

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM**

**A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN CONFLICT  
RESOLUTION**

**A CASE STUDY OF MEGA FM RADIO IN GULU DISTRICT,  
NORTHERN UGANDA**

**BY**

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION**

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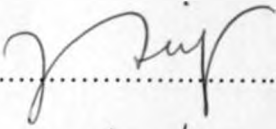
**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM  
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MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

**2008**

# DECLARATION

I the undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work and has never been presented to any other university for academic credit.

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This thesis has been submitted with my approval as the university supervisor.

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Date: 1/12/08

# DEDICATION

To my late mother Christine Shamim Rusaro Rutinduka.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea for this study was conceived on a trip to Gulu in 2007, where I met a lot of wonderful people living in very difficult circumstances. The picture of Gulu's internally displaced people gathered around small radio receivers will remain etched in my mind for a long time. I will also remain ever so grateful to them for their inspiration.

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Seif Magango

Nairobi, 23 November 2008

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper seeks to unravel the role radio has played in conflict resolution in northern Uganda. It touches on Uganda's history tracing the roots of the conflict in the north and describing the present situation. The paper studies media in Uganda and the northern region generally and later narrows down particularly to radio in Gulu District.

Using Mega FM as a case study, the paper demonstrates how radio in the region has played a significant role in conflict resolution by providing the population with relevant and accurate information aimed at increasing their participation in the search for peace and stability.

The paper provides a theoretical framework of the study, focusing on theories of conflict and the functional theories of media and in particular the agenda setting theory. It draws secondary literature from previous studies in a bid to fill the knowledge gap as regards the topic of study. The paper describes the methodology of data collection and presents an analysis and interpretation of the data. Finally, it identifies specific recommendations which if implemented can be utilized in fostering a faster peace process in northern Uganda and can be replicated in other conflict areas.



# ACRONYMS

**BBC**

British Broadcasting Corporation

**DFID**

Department for International Development

**DRC**

Democratic Republic of Congo

**FM**

Frequency Modulation

**ICC**

International Criminal Court

**ICG**

International Crisis Group

**IDP**

Internally Displaced Person

**KW**

Kilowatts

**KM**

Kilometres

**LRA**

Lord's Resistance Army

**MHz**

MegaHertz

**NGO**

Non-Governmental Organization

**NRM**

National Resistance Movement

**SPLA**

Sudan People's Liberation Army

**SPSS**  
Statistical Package for Social Sciences

**UDC**  
Uganda Democratic Coalition

**UN**  
United Nations

**UNICEF**  
United Nations Children's Fund

**UON**  
University of Nairobi

**UPDF**  
Uganda People's Defense Forces

**VOA**  
Voice of America

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# CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

*Knowledge itself is power.* Francis Bacon (1561 - 1626)

Information is a basis for knowledge and knowledge is power. Lack of knowledge contributes to knowledge deficiency which leads to powerlessness. Access to information implies a form of empowerment, or better still, it signifies freedom from ignorance, freedom from servitude and ultimately freedom to choose. Just as information or freedom of information, is useful to post-modernist society, it is equally vital for rural African societies which account for more than 70 percent of the whole population in most countries. (Hameso 1995).

There is need everywhere for the public and private provision of information especially relating to matters that directly affect the livelihood of people, such as health, education, politics and government policies among other issues. The need for such information heightens more so in times of conflict. People rely more than ever on the various sources of information for guidance, an update of the status of the conflict and entertainment. The ideal way to disseminate information is through mass media channels (radio, television, newspapers) that are able to reach large numbers of people.

According to Denis McQuail, the media is immensely important in conflict resolution in as far as they have unrivalled power in causing opinion change. He says "The media can: cause intended change; cause unintended change; cause minor change [form or intensity]; facilitate change [intended or not]; reinforce what exists [no change]; prevent change. Any of these changes may occur at the level of the individual, society institution or culture." (Denis McQuail, *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*, 4th edition, 2000, Sage, p.424 & 44).

As the above scholars postulate, media have power to influence thought processes and people's actions, especially if those media disseminate information in the world a majority of the people understand, it is therefore not surprising that radio is the most powerful medium throughout Africa since it is the most affordable and accessible means

of communication across the continent. If there is any one medium that can be used to influence the masses whatever way, it is radio. Many radio stations in Africa and particularly in rural area, broadcast in languages which a majority of the populations are conversant with. The easiest way to persuade someone is to use a language that they identify with. This makes for easier understanding of the message, and creates a sense of identity.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

For 22 years now, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels have waged a brutal armed rebellion in northern Uganda. Led by Joseph Kony, they have killed, maimed hundreds of thousands of people in the 14 districts lying between Lake Kyoga and the southern borders of Sudan and displaced at least 1.5 million more.

The region has been in the grips of war since 1986 when the Lord's Resistance Army took up arms against the then new government of President Yoweri Museveni. The rebels have committed atrocities and caused untold suffering. They have severed people's limbs, displaced civilians including women and children; abducted children to serve as combatants and sex slaves.

The conflict in northern Uganda has continued to take its toll, in socio-cultural, economic, political, humanitarian and psychological terms. Former UN under secretary-general for humanitarian affairs, Jan Egeland, described it as the most forgotten humanitarian situation in the world. Since then, the top leaders of the rebel group including Joseph Kony have been indicted by the International Criminal Court and listed on the US list of terrorist organizations.

Attempts at dialogue and reconciliation have kept eluding the country thereby prolonging the region's suffering and denying its people the much-needed development. The closest the country ever came to a political solution to the conflict was when Betty Bigombe, a minister then in the government of President Yoweri Museveni negotiated an agreement

with the rebels in the jungles which unfortunately crumbled at the last minute with the rebels failing to sign it.

However, all hope is not lost. In 2006 the government of Uganda and the LRA rebels opened peace talks in Juba, the capital of Southern Sudan, under the mediation of Southern Sudanese Vice-President Riek Machar. The talks, to which the Ugandan government was represented by a ministerial delegation led by Minister of Internal Affairs, Dr Ruhakana Rugunda, and the rebels were represented by a delegation led by a chief negotiator, were overseen by a special UN envoy and former President of Mozambique, Joachim Chissano. The negotiations have ended and the only remaining bit is for President Museveni and rebel leader Joseph Kony to sign a comprehensive peace agreement.

President Yoweri Museveni says the rebels have been receptive to peace talks because they have been militarily weakened and therefore are in need of a "soft landing" but the rebels have threatened renewed armed hostilities if peace talks break down.

The road to recovery for northern Uganda involves first and foremost the resolution of the conflict and then the socio-economic development of the region which would also involve the psychological healing of the people of the region.

With regard to the role of radio, much as it could be instrumental in fuelling the conflict, evidence will show that Mega FM has instead been critical in de-escalating conflict. The radio station has become a very important source of information relied upon by the general population in northern Uganda. Evidence will also show that the station has played a major part in encouraging LRA members to abandon rebellion.

This study therefore seeks to establish how radio (Mega FM) can help build peace in conflict situations by using their wide appeal and popularity in a mediating role, by strengthening civil society and promoting the peace agenda.

## **1.2 Uganda**

The country is located on the east African plateau averaging about 1,100m above sea level, and this slopes very steadily downwards to the Sudanese Plain to the north. The country contains a varied landscape of savanna, dense forests, and tall mountains, as well as Lake Victoria, the largest lake in Africa, and the source of the Nile River. Although landlocked, Uganda contains many large lakes besides Lake Victoria, there is Lake Kyoga, Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake George. The country lies almost completely within the Nile basin. Its capital city is Kampala.

Uganda is an ethnically diverse nation with a deeply ingrained intellectual and artistic culture. It was the site of several powerful kingdoms, most notably Buganda and Bunyoro, before the arrival of European colonists in the late 19th century. Today, five traditional Bantu kingdoms have remained enjoying some degrees of cultural autonomy – Toro, Ankole, Busoga, Bunyoro and Buganda.

Uganda became a British protectorate in 1894, and its present borders were established in 1926. It gained independence from British rule in 1962. In the 1970s and early 1980s the nation suffered two bloody dictatorial regimes, under Idi Amin and Milton Obote, and two wars. In 1986 Uganda came under the leadership of Yoweri Museveni, who introduced democratic and economic reforms in the predominantly agricultural economy.

## **1.3 Media in Uganda**

Uganda is a pioneer in the liberalization of the media in Africa. Private radio and TV have mushroomed since the government loosened controls in 1993. By late 2006 the central region around Kampala was home to more than 40 radio stations and around 10 TV stations. Rural radio stations serve various ethnic groups and there is a cluster of faith-based radio stations. Print media led by the state-owned New Vision also enjoy considerable independence. Radio is the most popular medium due to ease of access for most of the population.

## **1.4 Northern Uganda**

Northern Uganda comprises some 14 districts lying between Lake Kyoga in central Uganda and the Sudan border. The districts include Gulu, Lira, Apac, Pader, Kitgum, Adjumani, Amuru, Amolatar, Oyam, Masindi, Moyo, among others.

## **1.5 Gulu District**

The geographic focus of this study is Gulu, a district in Northern Uganda. Its name comes from the commercial centre, the town of Gulu. The district lies 332 kilometers north of the capital Kampala. It is one of the districts forming the historical homeland of the Acholi ethnic group. It covers an area of 11,732 square kilometres comprised of arable land, game reserves, forest coverage, and open waters and swamps (Gulu District Information Portal).

