012: 47). Advocating for better land policy as outlined above would also be a form of livelihood promotion.

Livelihood promotion is also "geared towards the rural and agricultural" according to Mallet and Slater, and there are a number of examples of how livelihood promotion be applied to rural contexts (Mallett and Slater 2012: 47). In the research of Jaspars and Maxwell (2009) markets were affected by conflict in all of their case studies, and even though they still functioned and alternative markets developed. However, at least up until 2009 international actors rarely addressed problems of "restrictions on the movement of goods, imposition of informal taxes and increased transaction costs." (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009: 15). However, Oxfam's interventions in the Congo have increased market access in a number of ways. This included the creation of cooperatives "to store and trade food and facilitate transport to markets through the creation of village groups, helping reduce taxes that have to be paid" (Mallett and Slater, 2012: 45). These cooperatives of 'village groups' can also support livelihood

diversification and support the development of methods for collective farming (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009).

The support of traditional governance mechanisms has occurred to much less degree, at least for the purposes of livelihood development. For instance, in Darfur there are traditional governance institutions for natural resource management and conflict resolution, but these are insufficiently understood and no interventions have been implemented to strengthen them. Furthermore, informal communal *chambres de paix* exist to solve local land disputes, but they have also received insufficient support from the international actors (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009).

Similarly, although some NGOs have attempted to influence policy of national and local authorities, there seems to be an insufficient amount of organisations doing so. Some agencies are involved in land disputes advocating for land access for IDPs and refugees, but solving the structural issues behind land access is complex and it is difficult, as it is a politically sensitive issue. Policy advocacy should also be targeted at the cost of sending and receiving remittances, as often households in conflict areas can be dependent on money sent to them by friends and relatives. Finally, agencies could try to advocate for local or national authorities to cover the cost of lost assets due to conflict, so that not all of the risk fall upon the households (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009).

**8.4.7. Finn Church Aid's Livelihood Development: The Data**

Finn Church Aid projects seem to practice a mix of livelihood provision, protection and promotion. The projects in particular seem to focus on physical assets, such as seeds, agricultural tools; some financial assets with vouchers and cash grants; as well as human assets in the form of training and education. Finn Church Aid's approach seems to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in the communities, as the most basic capitals and assets of vulnerable host and IDP communities are developed. Skills training in agronomy and the provision of agricultural inputs seems to be the most prevalent form of support, as both occur in projects 11502 and 11521 (11502, 2015) and (11521, 2015). These seem to mostly fall under livelihood protection and livelihood provision. As mentioned above the context of the eastern Congo has suffered from a disappearance of agronomists, and so developing human capital through skills training seems appropriate. Furthermore, since displacement is a common problem in North Kivu, with most civilians undergoing forced displacement at least once in their lifetime, providing basic assets seems to be quite necessary. However, there are some

potential problems with the livelihood development support that Finn Church Aid provides, which are explained below.

Now with more understanding about the different aspects of livelihood development, we can look at how well Finn Church Aid seems to be improving resilience of the communities. Both livelihood protection and livelihood promotion both have forms of intervention, which could improve *resilience*. Livelihood protection aims to protect the assets of the beneficiaries and prevent negative livelihood outcomes, and can be used to increase resilience, e.g. through diversification, as well as environmental sustainability (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Finn Church Aid supports youths to diversify their livelihoods mainly through the youth education 10603 project, but it also supports diversification through the provision of livestock and training in the two other livelihood development projects (10603, 2015).

The third type of livelihood development – livelihood promotion – also can increase resilience. It aims to improve livelihoods on a more fundamental level, and aims to "improve assets, strategies and supports the strengthening of policies, institutions and processes" (Mallett and Slater, 2012) (9: Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009). Hence, because it seeks to improve capitals as well as livelihood strategies (and the political and contextual environment conducive to these), it also can increase resilience. Here Finn Church Aid tried to strengthen markets through the distribution of cash vouchers (11521, 2015).

### 8.4.8. Distribution of Seeds and Agricultural Tools vs. Land Advocacy: The Data

As demonstrated above the distribution of seeds and agricultural tools can be problematic, and even undesirable in contexts like eastern Congo. Why did the Finn Church Aid projects not get involved in land rights, advocacy or in disputes over land instead? As mentioned in the Background section of this thesis, land is a central issue in eastern Congo, due to both overpopulation and the regulation of land ownership. One of the secondary interviewees also confirmed the importance of land in the Congolese context, as it is not only the basis of your livelihood, but "also part of your identity" (Researcher based in Goma, 2016). Therefore, it seems that in this context it would be important for NGOs to advocate for better land management policy, conflict resolution as well as land rights for marginalised groups. Furthermore, Mallett and Slater actually gave the specific example of the Democratic Republic of Congo, as a place where the lack of seeds and tools are not usually a problem, but where the problem was one of land access and "the disappearance of agronomists to assist local farmers" (40: Mallett and Slater, 2012). Especially IDPs suffered from a lack of land access. There even

seems to be evidence of the necessity of such approaches for these specific projects, as in project proposal 11521 families were actually denied access by a landowner (11521, 2014).

Improvements in natural resource governance and land rights would also create more resilient livelihoods and lower the risk of conflict, according to Ratner (2015). To ensure the resilience of livelihoods there also needs to be equitable governance structures and "the rights of the rural poor and marginalised" need to be guaranteed and reinforced (332: Ratner, 2015). Both governance structures and the rights of the rural poor need improvement in fragile contexts, such as the eastern Congo. Improving governance should increase the participation and trust between the citizens and authorities, improve institutions for more democratic decision-making and increase the accountability of authorities to its citizens (Ratner, 2015). Reinforcing the rights of the rural poor should enable the access to resources equitably, as well as improve the access they have to information concerning development plans, access to decision-making processes and to justice systems (Ratner, 2015). For instance, there could be capacity-building interventions directed at local-level dispute mechanisms, which have also been used to solve disputes over land, but which experienced a decreasing role in recent years.

Nevertheless, according to Fessard, Finn Church Aid's strategy along with the others in the humanitarian cluster – where humanitarian action is coordinated – was to provide rural communities the incentive to farm, rather than solve long-term land conflicts (Fessard, 2016). The idea was that you provide agricultural inputs, seeds, and training and assist farmers to set up cooperatives for economies of scale. This meant that not all the risk was taken by the farmers, but that it was shared with the NGOs. This meant that regardless of the conflict and the bad security situation, there was some incentive for vulnerable communities to engage in farming. This strategy seems more of an approach looking to solve short-term humanitarian goals, rather than long-term structural problems, such as land governance. This seems to indicate that long-term structural issues were not a challenge that Finn Church Aid was willing to tackle in this context, and that it is possible that such issues are to be covered by other organisations.

Furthermore, the Norwegian Refugee Council is already involved in land rights advocacy in eastern Congo, and it could be that land advocacy is the focus of one NGO, so as to better focus resources and not to double efforts (NRC, 2018). Coordination between NGOs and other humanitarian actors occurs through a food security cluster mechanism, and so the NGOs are aware of their own role in the comprehensive humanitarian approach towards the

region (FCA, 2016a). Each NGO has its own 'value added' and it would not make sense to have multiple organisations doing the same exact projects in the region, as that would 'saturate the market' in a sense.

Ratner (2015) also does state that cooperation with other organisations, although challenging, is extremely important. This is because when working with livelihoods, governance and rights advocacy, there are so many sectors that an NGO simply cannot engage in all of them. Therefore, instead it might be better to stay in one's area of specialisation, and for each organisation to coordinate with the others to change the underlying structures. This is also recommended in a policy document published by the Rift Valley Institute, which states that conflicts over land are primarily a problem of governance. It states that this needs an approach coordinated between different donors and "more coherent land governance interventions, which should be integrated into larger state-building efforts" (1: Mathys and Vlassenroot, 2016). Therefore, to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor in eastern Congo, Finn Church Aid should have sought to improve land governance and the rights of the rural poor by coordinating with other development actors and with the state of the Democratic Republic of Congo. This the NGO already does through engagement in different types of clusters, which local development and humanitarian actors are part of. However, there might still be room for improvement to make the approach towards the challenge of land governance in the Congo more 'coherent,' as conflict over land ownership rights is still prevalent.

### 8.4.9. Conflict Sensitivity: Scientific Literature

Since the 1990s there has been debate surrounding the impact of humanitarian and development responses on conflict dynamics. In 1994 Mary Anderson coined the term 'do no harm' to refer to the need for external actors and interventions to take local conflict dynamics into account, so that their interventions would at best influence them positively, or at least avoid influencing the conflict negatively (Leonhardt, 2002). Since then humanitarian and development actors are becoming more aware that their interventions have to be 'conflict sensitive' when they are being implemented in conflict settings or fragile contexts. Conflict sensitivity means that an organisation:

*"a) understands the context in which it is operating, b) understands the interaction between the intervention and that context, and c) acts upon that understanding, in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts on the conflict" (1: Woodrow and Chigas, 2009)*

To understand the operational context actors need to undertake conflict analysis, so that interventions are suitable for the social, political and economic conditions which construct the local social reality. Conflict analysis is simply put "the systematic study of the structures, actors and dynamics that interact to cause conflict." It takes into account the "underlying and long-term security, political, economic and social factors," which are at play in the conflict, and "the interests, relations, capacities and agendas of different actors in conflict." It also attempts to understand long-term patterns and trends to be able to determine any future developments or scenarios which the conflict could take. There are multiple conflict analysis tools in existence, each having their own strengths and weaknesses (17: Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009).

Livelihood development interventions are no different, and so they also must be conflict sensitive and take local conflict dynamics into account. For instance, certain assets may in fact become liabilities during conflict, as the assets may be targeted by armed groups, and so they may increase the risk of violence for the owners. Therefore, in certain contexts richer households might actually be more vulnerable to violence than poorer households. This was the case in Southern Sudan, where wealthier households were pillaged for cattle. These households then fared worse than their poorer households, as they did not possess the skillset necessary for other livelihood strategies. The UN's Common Humanitarian Fund responded by distributing poultry to displaced people, which were seen to be "low-value, easily transportable assets" (Mallett and Slater, 2012: 54). They were, therefore, aware of how the local conflict was affecting people's livelihood choices, and ensured that their interventions were conflict sensitive, in this regard at least. However, there have also been multiple cases where development and humanitarian actors have failed to take local conflict dynamics into account in their livelihood programmes. For example, often the creation of IDP and refugee camps have inadvertently fuelled conflicts, as they have been used by armed groups for recruitment purposes (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Therefore, it is paramount that conflict dynamics are analysed, and their effects recognised, when designing interventions.

Furthermore, since the coining of the term by Mary Anderson in the 1990s, the Do No Harm principles have now become a more specific instrument within the broader conflict sensitivity framework. Although it appears that some conflate conflict sensitivity with Do No Harm, the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium describes the *Do No Harm/Local Capacities for Peace*, as a specific tool within the conflict sensitivity paradigm. According to the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium this approach mainly aims to look at group tensions and dynamics, as well as how the aid affects these dynamics (McGregor et al. 2012). Elsewhere, the Do No Harm

approach is also associated with "analysing potential tensions within and between groups and control over resources, and how aid influences this." However, it is also said to look at the overall political and security effects of foreign aid, and aims to minimise negative impact (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009: 17). Furthermore, many organisations, such as CARE International, have developed their own Do No Harm tool (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009: 18). Therefore, the difficulty in distinguishing Do No Harm from conflict sensitivity seems understandable. However, it seems that generally the two are kept distinct from each other.

Nevertheless, when we are discussing Do No Harm as a *tool*, its aim is to take group dynamics and tensions into account, and to avoid the risk of conflict between groups. For example, when working with host communities and displaced persons, a World Bank report suggests that it is necessary to support both the displaced groups and host communities, as supporting just one group may lead to grievances arising in the other group. However, the more vulnerable group (usually refugees and IDPs) should still be supported to a higher degree (Devictor, 2016). The underlying idea of such approaches is to avoid entrenching unequal relations of power and to increase social cohesion between communities (Mallett and Slater, 2012).

Besides conflict analysis, for livelihood interventions to be successful in conflict or fragile settings, analysis of the political economy might also be necessary (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Political economy analysis aims to uncover who gain and who lose from the war economy and the current instability. This may be important as at worst livelihood development could unwittingly "feed into the exploitative patterns established during the war," if the development actors are not aware of the underlying political economy and how it relates to the conflict (Schafer, 2002: 25). To able to strengthen livelihoods and make them more resilient there needs to be awareness of social and political factors, as changes in resource governance can exacerbate grievances and inequalities (Ratner, 2015). Understanding how actors are involved in the war economy is important, as even seemingly 'innocent' actors may be involved, or if certain groups are marginalised. Political economy analysis can uncover such links, as it demonstrates how powerlessness can also be a factor causing vulnerability (Schafer, 2002). For instance, certain ethnic groups may be better off, since they have closer ties to armed groups or to the military, or households involved in certain livelihoods may be better or worse off, as their livelihoods may place them at an advantage or disadvantage in that political context. Therefore, political economy analysis should be undertaken alongside conflict

analysis, especially if the context is unfamiliar to the development agency or if the conflict or political economy is exceptionally complex.

### 8.4.10. Conflict Sensitivity: The Data

Development actors are aware that their development interventions can have negative repercussions for surrounding armed conflicts, and this is also true of Finn Church Aid. For instance, one of the aims in the Project Narrative for 11521 was to promote conflict sensitivity, and so it strengthens the livelihoods of both vulnerable IDPS and local residents (11521, 2015: 3). However, although Fessard stated that providing agricultural tools, seeds and agricultural training means that some of the risk is taken by the NGO, which helps farmers, this form of livelihood development can actually feed into the conflict by supporting armed groups. This is because there is always the risk of crops being looted by armed groups. However, although this is not desirable, the other option would be simply not to support these communities, leaving them vulnerable to armed group manipulation and recruitment. Given the pervasiveness of displacement in North Kivu – apparently most of the local residents in 11521 "have been displaced at some point" – a major step towards addressing conflict drivers is increasing the resilience of vulnerable populations, such as the internally displaced (11521, 2015: 2). Therefore, increasing their resilience through such livelihood development interventions is desirable, and should be seen as 'conflict sensitive,' minimising the negative impacts and maximising the positive impacts on the conflict.

Furthermore, it seems unlikely that armed groups would benefit greatly from these specific communities receiving agricultural tools or training. Certainly, there *is* the chance that the groups pillage the crop, that communities are extorted or that they even voluntarily support the armed groups. This could be the case especially between Hunde and the APCLS. However, since the project areas do not seem to be at the epicentre of the conflict in the Kivus, it is probably unlikely that the beneficiaries and the communities have close relations with armed groups.

Nevertheless, it is not certain to what extent it can be ruled out. The conflict has been ongoing for so long that it is now inextricably intertwined with the local economy – creating a war economy – and so also with local youths' livelihoods. After all, it is households in vulnerable positions who may be most likely involved with armed groups, either trading with them or even being part of armed groups. Therefore, communities with large numbers of poor households, IDPs or youth may be vulnerable to manipulation efforts by armed groups. This

needs to be taken into account when designing livelihood development interventions. Although we cannot be certain by any means, the project areas *were* reported to be fairly peaceful, and little armed group activity was reported, and so it can *probably* be assumed that the local communities do not have close relations with armed groups. Marjo Mäenpää testified that the conflict was quite far away from project (Marjo Mäenpää, 2016). At the same time Mäenpää did state that she had seen APCLS militia members in some villages, and so the relations between some communities and armed groups might be close.

One shortcoming of the interviews was that there were no questions concerning conflict or political economy analysis. In Finn Church Aid's *Global Programme Annual Report 2015* it is, however, stated that "power balance and analysis has been a very central concern in many interventions" (FCA, 2016a: 23). Furthermore, project 11521 itself also claimed to address group tensions by employing the 'Do No Harm' approach and applying the conflict sensitive approach (11521, 2015). Furthermore, Mäenpää also stated that in some projects both host and IDP communities are considered to be beneficiaries, so as to avoid creating or entrenching group tensions (Mäenpää, 2016). Therefore, although we do not know the extent of conflict or political economy analysis that has accompanied these development projects, the NGO is well aware of the importance of such analysis.

However, there is one question remaining. As mentioned above, project 11521 promoted conflict sensitivity by strengthening the livelihoods of both vulnerable IDPs and local residents (11521, 2015: 3). The Do No Harm principles are also adhered to avoid entrenching tribal tensions. The logic is that if it seems that one community is being favoured, then this may increase tensions and even lead to confrontation. However, it is stated that the IDPs are Tembo, while the residents in Shasha are Hunde and Hutu. The conflict in eastern Congo and the Kivus tends to be dominated by tensions between 'indigenous Congolese' (which the Tembo and Hunde are) and the Kinyarwanda, especially the Tutsi. Therefore, why is Finn Church Aid concerned about the relation between IDPs (Tembo) and the residents (Hunde and Hutu)? Should not the concern rather be surrounding the tensions between Tembo and Hunde (IDPs and residents) and the Hutu (residents)?

As has been mentioned before, the conflict in the Kivus is complex, and the armed groups' allegiances may change quite quickly depending on political developments, as they are sometimes based on short-term opportunism, rather than long-term political goals. This has also meant that at times the APCLS have been allied with the FDLR, although this would seem

impossible if just examining the groups' political goals, as the APCLS seek to drive away Kinyarwanda while the FDLR seek to defend the Hutu populations in the Kivus (Hutu belonging to the Kinyarwanda, along with the Tutsi). However, to a degree this is somewhat understandable, as the Tutsi tend to be the prime target for the APCLS, rather than the Hutu, as it is the Tutsi who are supposedly granted a disproportionate amount of power in the Kivus. Furthermore, often the conflicts in the Kivus are focused on very local-level issues, and so indigenous Congolese armed groups may ally with Hutu, or even Tutsi, if they happen to have a common enemy or any other reason for an alliance. Therefore, the relations between ethnic groups are not always clear cut in the Kivus. The politics governing ethnic relations tend to be localised and are subject to changing alliances due to change in short-term political goals. Furthermore, the Finn Church Aid projects (including 11521) seem to be located relatively far away from the conflict hotspots, where the tensions between ethnic groups tend to be higher, and so relations between even the 'traditional enemies' may be calm in these locations. This was also mentioned by Marjo Mäenpää, and given as an explanation for the good relations between the ethnic groups (Marjo Mäenpää, 2016).

The contextual nature of ethnic relations in the Kivus is probably why there is no concern about the relations between the Hunde and Hutu residents, but rather between the Tembo IDPs and the Hunde and Hutu residents. Rather than worry about the 'traditional enemies,' there is worry that the arrival of large numbers of IDPs will increase tensions, which can have both negative and positive effects on local livelihoods (though arguably negative for most). Therefore, it seems that although ethnicity does play a factor in the conflict in the Kivus, this suggests that the conflict is rather centred round the struggle for political power, land and livelihoods, which *tend* to centre around ethnicity (although not always, as is the case here). In other words, the conflict is centred around issues of power and land governance, and although the divisions tend to be along ethnic lines, this is not always the case.

### 8.4.11. Cash in Conflict Situations: The Data

However, some communities may have been closer to fighting or armed group activity, and this would explain why cash assistance was opted for in some communities, and why cash vouchers were used in others. Finn Church Aid provided small cash grants of $100 in project 11502 to help the most vulnerable households to develop small income-generating projects (11502: 2015). In this case, both conflict and political economy analysis may be necessary to be aware of the risks involved in cash grants, or even other types of asset provision. As

explained above, cash transfers can be problematic in conflict settings, as cash is easily rerouted into the war economy through armed groups, for instance, either through voluntary support or looting.

Cash vouchers are used in project 11521, whilst cash is used in 11502 (11521, 2015) and (11502, 2015). Hence, it could be that Finn Church Aid has made a conscious choice not to use cash in 11521, as there might be a higher risk of armed group activity in the area around Shasha, than around project 11502. However, generally speaking there did not seem to be much armed group activity around the project areas, and so it seems unlikely that the projects have inadvertently supported the conflict, although it is impossible to be certain. Nevertheless, this again highlights the importance of considering social dynamics of each specific community, when designing livelihood development programmes in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

## 8.5. Education

Education is held to be central to many developmental issues such as gender equality, human rights, employment, reproductive rights and poverty alleviation. Education and training can also take multiple forms: it can include primary and secondary education, numeracy and literacy for adults, basic and personal skills (e.g. finance or hygiene), vocational and technical training and 'on-the-job' training (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Education is often a high priority in humanitarian emergencies and conflicts, as children and youth tend to miss out on multiple years of education in conflict environments, either because of insecurity or the family's inability to afford fees (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Schools and other education facilities also provide a 'safe space' for children and youth, and having different communities in the same education facility can potentially bring communities closer together (Barakat et al. 2014). All in all, education is hoped to lower levels of violence, bring communities closer together and provide children and youth with hope for the future (Barakat et al. 2014).