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Gulu District has historically been seen as the most important and influential of the northern districts. It shares borders with seven other districts as well as Sudan. The district has been the location of much of the insurgent fighting by the LRA and is the birthplace of both Alice Lakwena (who led the Holy Spirit Movement rebel group in the late 1980s, a precursor to the LRA), and Joseph Kony (who leads the LRA rebels). Over 90% of the population was displaced in the LRA war, mostly into camps clustered around towns and trading centres. To avoid abduction by the LRA, thousands of children used to travel from rural areas to seek refuge in towns every night. The dominant language is Luo.

## **1.6 Media in Gulu District**

Gulu has five radio stations, three of which stand out as key players. The other two have a very limited listenership. One of them, Catholic station Radio Maria, broadcasts prayers, sermons and religious instruction. Editors at rival stations say the pursuit of advertising revenue is not its priority.

There are no newspapers printed locally in Gulu, but national dailies (The New Vision and The Daily Monitor) are available. The only vernacular (Luo-language) newspaper is



Rupiny, a Kampala-based daily published by the government-owned New Vision Printing and Publishing Company. The district has no access to free-to-view TV. Pay-TV is available in leading hotels.

### **1.7 Mega FM**

Mega FM was founded in October 2002 to "bridge the information and communication gap with a view to enhancing the peace process and spurring development in the region". It broadcasts from Gulu on 102.1 MHz and 103.1 MHz.

It was set up with 100 per cent funding from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). It was later handed to the Ugandan government. A Mega FM brochure, obtained by the researcher says the station "is editorially and financially independent".

Justin Oryema Boswell, the programme manager, says it was founded through a joint project involving DFID, the Ugandan government and the local community. "The community donated land for the station's building and the government provided political goodwill," he says.

Mega FM is based at Independence House, plot 11/13, Olya Road in the centre of Gulu town. It uses a pair of 2 KW transmitters which cover a radius of 150 km around Gulu town. The signal reaches the entire Gulu District and the neighbouring districts of Kitgum, Pader, Lira, Apac, Adjumani, Amuru, Amolatar, Oyam, parts of Masindi District And areas of southern Sudan close to the Ugandan border.

Eighty per cent of Mega FM's programming is in Luo, which is spoken by about 90 per cent of locals. It is also understood by most ethnic communities in northern Uganda and southern Sudan, including the Langi, the Alur, the Kumam the Acholi as well as people from Kenya's Luo community.

Mega FM also broadcasts in English, Swahili and Madi, a language widely spoken in Uganda's northwest.

A survey conducted in 2005 by the Steadman Group on commissioned from DFID, showed that Mega FM was the most popular radio station in northern Uganda, with an audience share of 48 per cent.

The station has 40 staff; 25 of them full-time.

### **1.8 Conflict – causes, types, motivations and solutions**

*We should look in society not for consensus, but for ineliminable and acceptable conflicts, and for rationally controlled hostilities, as the normal condition of mankind...Harmony and inner consensus come with death.*

Stuart Hampshire (1914 - 2004)

Conflict is a synonym for incompatible or irreconcilable variables in society such as values, beliefs and loyalties. Conflict only exists when incompatibility of interests and values is perceived by the two parties in a relationship.

Conflict has also been used to refer to inconsistencies in motions, sentiments, purposes or claims of entities, and sometimes to the process of resolving these inconsistencies. When the values of two systems are said to be in conflict for example the communist and democratic systems, it may mean that a person cannot rationally believe in the two systems at the same time; or that some process of propaganda, education, synthesis or war is going on to reconcile them or for one to supersede the other.

The term *Conflict* is derived from the Latin word *confligere* which means to strike together. This meaning had a physical rather than moral connotation, implying two or more things moving together to occupy the same space at the same time. In this case the logical inconsistency and the process of solution are the identical.

Social tension has been defined as the condition which arises from inconsistencies among initiatives in the structure of a society. Ideologies accepted by different groups within a society may be inconsistent without creating tension; but if initiatives or actions taken by individuals or groups in accord with those inconsistent ideologies, and if these actions lead to contact, then tension arises.

Inconsistency



Tension



Conflict



War

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These phenomena within a society may be considered distinct but they constitute a series in which each succeeding term includes those that precede it.

Conflict is a natural and inevitable part of all human relationships and occurs at all levels of society. When parties believe that they have incompatible goals, their main motive is to:

1. Neutralize
2. Injure, and / or
3. Eliminate

This will determine the type of conflict. The various types are:

*Physical Conflict* – Two or more entities try to occupy the same space at the same time.

*Political Conflict* – A group tries to impose its policy on others.

*Ideological conflicts* – Systems of thought or values struggle with each other.

*Legal conflicts* – Controversies over claims or demands are adjusted by mutually recognized procedures.

Conflict can be carried out through different methods, mainly:

1. Coercive /Physical Methods

Each party seeks to control or destroy. War involves disorganization of the enemy's forces, communications, sources of supply, capture of his material, imprisonment of forces, driving the enemy away from strategic points and occupation of territory.

2. Non-Coercive / Moral Methods

Involves persuading the other party to change his policy, ideology or claims, to isolate the other or defeat him in accordance with the rules of the game. Persuasion may be conducted by propaganda.

There are four key motivations to conflict:

1. Group motivation

This mostly applies to political conflicts whereby groups wish to gain either independence or control of the state or power. The group mobilizes group identity on the basis of ideology or common ethnic or religious identities. Such conflicts are usually sustained over long periods of time and most have been attributed to underlying problems or differences such as access to economic or political resources which provide people and their leader's reason for violence.

Frank Stewart refers to these as 'horizontal inequalities' based on the view that whenever cultural differences coincide with economic and political differences between groups, they can cause deep resentment which lead to tension and violent struggle.

## 2. Private gain motivation

Also referred to as the 'greed hypothesis'. People who fight have their own private motives for doing so based on a cost – benefit analysis. Such individuals may also have loyalty to the group that is fighting. The private gain hypothesis is based on rational choice or informed decision with a clear motive of gain.

In such cases, group identities are regarded as instruments to help these individuals fight or are used in such a manner that they enable an individual benefit to their own (group) detriment.

## 3. Failure of social contract

Social stability is based on a social agreement between people and government. When there is a functioning social contract, there is stability. People accept state authority as long as the state will provide and deliver services and economic resources. If the government reneges on its duty, people have grievances which lead to tension then conflict. People yearn for legitimacy, order and welfare and the government has to provide these.

## 4. Environmental pressure

According to Thomas Homer Dickson, contests over control of declining resources often intensified by population pressure is a major cause of conflict in the world. As the population increases, natural resources become insufficient.

A conflict is solved by definitive acceptance of a decision by all parties. According to the UN charter chapter 6, conflicts can be relatively solved in these ways:

1. Negotiation
2. Mediation
3. Conciliation
4. Commissions of Inquiry
5. Arbitration
6. Judicial Procedures
7. Resort to regional agencies

### **1.9 Theories of Conflict**

*Human needs theory:* The basic assumption is that human needs are a key motivational force behind human behaviour and social interaction. There exist specific and relatively enduring human needs which individuals will inevitably strive to satisfy even at the cost of personal disorientation or social disruption.

Human needs are the main foundation of human social, economic and political interactions. People who are denied certain needs show it conspicuously – indicating the power of human needs.

All social systems must respond to individual need if they are to maintain their legitimacy and stability. If they do not, they will be seen as useless, and unstable, and there will be pressure to change them.

Universal human needs that are self evident originate from our humanity for example, psychological, physical, physiological needs, and the need for recognition as a human being. Societies with high human need satisfaction have less conflict than those with low satisfaction.

*Psychoanalytic theory:* This theory deals with inter-group conflict and cooperation. Whenever several groups are brought together in common and shared circumstances for a length of time, they invariably develop a distinctive identity, decided social structure with patterned interactions, mechanisms for accomplishing tasks, and a sense of pride and loyalty.

These are considerably heightened when groups are faced with tasks requiring them to work together to attain a common goal. If or when certain groups come into contact with others when there is a possible conflict of interest, there follows insidious comparisons where one group is seen as superior to the other in a variety of ways, while the other is seen as inferior or possessing undesirable traits. The consequence of this is that social distance will be established, and if such groups are brought into competition then comparative images will become stereotyped. Injuring, neutralizing and eliminating become possible outcomes.

#### **1.10 Objectives of the Study**

The researcher sought to:

1. Determine whether Mega FM has significantly aided the progress of the peace process.
2. Assess whether the station has provided recreation to distract people from thoughts of and disposition to war.

#### **1.11 Hypotheses of the Study**

1. Mega FM has made a contribution to the peace process by spreading ideas of and information about peace in its programming.
2. Mega FM has provided refreshing entertainment to the people of northern Uganda and distracted them from thoughts of war.

### **1.12 Scope of the Study**

- The study will be geographically limited to Gulu District in northern Uganda.
- In regard to content, the researcher will concentrate on Mega FM's programming and how it has impacted peace efforts.
- Mega FM listeners will be interviewed on their perception of the station's contribution to peace building.

### **1.13 Definition of terms**

#### **1. Conflict**

It refers to inconsistencies in motions, sentiments, purposes or claims of entities and sometimes the process of solving these inconsistencies.

#### **2. Resolution**

It refers to the process of finding a sustainable end to a problem or dispute.