### 8.5.1. Education and Peace: Scientific Literature

Furthermore, education can also strengthen peace by supporting the creation of a national identity to increase social cohesion, as well as increases the legitimacy of the state, and so education can be used for purposes of statebuilding. However, this only holds true if the quality of teaching is adequate and if the education is provided equitably, as otherwise poor or unequal education access could actually lead to grievances (Winthrop and Matsui, 2013). Education can increase government legitimacy, as it is a social service that is very "visible to

the population," and so quality education can build trust in its institutions (Barakat et al. 2014). Furthermore, international organisations are also increasingly recognising the importance of education for fragile and conflict-affected contexts. For instance, UNICEF states that peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity needs to be integrated into education in development programmes, as it would "strengthen resilience, social cohesion and human security (UNICEF, 2013: 55). Therefore, on a general level education programmes are highly relevant in the contexts of fragility and conflict.

Nevertheless, it also needs to be stated that there is also insufficient evidence correlating education, conflict and peacebuilding, and more studies would be needed to draw any definitive conclusions (Barakat et al. 2014). However, UNICEF's theory of change posits that education has several peace dividends, as it has effects on other dimensions, such as civic engagement, governance and economic progress (Barakat et al. 2014).

### 8.5.2. Education and Livelihoods: Scientific Literature

More specific to livelihoods, education can support skills development, which increases the human assets of the population. It also can provide students with the attitude needed to find employment or to become an entrepreneur (Winthrop and Matsui, 2013). This improvement of human capital, translating to better livelihoods, also should contribute to peace. The improvement in human capital through education has also been found to decrease potential recruitment into armed groups, as youth found it easier to gain an income through more peaceful means and did not need to resort to violence. However, evidence from the Arab Spring shows that the education *also* needs to be relevant to the labour market, as high numbers of educated but unemployed youth tends to fuel civil unrest (Winthrop and Matsui, 2013). This is because unequal access to education can result in widening inequalities between communities, which may lead to grievances between these groups (Barakat et al. 2014). Hence, this is one why education needs to be 'conflict sensitive' (Barakat et al. 2014).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been promoted as being a practical and highly necessary form of education in fragile and conflict-affected countries. The training is meant to increase the 'employability' of individuals and to complement other labour market and livelihood interventions (which increase the demand for labour) (Mallett and Slater, 2012). However, problematically there has been a focus on measuring the outcomes of such training programmes, rather than the actual impact the training has had on incomes, employment and livelihoods. Although at least till 2014 TVET has not greatly improved

incomes, employment or livelihoods, the lack of evidence could also be due to the difficulty in measuring certain impacts, such as measuring skills development (Pompa, 2014).

However, various methods to maximise gains from technical and vocational training programmes have been identified. Apparently, programmes which combine life-skills training, literacy and numeracy, vocational training, internships with support entering the labour market have "significantly improved employment opportunities," especially for youth (Pompa, 2014: 8). Skills related to searching for jobs and to entrepreneurship (for instance, budgeting, marketing and organisation) have also been found to be useful (Pompa, 2014). Other authors also agree that entrepreneurial and business skills are important in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, as are other skills needed in the informal economy (Hadju et al. 2011). This is because demand for labour for formal markets is usually quite low in fragile and rural settings, and so education programmes should be designed to prepare youth for informal labour markets. This usually means becoming an entrepreneur in petty trade, and so education programmes should teach entrepreneurial skills and skills relevant to the rural environment (Mallett and Slater, 2012).

Moreover, although in rural Congo agriculture is a central economic activity, households tend to also diversify into other livelihoods, usually into forms of '*petty commerce*' or petty trades. Therefore, vocational education programmes should promote skills not only useful for agriculture, but they should also promote skills which are useful in various other sectors (Hajdu et al. 2011). These forms of small-scale business ventures and entrepreneurship are also known as 'income generating activities,' such as construction work, baking, roadside market stalls etc (Hajdu et al. 2011). Three factors seem to be crucial to support small-scale entrepreneurs: skills training, capital investment and the development of business skills (Hajdu et al. 2011). Access to investment and capital is a common obstacle in rural and fragile settings, so often NGOs address this through providing (or facilitating) micro-credit loans or start-up capital (Hadju et al. 2011). Also, any necessary tools or other assets needed for the work should be provided (Hadju et al. 2011).

The importance of including "post-training linkages such as linking the strategy for youth employment to a macro policy to promote economic growth" was also found to be important (Pompa, 2014: 10). Furthermore, when designing programmes it was important to conduct market research to see what skills were in demand (as well as to be aware of other education programmes in areas to identify market gaps). This was to prevent saturation of the

labour market. Other scholars, such as Mallett and Slater (2012), also agree that the secret to designing effective education programmes was to identify any constraints in the education sector, such as ethnic tensions, education gaps or weak state capacity to provide education. The education programmes also have to be context-specific: using local knowledge, building on local capacities, as well as engage the local community. Moreover, it also needs to be ensured that the TVET also reaches girls, so that females also find employment, which is hoped to improve gender equality. Furthermore, it is also important that the programmes have an element of flexibility, due to the dynamic nature of conflict contexts (Pompa, 2014).

Also, it would be important to foster relations with local businesses to secure internships and so increase employment opportunities post-training through the building of networks (Pompa, 2014). Jaspars and Maxwell (2009) also identified apprenticeship schemes as being effective. Finally, there needs to be cooperation with the government and local authorities to ensure that the programmes are suitable to national development plans and that they are sustainable, and that they will continue after the external actors exit (Pompa, 2014).

### 8.5.3. The Importance of Capital Investments for Skills Training Programmes: Scientific Literature

That there needs to be more research on the link between livelihoods, employment and violence is also agreed by Blattman and Annan (2015) who have made some interesting discoveries about the link between peace and employment. Ex-combatants in Liberia were provided training in agricultural work, counselling and capital inputs (either physical, tools, or future cash investments). According to their research the capital investments were the key factor in the programme, as training alone is not enough (Blattman and Annan, 2015). However, in another study co-authored by Blattman the results were more mixed. Although employment has had some effect on crime and violence, this was dependent on context. It seemed that the most high-risk groups need to be the focus (young men), and there were some context there may be no effect, such as when the violence is ideologically or politically motivated. However, they did find some positive effects [on crime and violence] from psychosocial and life skills training on both crime and violence (Blattman and Ralston, 2015).

According to another study, which was a research literature review of cross-country evidence connecting livelihood development interventions with actual impact, also suggested that capital investments (e.g. cash transfers, livestock and tools distribution) are most effective form of intervention. This is because the largest constraint which poor households faced in

developing their livelihoods tended to be the lack of different forms of capital. However, micro-finance was shown to not be effective, as loans were generally too expensive for poor. On the other hand, skills training programmes had also not been demonstratively cost-effective, as programmes tended to be expensive in relation to their returns, and there were many difficulties in designing the rights kinds of skills training programmes. These same results were found in the case in fragile contexts, especially in post-conflict situations and after natural disasters, although there is a lack of evidence for *high-conflict* situations (Blattman and Ralston, 2015).

**8.5.4. Direct effect of conflict on youth livelihoods (through their human capital, i.e. education): The Data**

Probably the most tangible relation, where the conflict directly had an effect on youths' livelihoods, was when the FARDC chased some boys out of school in project 10603 for having supposed ties to the APCLS. According to Timo Mueller's blog on armed groups in eastern Congo, this is part of the government's operation against the APCLS, which began in February 2014 (Mueller, 2014). Here there is a documented example of when conflict can destroy capital, as the potential for the youth to develop their human capital was interrupted so that the youth had to drop out of class that year. This also demonstrates that school buildings cannot always provide a 'safe space' for youth from the conflict around them, as schools are supposed to do.

**8.5.5. 'Evaluation' of the Effect of education programme on youth livelihoods: The Data**

This is not an actual evaluation of education programme 10603, as that is outside the scope of this thesis, but it is more of a comparison of the education programme to the findings and criteria of what has been found to make education programmes effective, based upon the scientific literature above. Although projects 11502 and 11521 also contained skills training as dimensions of their livelihood development interventions, they will not be covered in this same section. Firstly, they have already been discussed in previous sections. Furthermore, their goals were also remarkably different, which was to remove vulnerability and increase resilience through livelihood provision and protection, rather than to develop the human assets of youth and diversify livelihoods through livelihood promotion.

Finn Church Aid itself has also commissioned an independent evaluation in December 2015 of the Congo Country Programme, which was meant to measure outputs, outcomes as well as impact on the lives of beneficiaries. According to the evaluation it was found that "the impact of the programme increased greatly when the vocational trainings were linked with credit schemes for the youth and the established cooperatives" (FCA Global Programme 2015,

2016: 57). Furthermore, a business incubator also facilitated the creation of innovate businesses, with an "average monthly profit" of "$60 in Goma and over $90 in Masisi" (FCA Global Porgramme 2015, 2016: 57). 'Linking learning to earning' was generally found to be a successful strategy for improving positive impacts of the education programme on youth livelihoods in Masisi and Goma, which aimed to facilitate graduates having links to employment opportunities (FCA Global Porgramme 2015, 2016: 58). This is significant, as it was outlined earlier how youth under-employment can act as a conflict driver, especially if they have already received an education, in which case they may become disillusioned and frustrated. Therefore, ensuring that vocational training and education leads to employment or higher incomes is vital, when considering how to mitigate conflict. Therefore, it is positive that Finn Church Aid was able to link graduates to employment opportunities as well as ensure that graduates have access to capital.

However, what effect education programmes have on youth livelihoods in conflict contexts is still debated, and again the peacebuilding effects that livelihood development has on conflict is also debated. Nevertheless, Mäenpää stated that about 70% of the youth who underwent the education programme were employed, which is a relatively high number (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016). However, we do not know whether these provided higher incomes than their previous places of employment (or self-employment), nor the nature of their terms of employment. Nevertheless, since the programme targeted vulnerable youth, and also since 50% of the students were female, it is relatively safe to assume that they had not been in employment which required formal skills, and so most likely they were better off than previously.

The education programme also seems to fit the general criteria that have been found to be required to designing successful education programmes in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. It taught a vocational skill, as well as entrepreneurial and business skills (which prepares for informal markets), included a three-month long internship, and encouraged diversification away from agriculture. There was also life-skills training in the form of sensitisation on psychosocial issues, gender issues, conflict resolution and human rights (10603).

However, there seemed to be no provision of start-up capital, although village savings and loans associations were set up as part of the education project. The associations are self-organised and composed of members who save money together, and then take loans from these savings (10603: 20). VSLA's are tend to be entirely self-sufficient and have no donor funding,

unlike formal microfinance institutions, and so can only offer smaller loans at higher interest rates. However, for this reason they are also more sustainable and able to better reach more rural areas, and so might also be more suitable to this context, where continued donor support cannot be guaranteed (Brannen and Sheehan-Connor, 2016).