#### **3. Conflict Resolution**

Conflict resolution refers to a variety of approaches aimed at ending conflicts by addressing their causes as a way of solving them.

### **1.14 Justification of the Study**

Although a lot has been written about the war in northern Uganda, very little literature exists on the role of communication; especially the role of radio in the conflict. Most of the available scholarly literature and news material is on the brutality of the LRA rebels and the atrocities they have committed. The researcher will show the positive peace-building role played by radio in promoting peace.

In the analysis of conflict situations, causes of and parties to the conflict, and continuous reporting on the events taking place in a conflict situation are usually the main focus. This paper does not seek to dwell on conflict itself but rather on what is being done to bring about its transformation and ultimately resolution.



As far as the media is concerned, the focus in conflict situations is usually on reporting the conflict events – reporting to mirror society rather than to change it for the better. Further, the media tends to apportion blame to one party or the other in a conflict when what they should be doing is finding or addressing the root causes of the problem in order to arrive at a solution.

The destructive impacts of media being used negatively have been so palpably evident in the Rwandan genocide and the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. This can and is coming to an end as will be depicted in this paper. Journalists can expand beyond their regular fare of "if it bleeds, it leads" reporting to include new themes such as the human and economic costs of conflict, the profiling of bridge-builders in divided societies, the rebuilding of civil society, and the dynamics of peace processes, to name a few.

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Literature on communication and conflict more often than not advises on what the media should do, how the media should be – ideals that seem to be long shots. Hardly do they give examples media that have been exception to the rule of "conflict sells". This paper seeks to highlight the powerful and positive role that can be played by a small radio station in a region that has been plagued by conflict for over two decades as opposed to focusing on the conflict and its negative attributes. This is not in denial of the pain and suffering that has been caused by the conflict.

## **CHAPTER TWO: *Literature Review***

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter covers a review of existing works on the subject. The chapter begins by analyzing media and the role they play in conflict situations. The crux of this chapter is the theoretical framework which focuses on the agenda-setting theory of mass communication. The chapter defines agenda setting and gives its relevance and application to conflict resolution.

#### **2.1.0 MEDIA AND CONFLICT**

The role of the media in conflict situations may conjure up two negative images. The first is one of nationalistic propaganda aimed at heightening tensions among ethnic and religious groups, which serves as a catalyst to violence, as was the case in Bosnia and Rwanda. The second is of media reporters quickly rushing to a scene of conflict in order to provide extensive and graphic minute-by-minute reporting only to quickly leave the scene once the bloodshed is over.

According to VOA *Conflict Resolution Initiative*, hate media follow similar patterns in the way that they prepare the public to support bloody conflict, instigate the public to partake in violent actions and work to block the peaceful resolution of conflict. This destructive role of the media has been borne out in a number of contexts –e.g. promotion of genocide in Rwanda and [the Holocaust in] Germany and in ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, Angola and Zaire as well as the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East.

Fragile political transitions, as was the case in Kenya after the 2007 elections, are very vulnerable to violent outbreaks, and hate media is most effective in achieving its aims in information-deprived societies characterized by a lack of media diversity.

However, the media has the potential for ameliorating conflict and healing the social wounds of conflict. Mass media can be used to broadcast messages of peace and reconciliation through song and other forms of entertainment in such diverse settings as

South Africa, Burundi, and Macedonia as well as a roundtable format which brings adversaries together to engage in seeking common ground.

The media is an instrument of conflict resolution, when the information it presents is reliable, respects human rights, and represents diverse views. It is the kind of media that upholds accountability and exposes malfeasance, one that enables a society to make well-informed choices, which is the precursor of democratic governance. It is a media that reduces conflict and fosters human security. Such a media culture is a vital tool in transcending conflict, working towards a just and lasting peace by going beyond the problems of the present.

In general, the media can have four inputs on any peace process. First, they help in *defining the political atmosphere* in which the peace process takes place. Second, the media has an *active influence on the strategy and behaviour of the stakeholders* to the conflict. Third, the media has an important influence on the *nature of debate* about a peace process. Fourth, the media can *buttress or weaken public legitimacy of the stakeholders* involved in the peace process. (*Media and Conflict in Sri Lanka. A Paper by Mr. Sanjana Hattotuwa for Consultative Workshop on Managing Ethnic and Religious Conflict in Southern Asia: Role of Education and the Media Centre for Policy Alternatives, Colombo U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington, DC. 9-11 May 2003*)

A report by Gordon Adam and Raj Thamotheram, "The Media's Role in Conflict," identifies three roles that the media can play in conflict; these are:

- 1) **Media as Mediator**, as demonstrated in the Pulitzer Prize winning *Akron Beacon Journal's* "Coming Together Project" that brought Black and White community members together to discuss race relations in the wake of the Rodney King trial;
- 2) **Media as Social Educator**, as demonstrated by the DFID-funded Mega FM in northern Uganda, UNICEF-funded Radio Voice of Peace in Ethiopia; and

3) **Media as Pro-Social Propaganda**, as demonstrated by UN Peacekeeping Radio in Namibia, Cambodia, and elsewhere.

The 'media and conflict' debate is not about taking sides in reporting conflict -except the side of peace and peace-building- and about journalists already being a third party in any conflict they are covering. Consequently, the argument that there is a moral imperative to use that access [to conflict situations] constructively is steadily gaining ground.

What role can the media play in helping prevent conflicts from escalating? Potentially a big one, agree both conflict mediators and journalists, but they disagree on how. Positive journalism is what we need, argues John Marks, president of the Washington-based NGO, Search for Common Ground. Asking questions like: Where do you agree? - Instead of focusing only on the disagreements. Most journalists react to statements like these by pointing to the importance of responsible coverage of conflict situations: 'That's a big contribution already.' And journalists from the poorer parts of the world point to the fact that a lack of money and time prevents them from covering conflicts at all. 'Talking about media and conflict prevention is a luxury.'

Conflict sells; cooperation, or the process of resolving conflict, does not. It could be argued that, because of this assumption, the media tend to dramatize conflicts (either openly or tacitly) by focusing on irreconcilable differences between the parties, extreme positions and inflammatory statements, violent or threatening acts and win-or-lose outcomes. Furthermore, most news media ordinarily only turn their attention to conflicts at points of high public interest, such as dramatic escalation phases, unusually violent incidents, peace treaties, or other events considered especially newsworthy. (European Platform for conflict prevention and transformation – *Better Media, less Conflict.*)

### 2.1.1 RADIO

"Radio can be a powerful weapon in the hands of those who know how to use it," Nazi propaganda chief, Joseph Goebbels.

## **2.2 The Conflict in northern Uganda**

As the rest of Uganda has been peaceful, northern Uganda has since 1986 been devastated by war between President Museveni's Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) and the rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The brutal conflict has affected every facet of life in regions majorly inhabited by the Acholi and Langi ethnic groups. Parts of eastern and northwestern Uganda have also been hit by rebel ambushes and looting sprees. Fighting was heaviest around Gulu, Kitgum, Lira, and Apac.

The LRA is a successor of the Holy Spirit Movement which waged a violent rebel campaign against Museveni's government in 1986 under the leadership of Alice Lakwena, an aunt of Joseph Kony. The Holy Spirit Movement operated in northern Uganda and espoused the same causes as the LRA. Kony says he is fighting to ensure that Uganda is governed in accordance with the 10 Biblical commandments. It is no wonder, therefore, that there is allusion to God in both rebel groups' names.

The insurgency of the (LRA) has produced untold suffering in northern Uganda including some 1.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). UN Under-Secretary-General Jan Egeland has termed the situation the worst humanitarian disaster in the world. In February 2004, in one of the worst atrocities since the conflict began, the LRA massacred approximately 200 civilians, revealing some deficiencies in the government's capacity to defend the population and defeat the insurgency. The conflict seriously blemishes the record of President Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM), who has otherwise brought relative stability to the country (International Crisis Group).

Persistent rebel activity in northern Uganda has left the region in a state of crisis and turmoil. Despite several attempts by the government to stamp out this conflict, the LRA, often referred to as the 'Kony rebels', have persisted, never strong enough to seriously destabilize the government, but never weak enough to die out completely (Human Rights Watch/Africa 1997).

### 2.3 Key facts about the LRA

June 8 (Reuters) – A threatened offensive by regional forces against Uganda's LRA guerillas has little chance of crushing the elusive band that could even worsen instability in a swathe of central Africa.

Here are some facts about Joseph Kony and his LRA rebels:

- Self-proclaimed mystic Kony began one of a series of popular uprisings in northern Uganda after President Yoweri Museveni seized power in 1986. But his tactics of kidnapping recruits and killing civilians alienated supporters.
- The LRA is [in]famous for abducting children for use as soldiers, porters, and "wives". Although there are no universally accepted figures, the children are believed to number many thousands. Some are freed after days, others never escape.
- Tens of thousands of people have been killed in the 22-year war. A landmark truce was signed in August 2006 and was later renewed. But talks brokered by Southern Sudan collapsed in April after Kony failed to sign a final peace deal.
- The main sticking point was arrest warrants for LRA leaders issued by the International Criminal Court in The Hague. Rebel negotiators had insisted the indictments be scrapped before Kony signs off on a comprehensive peace agreement.
- Kony's force was once backed by Khartoum as a proxy militia, although Sudan now says it has cut all ties with it. Kony was reported to have quit his hideouts in Southern Sudan in 2005 for the Democratic Republic of Congo's Garamba forest. Later in 2008, he was reported to have transferred some of his fighters to the Central African Republic.