Nevertheless, having access to loans over the long-term is different to receiving start-up capital to found an enterprise. In rural and low-income contexts most individuals are self-employed and so some start-up capital is necessary to become an entrepreneur. However, the youth who underwent the education programme also did participate in an internship, and so there is the chance that some of them will become employed. Furthermore, it is possible that the VSLA's can also assist the youth to accessing some start-up capital if they have a promising business model.

Another issue to bear in mind is that it is unclear how well the education programme complemented other labour market and livelihood interventions. The education programme was designed in coordination with the education cluster in the Congo, which seems to suggest that the programme was designed with to the state's macro-economic policies in consideration (Finn Church Aid Global Programme Annual Report 2015, 2016). The greatest challenge in skills training programmes is to teach the skills which are needed in the labour market. Various failures to do so have made skills training programmes overall not as cost-effective as other interventions, such as simply providing start-up capital (Blattman and Ralston, 2015). Therefore, coordination with local or national administration is central, as they may have some development plans for the region.

Finally, it seems that what is most needed in livelihood development is capital injections, at least when providing skills training (Banerjee et al. 2015). Fessard stated that the challenge for livelihood development in North Kivu was due to a "lack of skills and investments," which also acknowledges the importance of capital investment for livelihood development (Fessard, 2016). Marjo Mäenpää even emphasised direct cash transfers, as she found them to be more effective "in principle" than food aid or start-up kits, although it was unclear whether she was referring to the education programme or the livelihood development projects (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016). Two of Finn Church Aid's projects seem to focus on providing agricultural tools and training for vulnerable groups, and cash vouchers or cash were also provided to the most vulnerable, so they could be invested into income-generation projects. However, the it is unclear whether the VSLAs set up in conjunction with the education

programme in 10603 could provide start-up capital. Therefore, in relation to the criteria of start-up capital, which has been shown to be extremely effective in strengthening livelihoods the results of Finn Church Aid are mixed. The importance of start-up capital *is* acknowledged by both staff members and some forms of capital are provided in the livelihood development projects. However, it is unclear whether start-up capital is provided to support graduates from the education programme in 10603 to help them to become entrepreneurs, which is often the only form of employment in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

### 8.5.6. Psychosocial Education: Scientific Literature

The psychosocial aspects of education are extremely important for an individual's mental well-being, as well as developing their ability to cope with crisis and resolve issues peacefully (Winthrop Matsui, 2013). Psychosocial support has implications for an individual's livelihood, as psychological health issues can cause physical symptoms, and affect the individual's ability to participate in communal and economic life (Lambourne and Gitau, 2013). It also supports psychological resilience of children and youth, which is important as trauma and psychological distress can lead to more aggressive or withdrawn behaviour (Winthrop and Matsui, 2013).

Closely related to psychosocial education is life-skills training, which improves empathy, self-awareness, decision-making skills, communication skills and the ability to set goals. There are also positive effects on young people's self-esteem, levels of aggression, sense of belonging and their will to contribute positively towards their community (Pompa, 2014: 9). Psychosocial support also can improve individual-level and community resilience, build trust and social cohesion in communities, and heal trauma through individual counselling or group workshops (Lambourne and Gitau, 2013: 24).

### 8.5.7. Psychosocial support for vulnerable people affected by conflict: The Data

Psychosocial support and education was an element in projects 11502 and 10603 (10603, 2015). In 11502 youth who had survived sexual and gender-based violence, or who had HIV/AIDs or had special needs were provided psychosocial support, which also included an income-generation (livelihood) element (11502, 2015). Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) victims and people with HIV/AIDs can suffer from mental issues, and so need psychosocial support so that they can get over their traumas and take part in society. There also tends to be stigmatisation of such population groups, and so supporting them to become

economically self-sufficient is also appropriate, which also has the effect of empowering the individual.

Sexual and gender-based violence, HIV/AIDs and disabilities can all be related to conflict, although they might not necessarily be caused directly by armed groups. As discussed earlier armed groups do use sexual violence as a military strategy to terrorise civilians, which can also promote the spread of HIV/AIDs. Furthermore, people can be physically maimed by armed groups, and so some of these physically handicapped youth may also have suffered their injuries due to conflict.

In essence, trauma can cause an individual to become vulnerable, as if an individual is not able to 'cope without damaging loss,' which includes social dependency, humiliation or psychological harm, then they are in fact vulnerable. In the World Bank report on forced displacement, it has been stated that psychological harm can impede an individual's capability to earn a living and practice a livelihood (Devictor, 2016). In such cases, psychosocial support is needed to mitigate these effects, to cope with trauma and ease socio-economic reintegration. Empowering the individual can help them to reintegrate (back) into the economy, as the experience of violence, trauma or sexual abuse can lead to problems with self-confidence and community stigmatisation. Furthermore, the wider community needs to be sensitised on the effects of SGBV and trauma to ease the process, and so that there is no victim-blaming. For instance, the social awareness sessions in 11502 were most likely directed at informing the community about SBGV and HIV/AIDs to lower the stigma, and to help the victims to rehabilitate into the community.

## 8.6. Gender

### 8.6.1. Gender, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Women's Empowerment: Scientific Literature

In eastern Congo sexual and gender-based violence remains highly endemic. It is not just armed groups and the FARDC, but also Congolese civilians who practice it, because of the impunity for these crimes, and because most of it goes unreported (Pettitt, 2014). Much like other types of trauma, sexual and gender based violence (also known as SGBV) can cause physical and psychological harm, and also impede a person's ability to be able to cope and to practice a livelihood. The prevalence of SGBV in Congolese society is due to a highly patriarchal social structure, at least according Davies and True (2015). They argue that isolated

variables and factors do not explain why SGBV is so prevalent in some societies, and that the study of sexual violence in conflicts needs to use a gender analysis lens. This is because the prevalence of SGBV can be explained using "a multifaceted form of explanation focused on structures, institutions and identities rather than single factors or individual-level variables" (Davies and True, 2015: 501). It is the existence of structural gendered disparities and inequalities and gender-based discrimination that explains the prevalence of SBGV in conflict, and they are not merely acts of opportunism in an increasingly irregular and ungoverned environment (Davies and True, 2015). Similar notions have been echoed elsewhere. For example, in her article for *The Guardian* Suzanne Moore states that the high incidence of sexual violence and rape in conflict zones is symptomatic of patriarchal social structures (Moore, 2017). Therefore, the prevalence of SGBV in fragile and conflict-affected zones is mainly due to gender discrimination present in the structures of society.

However, they do acknowledge that some specific factors may be highly significant in the prevalence of SGBV in conflict zones. For instance, they quote Dara Kay Cohen (2013) and argue that "the socialisation of armed groups" tends "to be the most significant explanation for the perpetration of rape." Armed groups that "forcibly conscript combatants, fight over lootable resources and are 'aimed at the centre' (i.e. not secessionists) are more likely to perpetrate rape in civil conflicts. State armed forces, however, are more likely to commit rape when they pressgang their fighters or when there is state failure" (Davies and True, 2015: 500). Furthermore, sexual violence is used by armed groups as a strategy to "terrorise communities," forcing them to leave their lands and destroying the social fabric of communities (Kelly et al. 2012: 295). This description seems to aptly describe the situation in North Kivu. Furthermore, they also state that Cohen finds no relation between rape and ethnic hatred, and so it is not horizontal inequalities between ethnic groups (and hatred of them) that explain rape, but rather structural gendered inequalities and possibly some other single determinants (such as the types of armed groups present) (Davies and True, 2015).

As mentioned above in the section about psychosocial support, a women who has been raped or suffered SGBV may often be stigmatised by her family and community. According to a study in eastern Congo, the female rape survivors were stigmatised by the community *if* they were also abandoned by their husbands following the rape. The husbands felt social pressure to abandon their wives, as otherwise they may also face stigmatisation (Kelly et al. 2012). Women who had been raped were "no longer 'acceptable' for marriage," and were sometimes rejected from the community and "forced to live alone with her children

with limited resources" (Christian et al. 2011: 234). Therefore, besides the psychosocial effects, stigmatisation is another major detrimental consequence which SGBV survivors experience in the context of North Kivu, and which can have major implications for their livelihood.

Stigmatisation by the community affects a person's life wholesale, especially in cultural contexts where life is centred around the community. According to a study conducted Kelly et al. (2012) in eastern Congo, the major concerns related to reintegrating back into society after suffering SGBV were economic. Access to economic resources were limited and their ability to maintain a livelihood was restricted. What is more, stigmatisation affected women's potential to recover from the attack, as stigmatisation also prevented women from seeking support as well as re-entering social life (Kelly et al. 2012).

Furthermore, sexual and gender-based violence can take multiple forms, and rape is not the only, nor even the most common form of SGBV. Another facet to take into account is domestic violence, which according to a study taking place in North Kivu by Lwambo (2013), was seen by female interviewees "as the general rule" in society (Lwambo, 2013: 59). Furthermore, according to cross-national research on SGBV, it was found that the incidence for intimate partner violence (IPV) was much higher across studies, than the incidence for other gender-based violence (Stark and Ager, 2011). This means that domestic abuse has been reported to be a much larger problem, than sexual abuse in different country contexts.

There is also a relation between strengthening women's livelihoods and gender relations. According to prevailing theory about empowerment and decreasing inequality between the genders, improving the bargaining power and empowering women at the household level are extremely important (Stark and Ager, 2011). Empowering women and improving their bargaining power at the household level would hopefully decrease the patriarchal nature of social structures, which make SGBV more prevalent in conflict zones. The aim would be to increase the *agency* of women, which can be defined as "women's autonomy in deciding how household economic resources are expended," which could occur, for instance, through increasing the woman's control of household resources (Kagotho and Vaughn, 2016: 2). According to a study of women in North Kivu, the women themselves also related their discrimination and lack of decision-making power to the lack of economic assets (Lwambo, 2013: 59). Therefore, empowering women through improving their asset base is hoped to improve gender equality. This also is supposed to have positive effects on livelihood

outcomes, as increasing a women's economic autonomy in a household apparently this would also have a positive impact on the sustainability and quality of households' livelihoods, according to Kagotho and Vaughn (2016).

Evidence of the positive impact that empowering women has on a household's livelihoods has also been found elsewhere. According to Sharaunga, Mudhara and Bogale (2015) "empowering women in socio-cultural aspects… reduces the probability of their households being vulnerable to food insecurity" (Sharaunga, Mudhara and Bogale, 2015: 195). There were also other dimensions to this effect. For instance, interestingly "women with high levels of financial capital endowment invested less in other forms of capital," and so were more vulnerable to food insecurity. Furthermore, the more dependent the woman was on the husband's income, the more vulnerable the household was to food insecurity (Sharaunga, Mudhara and Bogale, 2015: 195). On the other hand, "women with higher levels of human and physical capital forms of empowerment, vocational and farm financial management skills were more likely to diversify" their livelihoods. Furthermore, marriage status and practicing in dry-land agriculture increased likelihood of diversification, while a husband's high income and the practice of irrigation agriculture lowered this likelihood (Sharaunga and Mudhara, 2016: 104).

However, we should be wary of assuming that empowering women by easing their access into labour markets and increasing their income will necessarily improve their position in society, or decrease gendered structural inequalities. For instance, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme guaranteed 100 days employment to women, so that the barriers to entry to the labour market would lower and their bargaining power at home would improve. However, although there was a decrease in dowry deaths, there was an increase in kidnappings, sexual harassments and domestic violence. Whether this is due to a rise in reporting rates (due to female empowerment) or because there has been an increase in male-female interaction at the workplace (because the scheme also increased employment for men) needs to still be researched (Amaral, Bandyopadhyay and Sensarma, 2015).

An issue which even nowadays often goes unaddressed is that of sexual violence towards men in Congo. According to a study made in eastern Congo 64.5% of interviewed men reported sexual abuse and 20.2% had been raped (Christian et al. 2011). However, most men do not inform anybody, as they risk stigmatising themselves and their families, due to the fact that in the communities it was not understood how a man could be raped, and so there is the notion that once a man is raped, he can no longer be a 'man.' Furthermore, while a women

might be forced away from the home were she to be raped, most respondents stated that male rape survivors tended to leave the households themselves (Christian et al. 2011).

As the rape of men is so taboo in Congolese society, many NGOs also have no procedures or programmes for men who have been sexually abused. As with female rape victims, the priority after experiencing sexual abuse was that of livelihood, as most victims lost all their assets to armed groups by whom they had been abused. Furthermore, due to stigmatisation many men found it difficult to engage in economic activity, and so their wife had to become the main breadwinner of the household. Therefore, besides healthcare, male rape victims also requested livelihood support, such as seeds, tools or livestock (Christian et al. 2011). Furthermore, community sensitisation and awareness building was identified as a need to reduce stigma of male rape victims in Congolese communities, thus decreasing negative consequences that it has on their lives.

### 8.6.2. Sexual and Gender Based Violence: The Data

Since it seems that SGBV is not just a problem of armed groups and forces, but the prevalence is explained by patriarchal structures and people's prejudice towards women, it is probably hoped that easing women's access into the labour market will help address these structural issues. The theory behind it – that increasing women's bargaining power at the individual and household level – is appealing and seems persuasive. Therefore, supporting the SGBV victims to enter economic life should address structural patriarchy, according to this logic at least. According to research SGBV victims often prioritised economic activity and livelihoods as the main challenges after being sexually abused.

Furthermore, including women as stakeholders in the implementation of project 11521 and the sensitisation campaign in 11502 also seem to attempt to address the structural issues behind gender discrimination and violence (11521, 2015) and (11502, 2015). Furthermore, there is also some gender sensitisation for student youth in the education programme 10603 (10603, 2015). Through addressing the structural issues which support a patriarchal system, it is then hoped that society's ideas about gender roles will slowly change, and that gender discrimination and violence would decrease. There seems to be some evidence that this is possible at least, as Mäenpää did state that some young women were able to enter very male-dominated economic sectors successfully. Furthermore according to an evaluation on Finn Church Aid's Congo country programme there seemed to be potential positive impact on the gender gap due to economic empowerment programmes (FCA Global Programme 2015, 2016).

However, these efforts probably will not have much effect on the behaviour of armed forces, which tend to use sexual violence as a political strategy to cause terror and break down social cohesion, except in the long-term. Furthermore, since Finn Church Aid has been forced to leave North Kivu, it is uncertain how sustainable the positive developments made in regards to the gender gap are. What is more, patriarchal gender relations and social structures may explain the higher incidence of sexual violence in conflict in different contexts, the effects of these interventions are probably limited to these communities. Furthermore, since armed groups in the Kivus seem to possess many of the characteristics, that other armed groups which tend to perpetrate rape have (forced conscription, fighting over lootable resources, 'aimed at the centre and state failure) it seems that sexual violence among armed forces in the Kivus will remain a problem unless the issue of security in rural eastern Congo is addressed as well.

Interestingly, in the interview with Marjo Mäenpää the issue of gender and the use of financial assets also was mentioned, as she stated that in her experience women tended to be more responsible with finances than (Marjo Mäenpää, 23rd Nov 2016). This seems to be supportive of evidence elsewhere that increasing the women's control of resources at the household level could also increase food security, resilience and strengthen livelihoods, at least in some cases.

One criticism to point out is the lack of any sensitisation on the issue of sexual and gender-based violence towards men. For instance, project 10603 only mentions that youth are taught about SGBV in relation to women and women's right (10603, 2015). Furthermore, it is unclear whether the psychosocial support in 11502 was also offered to male SGBV victims. (11502, 2015) Of course, it is possible that there were no reported male victims, as men would be very unwilling to inform anybody had they been abused.

## 9. Conclusion

How to approach the so-called 'youth bulge' will remain an important question in years to come, not only to meet youths' dreams and aspirations, but also to maintain social and political stability. The link between youth livelihoods, violence and conflict in North Kivu still needs to be researched more thoroughly, as this research may have raised more questions rather than provided clear-cut answers. Generally, there seems to be a lack of high quality evidence on the causal effects that livelihood development programmes have on conflict – at least enough to draw conclusive results – but what can be concluded based on the answers this thesis has presented? What relations are evident between youths' livelihoods and the local level

conflict in North Kivu, based on the synthesis of the data and scientific literature? Furthermore, how do Finn Church Aid and scientific discourse frame these relations differently? Certainly, the relations seem to be quite complex and in some cases also indirect and involving many other factors and social processes.

Firstly, conflict can have an effect on livelihoods in multiple ways. Conflict can destroy assets and capitals, such as when forced displacement – *most likely* conflict-induced – lowered agricultural producitivty in project 11502. Furthermore, conflict can interrupt the development of assets, such as when the FARDC chased some boys from school in the youth education programme.

Therefore, conflict has the tendency to be destructive to livelihoods, although due to the nature of conflict and the political economy, it affects different livelihoods differently. In other words, certain livelihoods and households are more vulnerable to the effects of conflict. For instance, in the data it was mentioned that the conflict is harmful for farmers, as they are threatened by violence, looting and forced displacement. Therefore, Finn Church Aid aimed to mitigate the effect of conflict on livelihoods by supporting vulnerable populations to farm.

Conflict also has an effect on social structures and systems, and vice versa, again affecting livelihoods. The conflict's effect on land governance and rights also is one reason why land and natural resource governance is so problematic in the Congo, and why advocacy for better land governance is so necessary. However, in such a volatile context with such a fragile state, the challenge of reform is formidable, and only a few NGOs seemed to be involved in local level land conflicts. Moreover, the international community needs to coordinate action for more coherent development and peacebuilding policy, and so NGOs and other actors tend to specialise in certain types of interventions. This makes the approach of the international community more coherent, as well as allows NGOs to specialise in a few fields for more effect – as Finn Church has specialised in its three themes: R2P, R2L and R2QE. However, what FCA's role in that cluster is in relation to land and natural resource governance reform is not known.

Nevertheless, perhaps previous to exiting North Kivu Finn Church Aid could have tried to intervene more directly in local and state governance, for instance to advocate for land reform or the strengthening of peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms, as there are too few NGOs involved according to evidence. Alternatively, it could have empowered some communities or organisations to do so, as it has done for other groups, such as a women's

lawyer organisation RAFEJE (FCA, 2016a). Land is important for communities in eastern Congo, and is the source of much contention on the local level – therefore, improving land governance and strengthening the natural resource rights of marginalised groups could affect conflict dynamics positively, as well as decrease horizontal inequalities.

Because conflict changes social structures, it can also offer opportunities for vulnerable youth to promote their social position and to gain from the war economy. In a sense, the conflict has provided an opportunity for some vulnerable youth to escape their marginalisation and frustration, as well as their traditional and patrimonial societies, and join armed groups. Armed groups can be likened to new – albeit questionable – micro-societies offering social networks and social capital to youth, which restructure power relations, and allow youth to command resources through violence. In this sense, armed groups are like gangs in urban environments, as they allow vulnerable and marginalised youth to become part of a microcosm, and provide networks translating to support from peers and a semblance of economic security. Therefore, for vulnerable youth the conflict can offer a form of escape from their vulnerability.

This takes us to the link between the conflict and youth under-employment, the discussion of which took up considerable part of this thesis. This is due to the complex and context-specific nature of the link, but in the specific case of North Kivu, it seems that the link is relatively strong, although not completely clear cut, as there are other factors and social processes involved. Finn Church Aid's respondent's views were that livelihoods were a major conflict driver, and so livelihood development will decrease conflict, and at first looking at the case of North Kivu that seemed logical. However, upon reading more scientific literature it seemed that the link between the local conflict and under-employment was complex, and so the data needed to be placed in the context of the scientific literature and the two needed to be reconciled.

Saying that livelihood development will decrease the risk of youth joining armed groups, is different to saying that youth join armed groups simply for economic gain. Rather they join simply due to a lack of other opportunities, as well as because the social environment they reside in seems to favour such a decision. It seems vulnerable youth join armed groups because there is social pressure for them to provide for themselves and their family, so they can gain status as an adult. Due to changes in Congolese society, it seems they cannot and this leaves them frustrated and marginalised, vulnerable to violent behaviour, political marginalisation and grievances and armed group manipulation. What is more, the lack of

security and the violence present in society means that communities seek protection from armed groups, and so youths find it easier to rationalise their own violent behaviour.

Although these processes were *not* identified through the data, a considerable amount of scientific literature seems to suggest that such social processes are the driving forces between youth political violence, especially for a context like North Kivu. Therefore, these social problems, such as political marginalisation and questions about what is means to be an adult, also need addressing. Furthermore, a lack of livelihoods and frustration at being politically marginalised are perhaps more connected than some might admit. As Sanin and Keen argued the frustration that youth experience due to a lack of economic opportunities is really frustration with the political system, and so a political grievance in itself. Furthermore, horizontal inequalities between ethnic groups and the perception of being marginalised by other ethnic groups is another major problem in North Kivu, and has both economic and political dimensions to it. Nevertheless, it seems that one way of integrating youth into society, and decreasing marginalisation, is through economic integration – in other words, assisting them to gain a fulfilling livelihood for themselves.