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- Many northern Ugandans revile the LRA for its atrocities, but also blame Museveni for setting up camps for nearly two million people as part of its counter-insurgency strategy, fuelling one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.
- Kony has said he wants to rule Uganda by the Biblical Ten Commandments, but at the peace talks in Southern Sudan his negotiators also articulated a range of northern grievances, including what they termed theft of cattle by Museveni's troops and demand for more political power.

#### **2.4 Causes of the conflict in northern Uganda**

According to President Museveni, (Museveni Y.K. 1997, *Sowing the Mustard Seed*), the initial reason for the conflict was that the Acholi and Langi communities were deprived of their ability to get rich from looting other Ugandans [as they had done] when their kinsmen, Milton Obote and Tito Okello Lutwa, were in power.

Museveni (1997:178) further states that: "It was purely tribal opportunism that brought such numbers (50,000) of people to their [rebels'] side. In other words, the reason why those rebels in the north, organized on a tribal basis, were fighting for control of the national government was that the NRM as a government had stopped them from looting." Thus in the beginning the NRM saw the initial causes of the war as resource-related. The issue was who would be the primary beneficiary of Uganda's wealth (Acayo, Mnjama).

According to the LRA spokesman in an interview conducted by the Uganda Democratic Coalition (UDC) newsletter entitled 'Museveni's Regime under Attack' (1995), the LRA regard Museveni as a self-imposed dictator, denying Ugandans their civil and human rights, selling Ugandans to foreign exploiters, making Uganda a colony of the Tutsi who have turned Ugandan citizens into foreigners in their own country, resisting people's demand for multi-party democracy and a federal system, concocting a constitution which is intended to legitimize Museveni's brand of dictatorship, committing mass murders of innocent people in northern and eastern Uganda, and turning Uganda

into a terrorist camp where he trains and supports guerrilla forces against neighbouring countries.

According to Okumu (1997), *The Effect of War and Government Policies in northern Uganda from 1986*, there was mistrust [between the northerners and Museveni] when Museveni failed to keep the peace agreement signed between his National Resistance Army guerrillas [when he was a bush fighter] and the Ugandan government [of Tito Okello Lutwa]. The war was basically due to misunderstanding and mishandling of the situation.

The conflict in northern Uganda also involved Sudan. The Sudanese government had repeatedly accused the Ugandan government of providing military support to the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) [which waged a two-decade rebellion against the Khartoum government]. The Sudanese government therefore began to aid the LRA, relying on them to help fight the SPLA. This aid turned the LRA into more of a threat than ever, since the rebels were now armed with land mines and machine guns in place of rifles, machetes and stones (Acayo, Mnjama. *The Print Media and Conflict Resolution in Northern Uganda*).

According to the International Crisis Group, a Brussels-based lobby group, the LRA insurgency lacks any clear (and negotiable) political objective. Its claim to represent the grievances of the Acholi people is at odds with its methods. Because LRA actions are difficult to place within a coherent strategy aimed at achieving an identifiable political outcome, it is also difficult to develop an effective counter-strategy. LRA's targeting of the Acholi has created a self-perpetuating cycle of loss, resentment and helplessness that feeds the conflict but also widens the gap between government and local populations (ICG, 2004).



#### **2.4.1 Characteristics of the Conflict**

The conflict has four main characteristics according to the International Crisis Group.

First, it is a struggle between the government and the LRA.

Secondly, it is between the predominantly Acholi LRA and the wider Acholi population, who bear the brunt of the violence that includes indiscriminate killings and the abduction of children to become fighters, auxiliaries and slaves. The violence is aimed at cowing the Acholi and discrediting the government.

Thirdly, it is fuelled by animosity between Uganda and Sudan, who support rebellions in each other's territory.

Finally, it continues the North-South conflict that has marked Ugandan politics and society since independence (ICG, 2004).

#### **2.4.2 The Situation Today**

Peace talks between the LRA and the government have been underway in Juba since 2006, mediated by the semi-autonomous government of Southern Sudan.

In August 2006 the Ugandan government signed a truce with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Under the truce the rebels would leave Uganda and come under the protection of the southern Sudanese regional government. The ceasefire was to be followed by peace negotiations.

Still unresolved was the issue of war crimes charges brought against leaders of the LRA by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Ugandan government offered amnesty to the LRA leaders, but ICC officials said they were still seeking the top LRA leaders, including its founder, Joseph Kony. The ICC has brought charges against them of murder, rape, using young girls as sex slaves, and forcibly conscripting children into the rebel army. In October 2006 the LRA said it would refuse to sign a peace treaty unless

the ICC arrest warrants were dropped. There were signs that the truce was beginning to unravel, as some LRA units were leaving their designated assembly points in Sudan.

A report in the New Vision newspaper of April 14<sup>th</sup> 2008 titled 'Has Kony killed his new deputy?' stated that The LRA second in command, Okot Odhiambo, also an ICC indictee, was feared dead. According to the report, rebel chief Joseph Kony killed Odhiambo and eight others after a disagreement over the peace agreement. Kony later confirmed through his spokesman David Nyekorach-Matsanga to having killed him. Apparently, Odhiambo's death was one of the reasons for the failure to sign the 10<sup>th</sup> April final peace pact.

In April 2008, the LRA leader twice failed to turn up to sign a final peace accord, and cut off all communication with mediators which caused the peace process to stall. In June 2008 there were clashes between the LRA and Southern Sudanese troops, raising fears that the peace process was over. He later said he had refused to sign the peace deal because he did not understand some clauses in the final peace agreement.

An article by Melina Platas titled 'Kony can hide but can he run?' in *The Independent*, a Ugandan weekly magazine (May 16 – 21) gives an account of the situation. Exactly one month after Joseph Kony failed on the signing of the final peace agreement between the LRA and the government of Uganda, he again failed to meet a delegation of mediators and leaders from northern Uganda who traveled to meet him at the Sudan-Congo border on May 10. At Kony's request, the team was meant to explain to him how traditional Acholi justice [Mato Put] and the special division of the High Court [set up by the Ugandan government to try him in the place of the ICC] would function following the signing of the agreement. His supposed confusion regarding these specifics was his most recent excuse for renegeing on his April 10 commitment. As Kony continues to dawdle and delay, no one has proven willing or able to hold him accountable to his increasingly meaningless comments.

Principally responsible for what was once termed “the biggest forgotten, neglected humanitarian crisis in the world”, the LRA, with its band of elusive and internationally wanted war criminals, has today devolved into a festering regional force at once coming apart at the seams while simultaneously maintaining its infamous capacity to wreak havoc on innocent civilians.

With his failure to sign the final peace agreement, Kony unsurprisingly succeeded in further drawing out the “peace process” that has done everything but ensure that everyone involved take decisive steps in bringing peace and reconstruction to the region.

Yes, the war as it was known in northern Uganda for over two decades appears to have ended but in the process, a new force has been spawned.

While the LRA of old was an isolated and relatively unknown force allowed to terrorise northern Uganda through either the lack of capacity or lack of concern by the government of Uganda – the new LRA finds itself very much in the spotlight and unable to maintain the almost mystic aura that once surrounded Kony and company.

Penetration into the once isolated bubble that was the LRA force has demonstrated to both the rebels and outsiders alike that despite his spiritual claims, Kony is after all just another man.

The LRA has been moving across the region trying to locate itself in the most secure and strategic jungle spot. It darts from Garamba to Ri-Kwangba to Southern Sudan to Central African Republic and back again leaving behind smatterings of LRA camps and attacking and abducting as they go.

And whereas abductees and lower ranking rebels once feared defection - out of punishment by either the group itself or by the communities to which they will return – a number of events and factors have succeeded in making rebel reintegration into society a much more attractive option for would-be defectors. It is perhaps the demystification of

the LRA, together with the increasing impatience with the drawn-out peace process, which has put Kony on the defensive and led to a spate of abductions throughout the region in the past few months.

The perceived vulnerability of Kony and his rebels has implications for the behaviour of the group. More members could see defecting or surrendering as an attractive choice in the months to come. A recent UN report stated that 300 to 500 abductions had occurred in the region over the past few months.

Today there is relative peace in northern Uganda owing to the migration of the LRA away from the area. Recent abductions have occurred practically everywhere except Uganda. Unfortunately, this has created a recipe for collective action failure. Kony is now both everyone's problem and no one's problem.

## **2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In cognizance of the fact that no study can be conducted in a philosophical vacuum, the researcher will base his investigation on agenda-setting theory. The researcher will first explore the concept and theory of agenda setting and then give its application to the study.

### **2.5.1 What is Agenda Setting?**

The term agenda setting was coined by McCombs and Shaw (1972; 1993) to describe a phenomenon which had long been noticed and studied in the context of election campaigns. The core idea is that the news media indicate to the public what the main issues of the day are and this is reflected in what the public perceives as the main issues.

As Treneman and McQuail pointed out, "The evidence strongly suggests that people think about what they are told but at no level do they think what they are told." (1961; 178)

The evidence collected at that time and much since consists of data showing a correspondence between the order of importance given to media "issues" and the order of significance attached to the same issues by politicians and the public.