In this sense, supporting youth to gain a fulfilling livelihood will act to dampen conflict drivers, as envisioned by Finn Church Aid, although the link is not direct. However, this does not solve the problem of continuing political marginalisation, ethnic grievances, lack of security and the disillusion the Congolese feel in regards to their government. Moreover, one of FCA's interviewees actually acknowledges the need for more interventions at the state level to create change in the broader society and social structures, and improve resilience. However, addressing state and even local authority structures, and promoting political inclusion and good governance, are extremely challenging problems, which may be why FCA did not have interventions targeted at these institutions. Furthermore, perhaps Finn Church Aid's approach is the most cost-effective, as addressing issues such as political marginalisation, the lack of security, and social customs and pressure are challenging, and maybe the domain of other actors.

Forced displacement is another major effect of conflict, which also has an effect on local youth livelihoods, as it forces the livelihoods of already vulnerable groups into competition with each other. When a group of people are forced to migrate, then they come into a new society, either into a refugee camp or within a host community. The society experiences an influx of people, often meaning that there will be competition for already

limited jobs and resources. Furthermore, displacement affects the capitals and livelihoods of displaced persons negatively, as displacement tends to exacerbate vulnerability. Therefore, the displaced tend to be competing for livelihoods and resources with the more vulnerable population segments of the host communities, which then promotes the rise in tensions between these groups. This is a major reason why Finn Church Aid employs the Do No Harm approach in its livelihood development – to prevent the formation of such tensions. Do No Harm and conflict sensitivity being necessary *because* livelihood development can have an effect on conflict. However, according to the data the relations between the groups were generally quite positive, perhaps because the IDPs were integrated into the host communities. If the reason for the lack of tensions was because the displaced lived with resident host families, then the humanitarian sector should promote such solutions to avoid the formation of tensions between refugee and host communities. All in all, forced displacement also is a conflict driver in this sense, which is why it is one of the central largest challenges in the context of the Congo, as it increases tensions and destabilises the region.

Vulnerability is a major theme in this thesis. Conflict creates and exacerbates vulnerability through various ways, such as the destruction of capitals, displacement and sexual and gender-based violence. This could be one way of conceptualising the way that conflict affects livelihoods, as vulnerability also impedes an individual's or household's ability to practice their livelihoods. As discussed above the main prevailing concern of survivors of SGBV, for instance, was that their livelihoods were impacted due to psychological damage to themselves or due to social stigma. Therefore, in North Kivu Finn Church Aid also combated this by focusing on vulnerable populations, such as IDPs, poor households, SGBV victims or child combatants. In other words, Finn Church Aid aimed to build resilience – the mirror image of vulnerability – and to make communities more robust against the effects of conflict, such as displacement. This also addressed conflict drivers by reducing vulnerability, and so hopefully lowered armed force recruitment. Building resilience could happen through livelihood diversification, such as the youth education programme, or through farming cooperatives for instance.

Specific groups are also vulnerable in specific ways. Youth are vulnerable to armed forced recruitment, as they face specific social pressures compared to adults or to children. Men and women are also vulnerable in their own ways, although there is by no means a clear cut binary division, as men can be sexually abused and women are also recruited into armed groups. However, due to the dynamics of gender relations, men tend to be more vulnerable to

hyper-masculine violent behaviour, due to social pressure to be the 'breadwinner.' On the other hand, women are more vulnerable to sexual abuse, as sexual relations tend to be structured around power relations. Finn Church Aid focuses on vulnerable populations because they tend to be at lower poverty levels, but also because they are more vulnerable to violence as well as to becoming involved in violent acts themselves. Also, the approaches towards different groups vary, conflict creates and exacerbates vulnerability and through doing so impacts different population groups differently. For instance, it seems that women were the primary receivers of psychosocial care for SGBV, and that the youth were supported to develop their human capital and gain employment. However, perhaps some interventions are based upon generalised or false notions. For instance, perhaps there could be community sensitisation on SGBV towards men, to help men inform if they have been raped, as well as support for male SGBV victims.

Finally, livelihood development and education were also found to have relations to conflict. Firstly, livelihood development can affect conflict both negatively and positively, which is why 'conflict-sensitive' livelihood development programming has become necessary in dynamic conflict settings. At best livelihood development strengthens livelihoods, which makes communities more resilient against the effects of conflict, as well as decreases vulnerability, so youth are less likely to join armed groups. However, at worst livelihood development could drive conflict, either because the development aid is looted by armed groups, or because it increases tensions between communities.

Although education has significance beyond that of livelihood development, in these projects that was the major goal, as training focused on agricultural production or the vocational training of youth. As mentioned above education can be interrupted by conflict, affecting future livelihoods. Furthermore, education can have a positive effect on conflict by promoting economic growth and livelihood diversification and development. However, it is paramount that the 'right' education is provided, and so the local labour market needs to be taken into account. Furthermore, education should be accompanied by entrepreneurial skills development, capital injections and post-training linkages, as unemployed graduates are just as vulnerable – if not more so – to armed forced recruitment, as unemployed youth with few skills. What remained unclear was whether the Village Savings and Loans Associations offered start-up capital, which would be important in fragile settings, where many are self-employed entrepreneurs rather than employees.

One aspect of the thesis is that the data is based upon Finn Church Aid's own project narratives and staff interviews, and although the NGO and its staff are experts in the field, it also implies some epistemological limitations for the research. Firstly, no youth were interviewed and so we do not know their own reasoning for joining or not joining armed groups, or about their experiences of displacement or about other ways their livelihoods have been affected by conflict. We have some second hand accounts of what youth have said, but the research would have benefitted from interviewing youth, and to better understand the dynamics behind youth under-employment and political violence. For instance, what type of vulnerability would make youth most likely join armed groups – was it under-employment, poverty, trauma or the sensation of being political marginalised? Knowing this would have significant consequences for other NGOs currently in North Kivu, as Finn Church Aid is no longer present. Therefore, although in this thesis scientific literature could be used to put the data into context, the research would have better reflected the reality on the ground were some youth in North Kivu to be interviewed.

Unfortunately, the data did also not have useful information or insight on the intersections between youth and displacement, which could be a potential relation for further research. Other researchers have noted that especially youth may feel "considerable humiliation and frustration" due to the experience of displacement, may be forced to transition into adulthood prematurely or forced into exploitative economic activities due to the lack of livelihood strategies available for them (Evans et al, 2013: 21). Therefore, studying the effects of displacement on youth in North Kivu would be a worthy research topic to pursue.

Furthermore, it would have been interesting and perhaps significant for the research to know more about the nature of the relations between armed groups and local communities. Was there trade between them? Did militia members have families in the communities, or how embedded were they in general?

Furthermore, perhaps a few more staff interviews would have gave a better overall idea of how Finn Church Aid staff perceived the connection between livelihoods and conflict. Alternatively, the interview questions could have tried to ask more about the staff's impressions of how youth viewed their situation in North Kivu, although these would have been mere impressions, and possibly not very useful. Also, asking the staff about the issue of land rights advocacy would have been interesting in hindsight, and whether there was any coordination with Norwegian Refugee Council on the matter.

The significance of the thesis is most probably that it demonstrates the difficulty of designing and implementing development and humanitarian programmes in such volatile and fragile contexts, such as North Kivu. There are many dynamic factors and social processes involved, which are subject to change. The labour market may change, which may jeopardise vocational education programmes. Armed groups may increase activity in an area, and place development programmes and beneficiaries in danger, or the groups may be able to loot some of the outputs meant for beneficiaries. Then there are questions of how close are communities to armed groups, or how are the relations between ethnic groups in this particular community. Would it be more effective to focus livelihood support on women, to close the gender gap, or on men, who may be prone to hyper-masculine acts of violence if unable to support their families? These are questions that need to be asked, and depending on the main challenges in the community aim of the project, the answers will probably vary. Therefore, perhaps the thesis shows how important it is that interventions in fragile contexts, such as North Kivu, are tailored to that particular context. Furthermore, what is needed is flexibility, as changes in a dynamic environment such as this can be sudden and drastic.

In conclusion, there are multiple relations between the local level conflict in North Kivu and local youth livelihoods, although in some cases the relations are indirect and rather complex. It seems that conflict is generally destructive to livelihoods, although it does also present an environment where certain livelihoods can thrive. Conflict can change social structures, again creating an environment where a different – and maladaptive – livelihood strategy may seem more rational. Furthermore, conflict drives displacement, and through this conflict is also detrimental to youth livelihoods. Youth under-employment is also linked to the conflict, although the link is complex and other social factors are also involved in this linkage. Conversely, livelihood development and education seeks to remove vulnerabilities so that you are less disposed to joining armed groups, and so it also seeks to eliminate conflict drivers, as well as maximise peaceful resolution.

# Bibliography

## Primary Data

### Project Documents

Finn Church Aid Project Proposal (2014, 16th June) 'Emergency food distribution, contributing to livelihood and improved resilience for conflict affected communities in North Kivu, DRC,' July 2014 – December 2014, FCA Project Number 11521

Finn Church Aid Narrative Report (2015, 21st September), 'Emergency nutrition, food security and psychosocial support for the vulnerable IDP and returnee communities in Masisi territory, North Kivu, DRC,' April 2014 – January 2015, FCA Project Number 11502

Finn Church Aid Narrative Report (2015, 30th September) 'Emergency food distribution, contributing to livelihood and improved resilience for conflict affected communities in North Kivu, DRC,' July 2014 – January 2015 FCA Project Number 11521

ETN and Finn Church Aid Narrative Report (2015, 25th January), 'The Narrative Report of the Socio-economic Reintegration of Vulnerable Youth,' [Original French Title 'Rapport Narratif annuel du projet de reinsertion socioprofessionelle des jeunes'] FCA Project Number 10603

## Interviews

Fessard, Frederic (2016, 19th December). Personal Interview

Mäenpää, Marjo (2016, 23rd November). Personal Interview

## Secondary Data

Anonymous Researcher based in Goma (2016, 5th July). Skype Interview

## Scientific Literature

Ajibola, Iyabobola O. (2015) 'Nigeria's Amnesty Program: The Role of Empowerment in Achieving Peace and Development in Post-Conflict Niger Delta,' in *Sage Open*, Vol. 1 No. 11

Autessere, Severine (2010) *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*, Cambridge University Press, New York

Autessere, Severine (2011) 'The Trouble With Congo: A Precis,' *African Security Review*, Vol. 20 No. 2

Babalola, Stella O. (2013) 'Dimensions and Correlates of Negative Attitudes Toward Female Survivors of Sexual Violence in Eastern DRC,' in *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, Vol. 29 No. 9

Banchirigah, Sadia Mohammed and Hilson, Gavin (2009) De-Agrarianisation, *Re-Agrarianisation and Local Economic Development: Re-Orientating Livelihoods in African Artisanal Mining Communities,' in *Policy Sci*, Vol. 43

Bandiera, Burgess, Das, Gulesci, Rasul and Sulaiman (2013) 'Can Basic Entrepreneurship Transform the Economic Lives of the Poor?' IZA Discussion Paper 7386

Banerjee, Duflo, Goldberg, Karlan, Osei, Pariente, Shapiro, Thuysbaert and Udry (2015) 'A Multifaceted Programme Causes Lasting Progress for the Very Poor: Evidence from Six Countries,' in *Science*, Vol. 348 No. 6236

Banks, Nicola (2016) 'Youth Poverty, Employment and Livelihoods: Social and Economic Implications of Living with Insecurity in Arusha, Tanzania,' in *International Institute for Environment and Development*, Vol. 28 No. 2

Barakat, Connolly, Hardman, Lewis, Lineker, Menkhaus, Rzeszut and Shanks (2014) *Beyond Fragility: A Conflict and Education Analysis of the Somali Context*, Post-War Reconstruction and Development Unit, UNICEF: York

Baranyi, Stephen and Desrosiers, Marie-Eve (2012) 'Development Cooperation in fragile states: filling or perpetuating gaps?' *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 12 No. 5

Barnett, Jon (2008) 'Peace and Development: A New Synthesis,' in *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 45 No. 1

BBC News (2016) 'DR Congo Arrests Rwandan FDLR Rebel Commander' Last accessed 20th October 2017, < http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-37788062>

Berman, Eli; Callen, Michael; Felter, Joseph; and Shapiro, Jacob (2011) 'Do Working Men Rebel? Insurgency and Unemployment in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Pilippines,' in *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 55 No. 4

Blattman, Chris; Fiala, Nathan and Martinez, Sebastian (2014) 'Generating Skilled Self-Employment in Developing Countries: Experimental Evidence from Uganda,' in *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, pp. 697-752

Blattman, Chris and Annan, Jeannie (2016) 'Can Employment Reduce Lawlessness and Rebellion? A Field Experiment with High-Risk Men in a Fragile State,' in *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 110 No. 1

Borda-Rodriguez, Alexander and Vicari, Sara (2013) 'Rural Cooperative Resilience: The Case of Malawi,' in *Journal of Cooperative Organisation and Management*, Vol. 2 No. 1

Brannen, Conner and Sheehan-Connor, Damien (2016) 'Evaluation of the Impact of Village Savings Loan Associations Using a Novel Survey Instrument,' in *Development Southern Africa*, Vol. 33 No. 4

Breytenbach, Willie; Chilemba, Dalitso; Brown, Thomas A.; and Plantive, Charlotte (1999) 'Conflicts in the Congo: From Kivu to Kabila,' in *African Security Review*, Vol. 8 No. 5

Bryant, Antony and Charmaz, Kathy (2007) *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*, Sage Publications Limited: London

Böhnke, Jan Rasmus and Zuhrer, Cristoph (2013) 'Aid, minds and hearts: the impact of aid in conflict zones' in *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 30 No. 5

Chambers, Robert and Conway, Gordon R. (1991) 'Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century,' in IDS Discussion Paper 296

Christian, Mervyn; Safari, Octave; Ramazani, Paul; Burnham, Gilbert; and Glass, Nancy (2011) 'Sexual and Gender Based Violence Against Men in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Effects on Survivors, their families and the Community,' in *Medicine, Conflict and Survival*, Vol. 27 No. 4

Cho, Yoonyoung; Robalino, David; and Watson, Samantha (2016) 'Supporting Self-Employment and Small-Scale Entrepreneurship: Potential Programmes to Improve Livelihoods for Vulnerable Workers,' in *IZA Journal of Labour Policy*, Vol. 5 No. 7

Chretien, Jean-Pierre (2006) *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History*, Zone Books: New York

Collier, Paul and Hoeffler, Anke (2000) 'Greed and Grievance in Civil War,' Policy Research Working Paper 2355, World Bank Development Research Group

Cortright, David (2016) 'Linking Development and Peace: The Empirical Evidence,' in *Peace Policy*, <https://peacepolicy.nd.edu/2016/05/18/linking-development-and-peace-the-empirical-evidence/>

Court, Anthony (2013) The Banyamulenge of South Kivu: The 'Nationality Question', in *African Studies*, Vol. 72 No. 3

Cramer, Christopher (2011) *Unemployment and Participation in Violence*, World Development Report 2011 Background Paper, World Bank

Daley, Patricia (2013) 'Refugees, IDPs and Citizenship Rights: The Perils of Humanitarianism in the Great Lakes Region,' in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 34 No. 5

Davies, Anne; Venäläinen, Raisa; and Brusset, Emery (2017) 'Evaluation: Programme-Based Support Through Finnish Civil Society Organisations II,' Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland

Devictor, Xavier (2016) *Forcibly Displaced: Toward a Development Approach Supporting Refugees, the Internally Displaced and their Hosts*, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank: Washington DC

Downing, Cristal (2014) 'Child Recruitment to Illegal Armed Groups in Colombia: Peacebuilding and Development Challenges,' in *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, Vol. 9 No. 3

Eguavoen, Irit (2010) 'Lawbreakers and Livelihood Makers: Youth-Specific Poverty and Ambiguous Livelihood Strategies in Africa,' in *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies*, Vol. 5. No. 3

Evans, Dr. Rosalind; Lo Forte, Claudia and Fraser, Dr. Erika McAslan (2013) *UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth: A Global Review*, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: Geneva

FCA, Finn Church Aid (2015) 'Kehitysyhteistyöleikkaukset: Ulkomaanapu lopettaa työnsä viidessä maassa,' <https://www.kirkonulkomaanapu.fi/ajankohtaista/uutiset/kehitysyhteistyoleikkaukset-ulkomaanapu-lopettaa-tyonsa-viidessa-maassa/>

FCA (2016)a, Finn Church Aid, *Finn Church Aid Global Programme: Annual Report 2015*, Finn Church Aid with the support of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

FCA (2016)b, Finn Church Aid, *Finn Church Aid Global Strategy: 2017 Onwards*, Finn Church Aid

FCA (2017), Finn Church Aid, *Annual Report 2016*, Finn Church Aid

Fiala, Nathan (2015) 'Economic Consequences of Forced Displacement,' in *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 51 No. 10

Fortune, Francis; Ismail, Olawale, and Stephen, Monica (2015) 'Rethinking Youth: Livelihoods and Fragility in West Africa: One Size Doesn't Fit All,' Fragility, Conflict and Violence Group; World Bank

Gelaye, Bizu; Arnold, Dodie; Williams, Michelle; Goshu, Miruts; and Berhane, Yemane (2009) 'Depressive Symptoms Among Female College Students Experiencing Gender-Based Violence in Awassa, Ethiopia,' in *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* Vol. 24 No. 3

Grimm, Michael and Puffhausen, Anna Luisa (2015) 'Do Interventions Targeted at Micro-Entrepreneurs and Small- And Medium-Sized Firms Create Jobs? A Systematic Review of the Evidence for the Low- and Middle-Income Countries,' in *Labour Economics*

Hadju, Ansell, Robson, Van Blerks and Chipeta (2011) 'Income-Generating Activities for Young People in Southern Africa: Exploring AIDs and other Constraints,' in *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 177 No. 3

Hammersley, Martyn and Atkinson, Paul (1983) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, London: Tavistock Publications

Hilhorst, Dorothea; Christopolos, Ian and Van Der Harr, Gemma (2010) 'Reconstruction "From Below": A New Magic Bullet or Shooting from the Hip?,' in *Third World Quarterly*

Hilker, Lyndsay McLean, and Fraser, Erika (2009) *Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States*, Social Development Direct, DFID Equity and Rights Team, DFID UK

Hilson, Gavin and Osei, Lydia (2014) 'Tackling youth unemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa: Is there a role for artisanal and small-scale mining?' in *Futures*, 62

Hussein, Karim (2002) 'The Relevance of Livelihoods Approaches to Food Insecurity Measurement,' Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Ijang, Tata Precillia and Ndikumagenge, Cleto (2013) Dependency on natural resources: post-conflict challenges for livelihoods security and environmental sustainability in Goma, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Development in Practice, Vol. 23 No. 3

IFY, International Youth Foundation (2013) *Youth Map DRC – Congolese Youth: Assets and Opportunities*

International Alert (2015) *Peace Through Prosperity: Integrating Peacebuilding into Economic Development*, International Alert

IRIN News (2013) "Combatants 'Recycled' in the DRC," <
http://www.irinnews.org/report/98668/combatants-%E2%80%9Crecycled%E2%80%9D-drc> last accessed: 27th September 2017

Jacobsen, Karen (2002) 'Livelihoods in Conflict: The Pursuit of Livelihoods by Refugees and the Impact on Human Security of Host Communities,' in *International Migration*, Vol. 40

James-Wilson, David (2008) *Youth Livelihoods Development Programme Guide*, USAID

Jaspars, Susanne and Maxwell, Dan (2009) 'Food Security and Livelihoods Programming in Conflict: A Review,' Network Paper 65, Humanitarian Practice Network, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Justino, Patricia (2011) 'Poverty and Violent Conflict: A Micro-Level Perspective on the Causes and the Duration of Warfare,' IDS Working Paper No 385

Justino, Patricia (2016) 'Supply and Demand Restrictions to Education in Conflict-Affected Countries: New Research and Future Agendas,' in *International Journal of Educational Development*, 47

Kagotho, Njeri and Vaughn, Michael (2016) 'Women's Agency in Household Economic Decision-Making in Kenya,' in *International Social Work*

Keen, David (2000) 'Incentives and Disincentives for Violence,' in Berdal, Mats and Malone, David M. (eds) *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder, Colorado USA

Keen, David (2012) 'Greed and Grievance in Civil War,' in *International Affairs*, Vol. 88 No. 4

Kelly, Jocelyn; Kabanga, Justin; Cragin, Will; Alcayna-Stevens, Lyn; Haider, Sadia; and Vanrooyen, Michael J. (2013) '"If you're husband doesn't humiliate you, other people won't": Gendered Attitudes Towards Sexual Violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo,' in *Global Public Health*, Vol. 7. No. 3

Kelly, Jocelyn T. D. (2014) '"This Mine Has Become Our Farmland": Critical Perspectives on the Coevolution of Artisanal Mining and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo,' in *Resource Policy*, Vol. 40

Klingebiel, Stephan (2001) 'The Impact of Development Cooperation in Conflict Situations' in *Evaluation*, Vol. 7 No. 1