According to McQuail, agenda setting refers to a process of media influence (intended or unintended) by which the relative importance of news events, issues or personages in the public mind are affected by the order of presentation (or relative salience) in news reports. It is assumed that the more the media give attention to a topic, the greater the importance attributed to it by the news audience. The media influence is not in the direction of opinion but only on what people think about. The concept has mainly been applied to political communication and election campaigns. Despite the near certainty that the process does not occur as hypothesized, it is not easy to prove, because media take their priorities from public opinion as well from politicians.

Dearing and Rogers (1996) define agenda setting as "an ongoing competition among issue protagonists to gain the attention of media professionals, the public and policy elites."

Lazersfeld et al (1994) referred to it as the power to "structure issues" Politicians seek to convince voters that the most important issues are those with which they are most closely identified. This is an essential part of advocacy and attempts at influencing public opinion. As a hypothesis, agenda setting seems to have escaped the general conclusion that perspective campaigns have little or no effect. This is the essence of the agenda setting hypothesis.

### **2.5.2 Agenda Setting Theory**

Early in the 1960s scholars were rejecting the idea that the media had powerful and immediate effects on their audiences. While some of the earliest research had seemed to point to that conclusion, the large-scale studies of the 1940's and 1950's had not supported such a view. The accumulation of research seemed more consistent with a

minimal effects interpretation. At the same time, sensitive observers of the media and their audiences continued to feel that people were influenced in their beliefs and actions because of the repeated exposure to the content of mass communications. Such influences might not show up in the kind of research studies that had been conducted.

It was entirely possible, it was felt, that the influences were long-term, subtle, and difficult to pin down by the experiments, survey studies and other research efforts that had been in vogue. It was time, many communication scholars believed to look in new directions. Perhaps, they felt, it was time to return to the obvious facts about mass media themselves and how they functioned in contemporary society.

One obvious fact about the media in contemporary society is the constant flow of news. Another obvious fact is that large numbers of people read their newspapers and listen to news on radio. Some citizens rely more on television for their news, still others have little interest in daily events. Nevertheless, the mass media still are a significant source of detailed information about what is going on for very large numbers of people.

Another obvious fact is that the news industry seems more interested in some events than in others. It is widely understood that the material presented in the press is selective. That selectivity stems from its limited capacity to provide total surveillance from factors imposed on those who do the gate-keeping, and from the financial limitations placed on media that must survive as profit-making business enterprises. Such variables go a long way to account for the manner in which the press decides what stories to select, follow up, emphasize, interpret, and present in particular ways.

The essential point is that there is a constant flow of information from the press to its audience. Day after day, week after week, news media provide their audiences with information on a list of topics and issues that seem important to those who manage the news media. That information, selective or distorted as it may be, provides the most basic source for millions of people about what is taking place in their society. It seemed inconceivable to many media scholars that such a flow of information simply had no

effect on those who received it. The idea that the news media powerfully controlled people's attitudes, beliefs and behavior might not hold water, but the press obviously brings to their attention a selected agenda of topics and issues to respond to and think about.

Walter Lippman noted that since people had only limited opportunities to observe important events in a firsthand manner, they were dependent upon the press to provide them with information on what those events were like. The role of the press, he observed, was to provide us with views of "the world outside" from which we can form "pictures in our heads". Lippman understood very well that there was often a significant gap between the accounts of the press and what had actually taken place. Aside from the problem of outright distortion, the essential theoretical question that would emerge from such considerations was whether the topics selected by the press to represent the "world outside" limited the kind of events about which people could form interpretations of what was happening.

Furthermore, if the press implied in some way by its presentation of topics that one event was more important than another, did readers come to believe that is it how it was in reality? Were the "pictures in our heads" (whatever their nature and dimensions) ranked in our personal assessments of significance in a manner parallel to the way in which they were covered and differentially emphasized by the press and daily flow of news?

According to Rogers and Dearing (1987), we need to distinguish clearly between three different agendas: the priorities of the media, those of the public and those of policy. These interact in complex ways and may have effects in different directions. They also offer several generalizations about agenda setting.

- Different media do tend to agree about the relative salience of a set of issues.

- Media agendas do not closely match “real world” indicators. It is not the absolute significance of an issue that counts but the relative strength of forces and people trying to define and promote an issue.
- Finally, the “position of an issue on the media agenda importantly determines that issue’s salience in the public agenda” (1996:192).

One common condition for agenda setting is that different mass media tend to share the same set of news priorities. This condition is challenged by the availability of many new online news services, plus the greater chance for a ‘new user’ to seek news according to a personal agenda.

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However, evidence is insufficient to show a causal connection between the various issue ‘agendas’. For that we need to know the content of [political] party programmes, evidence of opinion change over time in a given section of the public, plus content analysis showing media attention to different issues in the relevant period. We also need some indication of relevant media use by the public concerned. This study through content analysis indicates how Mega FM set the conflict resolution agenda in northern Uganda.

## 2.6 Application of Agenda Setting Theory to Conflict Resolution

The media has various opportunities to set the agenda in conflict resolution:

**1. Social construction:** First and foremost, the media are the social constructs that house and facilitate mass communication; they are “the institutions and forms in which ideas, information and attitudes are transmitted and received.” The media create the space for communication within societies and among communities and between nations.

**2. Creation of social conversation:** The media have the ability to create either a societal conversation or clash. In the words of communications scholar James Carey, “we first produce the world by symbolic work and then take up residence in the world we have



produced." Berger and Chafee (1987:17) concur when they say communication "seeks to understand the production, processing and effects of symbol and signal systems by developing testable theories, containing lawful generalizations and effects."

**3. *Social responsibility:*** The media, when infused with a sense of social responsibility, can provide tools and strategies to manage and process the myths, images, collective memories, fears and needs that shape perceptions that drive human behaviour. The media reflect and create this myriad of internal complexities within society. They impress upon society and belligerents within it the fact that conflict may be natural and normal but violence is a choice - as is reconciliation.

**4. *Providing space for healing:*** The media can help turn collective storytelling into public acts of healing. Conflict resolution expert Jean-Paul Lederach explains, "People need opportunity and space to express to and with one another the trauma of loss and their grief at that loss, the anger that accompanies the pain and the memory of injustice experienced, and the media do provide this space."

The media through the telling of stories can assist in the releases feelings of shame and humiliation in victims so that the story becomes one of dignity and virtue. Transferring the shame from the victim to the perpetrator creates a sense of justice and retribution.

**5. *Public shaming:*** Besides, the media's capacity for public shaming is an extremely important one, especially in more traditional societies where concepts of honour and reputation still drive behaviour. Shaming is an effective tactic. It "encompasses all social processes of expressing the disapproval which have the intention or effect of invoking remorse in the person being shamed and/or condemnation by others who become aware of the shaming." When culpability and responsibility are acknowledged, shaming becomes a form of public penitence.

**6. *Careful reporting:*** The media in a conflict atmosphere must not succumb to pressure to exploit or sensationalize stories which would traumatize victims and society in general.

Nor should they reduce testimonies to mere lists of atrocities which remove vital context and accountability. Careful reporting must facilitate societal conversation, respecting and being sensitive to victims.

**7. *Human rights advocacy:*** In societies emerging from conflict, media are also pivotal in advocating human rights. As Jean-Marie Vianney Kavumbagu puts it "The need to send and receive information quickly is ... a vital challenge to vulnerable people such as refugees, those displaced by war, asylum seekers, etc., who do not know their basic rights, which are frequently violated without anyone taking any notice."

**8. *Adherence to universal principles of good journalism:*** According to P. M. Maluki, *Communication and Conflict*, 2006 UON, the media plays different roles in conflict escalation and resolution. In reporting conflict, the media should follow certain principles of communication that guide journalists on how to operate as the fourth estate:

1. Independence: freedom from government control, advertisers and owners or proprietors
2. Fairness. Balance
3. Impartiality. Not taking sides. According all parties to a conflict respect.
4. Freedom of the press. Media should have access to information during a conflict.
5. Decency. There should be a sense of morality in the content.
6. Accuracy. Facts should be accurate and sources credible.
7. Responsibility. Moderate reporting to reflect and change society positively.

## CHAPTER THREE: *Research Methodology*

### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes and explains the various research methods utilized by the researcher in carrying out this study.

Research methods are all techniques that are used for conduction of research. Research methods or techniques therefore refer to the methods researchers use in performing research operations. In other words, all those methods which are used by the researcher during the course of studying a research problem are termed as research methods.

Since the object of research, particularly applied research, is to arrive at a solution for a given problem, the available data and the unknown aspects of the problem have to be related to each other to make a solution possible. Keeping this in view, research methods can be put into the following three groups:

1. Those methods that are concerned with the collection of data. These will be used where the data already available are not sufficient to arrive at the required solution. (Library and Field research)
2. Those statistical techniques that are used for establishing relationships between the data and the unknowns. (Data Analysis)
3. Those methods that are used to evaluate the accuracy of the results obtained. (Generalization, hypotheses testing and interpretation)

### **3.1 The Research Process**

For research to be carried out effectively certain series of steps or actions are necessary and these constitute the research process. This study will follow the following steps:

#### ***1. Formulation of the research problem.***

This involves the formulation of a general topic into a specific research problem whereby the researcher has to understand the problem thoroughly and rephrase it into some meaningful terms from an analytic point of view. The research problem of this study is to find out “The role of radio in conflict resolution”.

To make this problem easily analyzable, the researcher will carry out a case study of one radio station in northern Uganda, a conflict area. The researcher will then break down the role of the media in conflict resolution to three major areas which constitute the objectives and hypothesis of study. These are:

- Peace building
- Mass education, and
- Entertainment

These factors are the statement of objective and will determine the data that will be collected, the characteristics of the data which are relevant, relations which are to be explored, the choice of techniques to be used in these explorations and the form of the final report. Pertinent terms such as ‘conflict’, ‘resolution’ and others are also clearly defined along with formulation of the problem.

#### ***2. Literature review***

The researcher has to undertake an extensive literature survey connected with the problem of study. The researcher will utilize journals, magazines, media reports and books among other sources in a bid to examine existing works on the conflict in northern Uganda, the radio as a mass medium, conflict resolution, conflict theories and the agenda setting theory among other topics, as well as to determine what knowledge gaps need to be filled by this study.

### ***3. Development of hypotheses***

Working hypotheses are tentative assumptions made in order to draw out and test their logical or empirical consequences. The researcher has to clearly state working hypotheses of the study. These will guide the researcher by delimiting the area of research.

### ***4. Preparing the research design***

This refers to the conceptual structure within which the research will be carried out. The preparation of such a design would enable the researcher to be as efficient as possible in yielding maximal information. The purpose of the research design is to provide for the collection of relevant evidence with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money.

This depends on the research purpose. The purpose of the study is exploration (exploratory research). To explore the role of radio in conflict resolution is the purpose of this study.

### ***5. Determining sample design***

All items under consideration in any field of inquiry constitute a 'universe' or 'population'. A complete enumeration of all items in the 'population' is known as a census inquiry. Common practice is to select only few items from the 'population' or 'universe' for study purposes. The items so selected constitute a sample. The researcher will mainly utilize purposive and random sampling as will be explained further in this chapter.

### ***6. Collection of data***

In selecting the methods of collecting data the researcher will take into consideration the nature of the study, its objective and scope, budget, time and desired degree of accuracy. The researcher will collect data using personal interviews, code sheets and content analysis.

### ***7. Execution of the project***

The manner in which the project is executed determines whether the data collected is adequate and dependable. Since the study makes use of code sheets, the researcher will

code the questions and possible answers. For the interviews, the researcher will make the necessary arrangements with the interviewees and train the research assistant.

### **8. *Analysis of data***

After collecting the data, the researcher will have the task of analyzing it. Data analysis requires a number of closely related operations such as establishment of categories, the application of these categories to raw data through coding, tabulation and then the drawing of statistical inferences. The unwieldy data emanating mostly from open-ended questions will be condensed into few manageable groups and tables for further analysis.

At this stage, the researcher will use:

- a) Coding: To transform categories of data into symbols that can be tabulated and counted.
- b) Editing: To improve the quality of data for coding.
- c) Tabulation: To put classified data in the form of tables. This will be done with the help of SPSS.

### **9. *Hypothesis testing***

After analyzing the data, the researcher will be in a position to test the hypotheses of the study. The researcher has the option of various tests such as the Chi-square test, the t-test, and the F-test among others. Hypothesis testing will result in accepting or rejecting the hypothesis, upon which generalizations will be established.

### **10. *Generalizations and Interpretation***

Once the researcher has tested the hypotheses, it will be possible for him to arrive at a generalization. The real value of research lies in its ability to arrive at generalizations. The researcher will also seek to explain his findings on the basis of theory, which in this case is the agenda setting theory of mass communication. This is interpretation.

### **11. *Preparation of the report or thesis***

The researcher will prepare a report of what has been done. It will entail an introduction, summary of findings, main report, and conclusion.

### **3.2 Site description**

The geographic focus of this study on the role of Mega FM in conflict resolution is Gulu, a district in northern Uganda. Its name comes from the commercial centre, the town of Gulu. The district lies 332 kilometers north of the capital Kampala. It covers an area of 11,732 square kilometers comprised of arable land, game reserves, forest coverage, and open waters and swamps (Gulu District Information Portal).

The selection of Gulu district for the purpose of this study is because it has been heavily affected by the conflict in the region.

### **3.3 Sample Design and Sampling Procedures**

A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or the procedure the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample. Sample design may as well lay down the number of items to be included in the sample i.e. the size of the sample. Sample design is determined before data is collected. The researcher must select a sample design that is reliable and appropriate for his study.

While developing a sample design the researcher will focus on certain key points in relation to his topic of study:

- I) Type of universe – This is the clearly defined set of objects (the universe). The universe in the case of this study is the radio stations - what role do they play in bringing about resolution of conflicts? Another universe is the programming of the radio stations and listeners of Mega FM.
- II) Sampling unit – This may be a geographical unit, social unit or even and individual. The sampling unit in this study is a geographic one – Gulu District.
- III) Source list – Also known as sampling frame from which a sample is to be drawn. It contains names of all items of a universe and should be as representative as possible. In this study the source list contains names

of radio stations in Gulu District. These are – Mega FM, Radio King, Choice FM, Radio Maria and Radio Four. Another source list is that of all the programmes aired on Mega FM.

- IV) Size of the sample – This refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. In the case of this study, the sample size in terms of radio stations is only one – Mega FM. On the other hand the sample size in terms of programmes broadcast on Mega FM is 30 news, entertainment and talk show programmes. In terms of Mega Fm audiences the researcher will use a sample size of 30 listeners.
- V) Parameters of interest – This refers to the specific population factors that are of interest to the research. The parameters of interest in this study are the programmes broadcast by Mega FM that focus on peace, mass education and entertainment.
- VI) Budgetary constraints – Cost considerations have a major impact on the size and type of the sample. For this study, considering more than one radio station would have been unrealistic in terms of cost as this would have forced the researcher to spend a longer time in northern Uganda. Transport, food and accommodation expenses would have to be considered.
- VII) Sampling procedure – This refers to the technique or procedure used in selecting the items for the sample. This technique or procedure stands for the sample design itself. There are two types of sample designs – probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is based on the concept of random selection in which every subject in a population has equal chance of being selected, whereas non-probability sampling is based on ‘non-random’ sampling. This study used both probability and non-probability sampling.



### **3.3.1 Non-Probability Sampling**

This refers to that sampling procedure which does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has of being included in the sample. Non-probability sampling is also known as deliberate, purposive or judgmental sampling. In this type of sampling the items for the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher; his choice concerning the items remains supreme.

For this study, the researcher's choice determined the *conflict area of study*. Of all areas in the world facing conflict, the researcher chose northern Uganda for reasons of proximity, cost of travel, interest and knowledge of the region and the conflict among other factors.

Furthermore, the researcher selected the *particular district of study* – Gulu district, out of all the districts in northern Uganda including Arua, Lira, Apac, Pader, Kitgum, Adjumani, Amuru, Amolatar, Oyam, Moyo, among others, which have been affected by the conflict in the region.

The researcher also deliberately selected the *radio station of study* - that is Mega FM. There are other radio stations in Gulu including Radio King, Choice FM, Radio Maria and Radio Four. Various factors came into play in the researchers' deliberate selection of Mega FM, such as number of listeners and coverage of the station.

### **3.3.2 Systematic Random Sampling**

An element of probability sampling will be used in this study. Probability sampling is based on the concept of random selection.

Systematic sampling is the most practical way of selecting every *n*th item on a list. An element of randomness is introduced in this kind of sampling by using random numbers to pick up the unit with which to start. In systematic sampling only the first unit is selected randomly and the remaining units of the sample selected at fixed intervals.

This method will be used to determine the programs that will be part of the sample for this study. Systematic sampling will be used this way:

**News** – For the period of four weeks of the study, morning and evening news will be studied alternately. That is – in the first week, morning news will be studied, in the second week evening news, the third week morning and the last week, evening news.

**Talk shows** – Every week three talk shows or opinion programmes will be studied. To determine which three will be studied, the researcher will use systematic sampling. For example during the first week of study, shows on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday will be studied, then on the second week, those on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, the third week will focus on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, the fourth week, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

### **3.3.3 Simple Random Sampling**

In this kind of sampling, every item of the universe has equal chance of inclusion in the sample. It is by lottery method that individual units are picked up from the whole group not deliberately. It is blind chance alone that determines whether one item or the other is selected.

Random sampling will be used to determine the *entertainment shows* and *listeners of Mega FM* who will be part of the study. The reason for using random sampling is that Mega FM has many entertainment shows throughout the day and night, and there is no exact criterion that can be used to determine which ones to include and which to not include in the study. For the researcher this is the best technique for ensuring a representative sample for entertainment. A sample size of 15 entertainment shows will be adequate for the purpose of this research. As regards the listeners of Mega FM, every listener will have equal chance of being selected for this study and for reasons of time and cost a total of 30 respondents will be selected.

### **3.4 Sources of data and collection methods**

This research will utilize both primary and secondary sources of data.

**Secondary data:** This is data which has already been collected by other people and which has passed through the statistical process. The researcher will undertake library research. This will involve content analysis of documents – journals, magazines, guides, books, statistical compilations among others.

**Primary data:** is that which is collected for the first time and thus happens to be original in character. The researcher will undertake field research. The researcher will utilize two methods of data collection:

#### **1. Personal Interviews**

This involves the presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. The researcher will interview the management of Mega FM. The interviews will be in form of direct personal investigation.