Korf, Benedikt (2005) 'Participatory Development and Violent Conflict – An Antagonism?' in *International Journal of Rural Management*, Vol. 1 No. 1

Kyamusugulwa, Patrick M. and Hilhorst, Dorothea (2015) 'Power Holders and Social Dynamics of Participatory Development and Reconstruction: Cases from the Democratic Republic of Congo,' in *World Development*, Vol. 70

Lambourne, Wendy and Gitau, Lydia Wanja (2013) 'Psychosocial Interventions, Peacebuilding and Development in Rwanda,' in *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, Vol. 8 No. 3

Lalnilawma and Chowhan, Balaji Singh (2011) 'Strengthening Food and Livelihood Security: Lessons from Save the Children's Intervention in Mizoram, India,' in *Internantional Journal of Rural Management*, Vol. 7 No. 1 and 2

Laudati, Ann (2013) Beyond minerals: broadening 'economies of violence' in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Review of African Political Economy, Vol. 40 No. 135,

Leonhardt, Manuela (2002) 'Providing Aid Agencies with Tools for Conflict-Sensitive Practice: Lessons Learned from Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA),' in *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, Vol. 1 No. 2

Local Voices (2013) 'Armed Militias in Masisi: A Case Study of the APCLS,' Local Voices with International Alert and Search for Common Ground, < https://www.sfcg.org/local-voices-armed-militias-in-masisi/> last accessed: 28th September 2017

Lwambo, Desiree (2013) '"Before the war, I was a man": Men and Masculinities in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo,' *Gender and Development*, Vol. 21 No. 1

Mallett, Richard and Slater, Rachel (2012) ''Growth and Livelihoods in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations,' Working Paper 9, Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Manning, Richard and Trzeciak-Duval, Alexandra (2010) 'Situations of Fragility and Conflict: Aid Policies and Beyond,' *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 10 No. 1

Marriage, Zoe (2007) 'Flip-flop rebel, dollar soldier: demobilisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo,' in *Conflict, Security and Development*, Vol. 7 No. 2

Mathys, Gillian and Vlassenroot, Koen (2016) ''It's Not All About the Land:" Land Disputes and Conflict in Eastern Congo,' Rift Valley Institute PSRP Briefing Paper 14

McGregor, Joan; Lund, Charlie; Clifford, Paul and Weatherbed, Simon (2012) *How To Guide to Conflict Sensitivity*, The Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, Department for International Development (DfID)

McIlwane and Moser (2003) 'Poverty, Violence and Livelihood Security in Urban Colombia and Guatemala,' in *Progress in Development Studies*, Vol. 3 No. 2

McIntyre, Angela (2010) 'Rights, Root Causes and Recruitment,' in *African Security Review*, Vol. 12 No. 2

McKenzie, David and Woodruff, Christopher (2013) 'What Are We Learning from Business Training and Entrepreneurship around the Developing World?' The World Bank Research Observer, Oxford University Press

Miguel, Edward (2011) 'Economic Shocks, Weather and Civil War,' in National Bureau of Economic Research Reporter 2011, No. 3: Research Summary, <http://www.nber.org/reporter/2011number3/miguel.html>

Morse, Stephen and Nora, McNamara (2013) 'Chapter 2: The Theory Behind the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach,' in *Sustainable Livelihood Approach: A Critique of Theory and Practice*, Netherlands: Springer

Moore, Suzanne (2017) 'What Connects Rape in War, Domestic Violence and Sexual Harassment? Patriarchy,' in *The Guardian*, Last accessed: 22nd October 2017, < https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/18/what-connects-in-war-domestic-violence-and-sexual-harassment-patriarchy>

Mueller, Timo (2014) 'What happened to the APCLS rebel group in 2014?' [Blog Post] < https://muellertimo.com/2014/09/12/what-happened-to-the-apcls-rebel-group-in-2014/>

Muldering, M. Chloe (2013) 'An Uncertain Future: Youth Frustration and the Arab Spring,' The Pardee Papers, No. 16, < http://www.bu.edu/pardee/files/2013/04/Pardee-Paper-16.pdf>

Nantulya, Paul (2017) 'A Medley of Armed Groups Play on Congo's Crisis,' Africa Center for Strategic Studies, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/medley-armed-groups-play-congo-crisis/>

Nigel, John (2009) 'Livelihoods in a Conflict Setting,' in *Norwegian Journal of Geography*, Vol. 63 No. 1

NRC, Norwegian Refugee Council (2018) 'NRC in the Democratic Republic of Congo,' NRC Website, <https://www.nrc.no/countries/africa/dr-congo/>

Obrist, Brigit; Mayumana, Iddy; and Kessy, Flora (2010) 'Livelihood, Malaria and Resilience: A Case Study in the Kilmobero Valley, Tanzania,' in *Progress in Development Studies*, Vol. 10 No. 4

OECD, Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (2008) *Concepts and Dilemmas of Statebuilding in Fragile Situations: From Fragility to Resilience*, OECD/DAC Discussion Paper

Ojewska, Natalia (2014) 'Targeted Assistance Needed for DRC's Former Child Soldiers,' IRIN News, Last Accessed: 25th October, 2017, < http://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2014/07/03/targeted-assistance-needed-drc%E2%80%99s-former-child-soldiers>

Pettitt, Jo (2014) 'Rape As Torture in the DRC: Sexual Violence Beyond the Conflict Zone,' in Freedom From Torture Country Reporting Programme

Plummer, David and Geofroy, Stephen (2010) 'When Bad is Cool: Violence and Crime as Rites to Manhood,' in *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies*, No. 4

Pompa, Claudia (2014) *TVET and Skills Training in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries*, EPS PEAKS, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Petřík, Jaroslav (2008) 'Does Foreign Aid Alleviate Violent Tensions?' *Global Change, Peace & Security*, Vol. 20 No. 3

Raj, Anita; Gomez, Charlemagne; and Silverman, Jay (2014) 'Multisectorial Afghan Perspectives on Girl Child Marriage: Foundations for Change Do Exist in Afghanistan' in *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 20 No. 12

Rakodi, Carole (1999) 'A Capital Assets Framework for Analysing Household Livelihood Strategies: Implications for Policy' in *Development Policy Review*, Vol. 17 No. 3

Ratner, Blake (2015) 'Building Resilience in Rural Livelihood Systems as an Investment in Conflict Prevention,' in *Livelihoods, Natural Resources and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding*, Young, Helen and Goldman, Lisa (eds.) London: Earthscan

Sanin, Francisco Gutierrez (2004) 'Criminal Rebels? A Discussion of Civil War and Criminality from the Colombian Experience,' in *Politics and Society*, Vol. 32 No. 2

Samset, Ingrid (2002) 'Conflict of Interests or Interests in Conflict? Diamonds and War in the DRC,' in *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 29 No. 93-94,

Schafer, Jessica (2002) *Supporting Livelihoods in Situations of Chronic Conflict and Political Instability: Overviews of Conceptual Issues*, Working Paper 283, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Sharaunga, Stanley; Mudhara, Maxwell and Bogale, Analyeh (2015) 'The Impact of "Women's Empowerment in Agriculture" on Household Vulnerability to Food Insecurity in the KwaZulu-Natal Province,' in *Forum for Development Studies*, Vol. 42 No. 2

Sharaunga, Stanley and Mudhara, Maxwell (2016) 'Dimensions of Empowerment Influencing Women in KwaZulu-Natal to Diversify Away from Agricultural-Based Livelihoods,' in *Agrekon*, Vol. 55 No. 1-2

Smith, David (2012) 'One-Third of Congolese Men Admit Committing Sexual Violence,' *The Guardian*, Last Accessed: 25th October 2017, < https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/oct/31/third-congolese-men-admit-sexual-violence>

Stark, Lindsay and Ager, Alastair (2011) 'A Systematic Review of Prevalence Studies of Gender-Based Violence in Complex Emergencies,' in *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, Vol .12 No. 3

Stearns, Jason K. and Vogel, Christopher (2015) 'The Landscape of Armed Groups in Eastern Congo,' Congo Research Group, Centre on International Cooperation

Storr, Will (2011) 'The Rape of Men: The Darkest Secret of War,' 17 July 2011, *The Observer*, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/jul/17/the-rape-of-men>

Subedi, D. B. (2013) 'From Civilian to Combatant: Armed Recruitment and Participation in the Maoist Conflict in Nepal, in *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol. 21 No. 4

Suhrke, Astri and Buckmaster, Julia (2006) 'Aid, Growth and Peace: A Comparative Analysis,' in *Conflict, Security and Development*, Vol. 6 No. 3

Tahir, Nadia (2015) 'Does Aid Cause Conflict in Pakistan?' in *Defence and Peace Economics*

Teye, Joseph Kofi and Yebleh, Moses Kai-Doz (2014) 'Living Without Economic Assets: Livelihoods of Liberian Refugees in the Buduburam Camp, Ghana,' in *International Migration and Integration*, Vol. 16

The East African (2016) 'Rwanda: We Can Go It Alone on FDLR,' Last accessed 20th October 2017, < http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Rwanda--We-can-go-it-alone-on-FDLR/2558-3307470-13kngrdz/index.html>

Tonheim, Milfred (2014) 'Genuine social inclusion or superficial co-existence? Former girl soldiers in eastern Congo returning home,' in *The International Journal of Human Rights,* Vol. 18 No. 6
UNICEF (2013) *Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy in Conflict-Affected Contexts: 2012 Consolidated Annual Report*, UNICEF: New York

United Nations, General Assembly, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary General, A/70/836 (20th April 2016), Last Accessed 26th October 2017: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=s/2016/360&referer=/english/&Lang=E

UNOCHA, United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Remarks at the Member States Briefing on the Democratic Republic of Congo*, (16 November 2017), <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ERC_USG%20Mark%20Lowcock%20Statement%20on%20DRC%20to%20Member%20States%2016November%202017%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

Verweijen, Judith and Wakenge, Claudia Iguma (2015) 'Understanding Armed Group Proliferation in Eastern Congo,' in Rift Valley Institute, PSRP Briefing Paper 7

Vinci, Anthony (2006) 'Greed-Grievance Reconsidered: The Role of Power and Survival in the Motivation of Armed Groups,' in *Civil Wars*, Vol. 8 No. 1

Woodrow, Peter and Chigas, Diana (2009) 'A Distinction with a Difference: Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding,' CDA Collaborative Learning Projects: Cambridge, Massachusetts

Young, Helen and Jacobsen, Karen (2013) 'No Way Back? Adaptation and Urbanisation of IDP Livelihoods in the Darfur Region of Sudan,' in *Development and Change*, Vol. 44 No. 1