The method of interviewing that will be used by the researcher will be *unstructured interviews* which allow a flexibility of approach to questioning. The researcher will not follow a system of pre-determined questions and standardized techniques of recording information. Because this is an exploratory study, the interviewer will require more freedom to ask supplementary questions if need be or at times may omit certain questions, or even change the sequence of the questions. The researcher will have greater freedom while recording the responses to include some aspects and exclude others.

#### **2. Questionnaire**

A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaires to be filled in by the listeners of Mega FM will be designed in such a way that they cover the areas of focus of the study, namely – news and programming on peace and their effect on listeners.

The questions will be both open (allowing respondents to explain using their own words) and closed (with fixed alternative answers).

### **3. Content Analysis**

Content analysis constitutes analyzing the content of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and the content of other verbal materials which can be recorded, spoken or printed. Content analysis prior to the 1940s was mostly quantitative analysis of documentary materials concerning certain characteristics that can be identified and counted. But since the 1950s content analysis is mostly qualitative analysis concerning the general importance of the existing documents. According to Bernard Berelson "Content analysis is measurement through proportion ...Content analysis measures persuasiveness and that is sometimes an index of the intensity of the force."

This study will use content analysis in both library research and field research. Library research will cover an extensive survey of existing literature on conflict, conflict resolution, background on Uganda, the conflict in northern Uganda, theories of conflict, the agenda setting theory, and many other topics.

For field research, the most effective way of finding out if Mega FM has played a positive role in the peace process in northern Uganda is by studying the effects of its programming. That is what the researcher will seek to do by gauging the effect of the station's programmes on its listeners.

#### **3.5 Processing and analysis of data**

Processing of data implies editing, coding, classification, and tabulation of data so that it is amenable to analysis.

Analysis refers to the computation of certain measures along with searching for patterns of relationship that exist among data groups. The relationships or differences supporting

or conflicting with original or new hypotheses should be subjected to statistical tests of significance to determine with what validity data can be said to indicate any conclusions.

In this study, the processing operations that will be used include:

1. **Editing** – This will involve examining the collected raw data to detect errors and omissions and to correct them where possible. The researcher will carefully scrutinize the completed code sheets. This will ensure that the data collected is accurate, consistent with other facts gathered, and well arranged to facilitate coding and tabulation. The researcher will edit the code sheets at two stages.

The first will be field editing whereby he will review the questionnaires to complete what he or his assistants may have written in abbreviation or illegible form. This the researcher will do immediately after he conducts interviews, receives questionnaires and after listening to programmes on Mega FM.

The next stage of editing will be central editing which will take place after all the questionnaires have been completed and gathered. The researcher will go through the questionnaires thoroughly to correct obvious errors such as entries in the wrong place and the like. The researcher will also have to strike out inappropriate answers.

## 2. **Coding**

This is the process of assigning numerals or other symbols to answers so that responses can be put into a limited number of categories or classes. The classes should be appropriate to the research problem.

The researcher first code each of the listeners' questionnaires, then code the responses to the close-ended questions in order to place the in a form that is analysable. The researcher will use manual coding whereby each code sheet will be assigned a number and placed in rows, and the question numbers will be

placed in columns. Then the coded answers will be entered to correspond with the code sheet and question number.

### **3. Classification**

This is the reduction of data into homogeneous groups in order to get meaningful relationships. Data having common characteristics will be placed in one class and in this way all data will be divided into a number of groups or classes. The researcher will use two types of classification.

The first is classification according to attributes. The data will be divided into classes according to the factors they seek to explore. For example, all data regarding the role of radio in each of the areas of entertainment, education and peace building will be grouped together.

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Secondly, the researcher will use classification according to class intervals. Here quantitative phenomenon such as numbers of hours or minutes of programming, and audience rating of the radio station will be included. Each group or class interval will have an upper limit as well as a lower limit. For example, time in terms of hours and or minutes will be classified as – 10-20 minutes, 20-30 minutes, 30-40 minutes, 40 minutes-1 hour, 1-2 hours and 2 hours and above.

### **4. Tabulation**

This involves the logical arrangement of data. It is the process of summarizing raw data and displaying it in compact form for further analysis.

For this, the researcher will use a computer programme – SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). All that will be required of the researcher in this case will be to enter the data that has been coded into columns of variables against question numbers and this data will be compressed for tabular display.

As far as analysis of data is concerned, the researcher will employ a measure of both descriptive analysis and inferential analysis.

In *descriptive analysis*, the researcher will provide descriptions of the main variables of study. He will work out measures that show the size and shape of the variables as well as measure the relationships between the main variables.

In *inferential analysis*, the researcher will be concerned with tests of significance to prove or disprove hypotheses and determine to which extent the data can be said to indicate a certain conclusion. The researcher will be able to perform the task of interpretation.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

Once the researcher has undertaken these stages, the findings will be ready for interpretation and generalizations, conclusions and recommendations will be made with regard to the scientific method.

# CHAPTER FOUR: *Data Analysis*

## 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains and analysis of tabulated data. Questionnaires were prepared and handed to Mega FM listeners, interviews held with Mega FM management and programmes on the radio station were listened to. Information obtained from the interviews and Mega FM programmes has formed basis for understanding the role played by the radio station in bringing about conflict resolution in northern Uganda. Raw data from the listeners' questionnaires was coded and classified to be made easy to understand and interpret.

### 4.0.1 DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

These are those variables that define the social characteristics of the population under study which in this case is listeners of Mega FM. The demographic data here included an analysis of age, gender, marital status, education and employment. The purpose of analyzing these variables was to the audience profile of Mega FM.

#### 1. Age

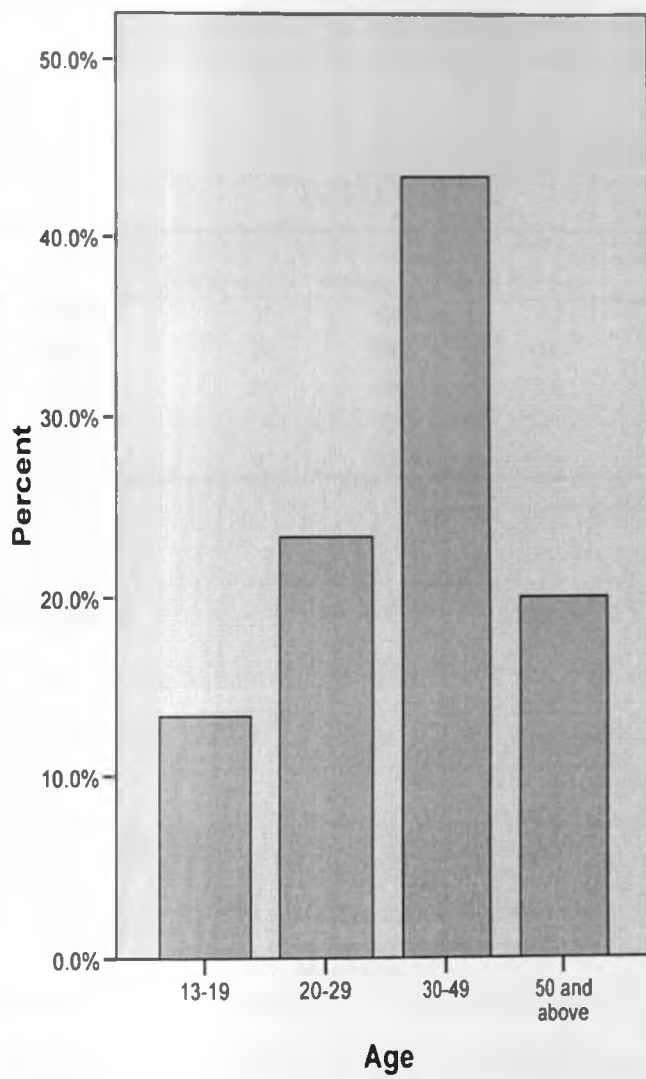
The study's target audience were people aged 13 years and above to get a representative sample. However, a majority of the respondents fell between the ages of 30-49 followed by 20-29 year olds. This implies that the audiences of Mega FM are young adults, adults and middle aged people.

Table 4.1

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
13-19	4	12.9	13.3	13.3
20-29	7	22.6	23.3	36.7
30-49	13	41.9	43.3	80.0
50 and above	6	19.4	20.0	100.0
Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing				
System	1	3.2		
Total	31	100.0		





Graph 4.2

## 2. Gender

Sixty-five percent of the respondents in the study were male and only 32 percent were female. The implication is that in terms of gender, Mega FM is listened to more by men than women and from the age statistics, young and middle aged males.

Table 4.3

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	10	32.3	33.3	33.3
	Male	20	64.5	66.7	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

## 3. Marital Status

A majority of the respondents were married (77%), with a mere nineteen percent being single. The audience profile of Mega FM is young and middle aged men who are married.

Table 4.4

		Marriage			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	24	77.4	80.0	80.0
	Single	6	19.4	20.0	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

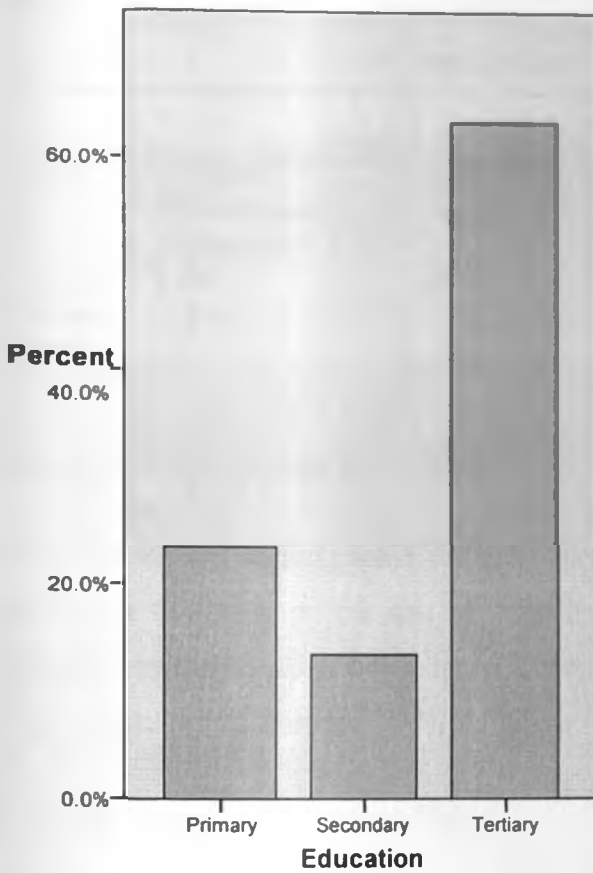
#### 4. Education

Sixty-one percent of the respondents were educated to university or college level, 23 percent to primary level and thirteen percent to secondary level. The implication of this is that majority of the respondents were able to understand the questions and answer them appropriately. Further, Mega FM's audience is young and middle aged, men who are married and educated to tertiary level.

Table 4.5

Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary	7	22.6	23.3	23.3
	Secondary	4	12.9	13.3	36.7
	Tertiary	19	61.3	63.3	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		



Graph 4.6

## 5. Employment

Fifty-two percent of respondents sampled were employed, and 26 percent unemployed. This is closely related to the statistics on education of the respondents, 61 percent of whom were educated to tertiary level. There is a high correlation between level of education and employment. Based on the above demographics and a representative sample it would be prudent to say that the audience profile of Mega FM is young and middle aged males who are married have university or college education and are employed.

Table 4.7

		Employment			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employed	16	51.6	53.3	53.3
	Self-employed	6	19.4	20.0	73.3
	Unemployed	8	25.8	26.7	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

#### 4.0.2 OTHER VARIABLES

These are the non-demographic characteristics of the listeners of Mega FM that were relevant to the study on the role of communication in conflict resolution in northern Uganda. Important variables here include opinions on Mega FM's reporting on the peace process, human rights issues, IDPs, and justice among other issues.

#### 6. When do you listen to Mega FM?

Sixty-five percent of Mega FM listeners say they listen to the station everyday and only six percent listen sometimes as indicated in the table above. This implies that majority of listeners are loyal to the station. This is perhaps because of the gratification they receive from listening.

Table 4.8

		When			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sometimes	2	6.5	6.7	6.7
	Daily	20	64.5	66.7	73.3
	On occasions	8	25.8	26.7	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

### **8. What do you like about Mega FM?**

When asked what they liked about Mega FM, 47 percent of listeners said they like a combination of the news, drama, music and the presenters. A further 32 percent said they liked the news most.

Table 4.9

		Like			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	News	10	32.3	33.3	33.3
	Drama	2	6.5	6.7	40.0
	Music	1	3.2	3.3	43.3
	Presenters	3	9.7	10.0	53.3
	All the above	14	45.2	46.7	100.0
	Total		30	96.8	100.0
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

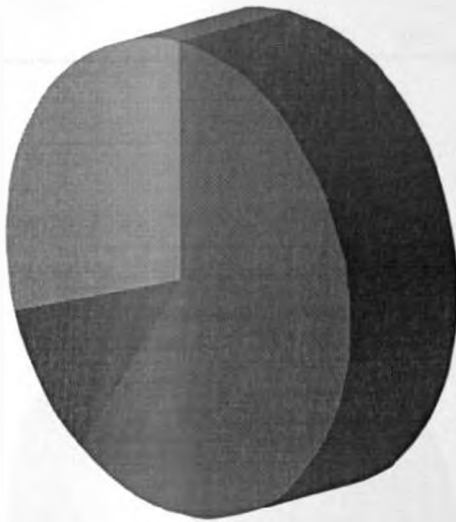
### **8. Does Mega FM promote the peace process?**

According to 58 percent of the respondents, Mega FM promotes the peace talks between the government of Uganda and the LRA. Twenty-nine percent did not know whether the station promotes the peace talks or not. The implication is that Mega FM runs programmes that portray the peace talks positively and encourage the government and the LRA to negotiate.

Table 4.10

Peace

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	58.1	60.0	60.0
	No	3	9.7	10.0	70.0
	Do not know	9	29.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		



Pies show percents

Chart 4.11

**9. Does Mega FM give equal coverage to the Government and the LRA?**

Majority of the respondents (71%) felt that Mega FM gives equal coverage to the government of Uganda and the LRA in its news reports as regards the status of the conflict and the peace talks. This implies that the station is fair and impartial in its coverage.

Table 4.12

Coverage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	22	71.0	73.3	73.3
	No	7	22.6	23.3	96.7
	Do not know	1	3.2	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

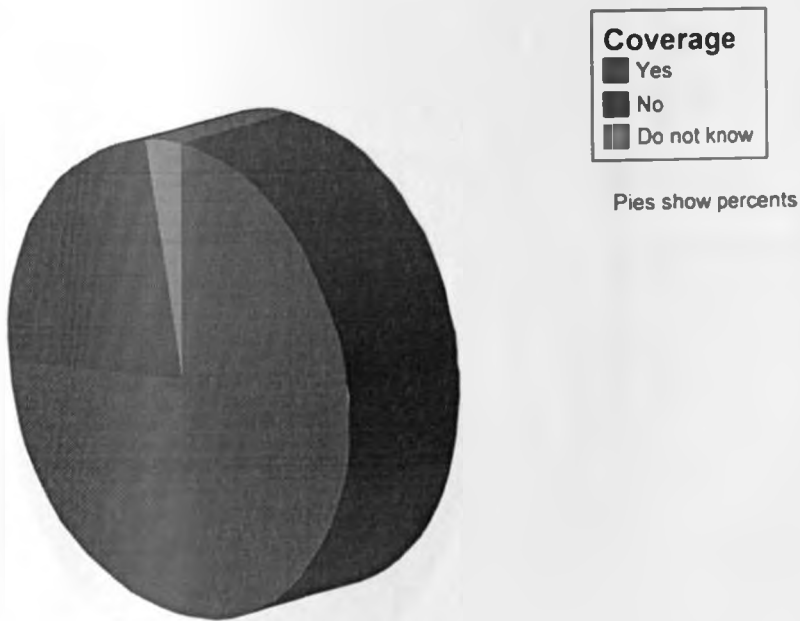


Chart 4.13



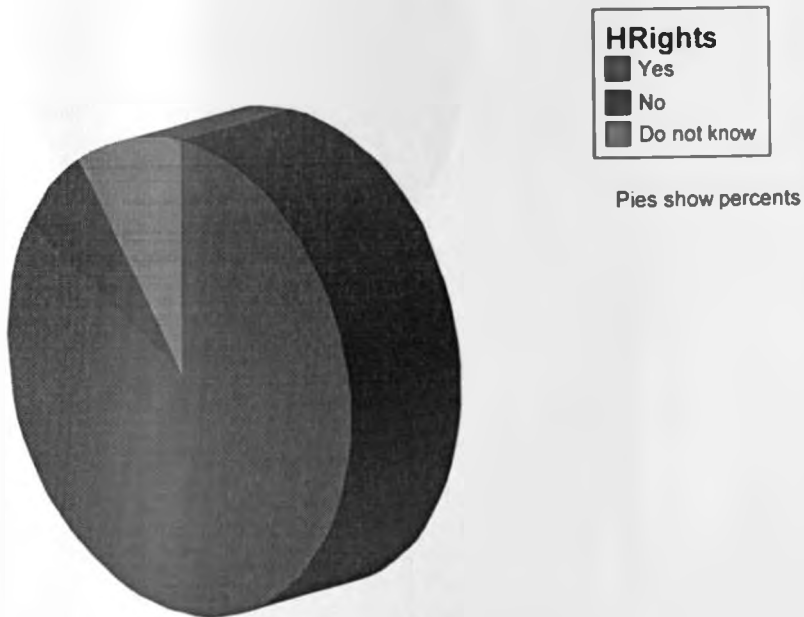
### 10. Does Mega Fm advocate human rights?

Eighty percent of the respondents felt that Mega FM promotes human rights while nine percent did not know. Those who said they did not know perhaps did not understand what constituted human right issues.

Table 4.14

		HRights			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	25	80.6	83.3	83.3
	No	2	6.5	6.7	90.0
	Do not know	3	9.7	10.0	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

Chart 4.15



**11. What human rights issues does Mega FM promote?**

As indicated above, many of the respondents felt that the human rights issues promoted by Mega FM are the right to a fair and impartial trial, right to life for all and the right to education. These are the main human rights issues in the context of the conflict in northern Uganda.

Chart 4.16

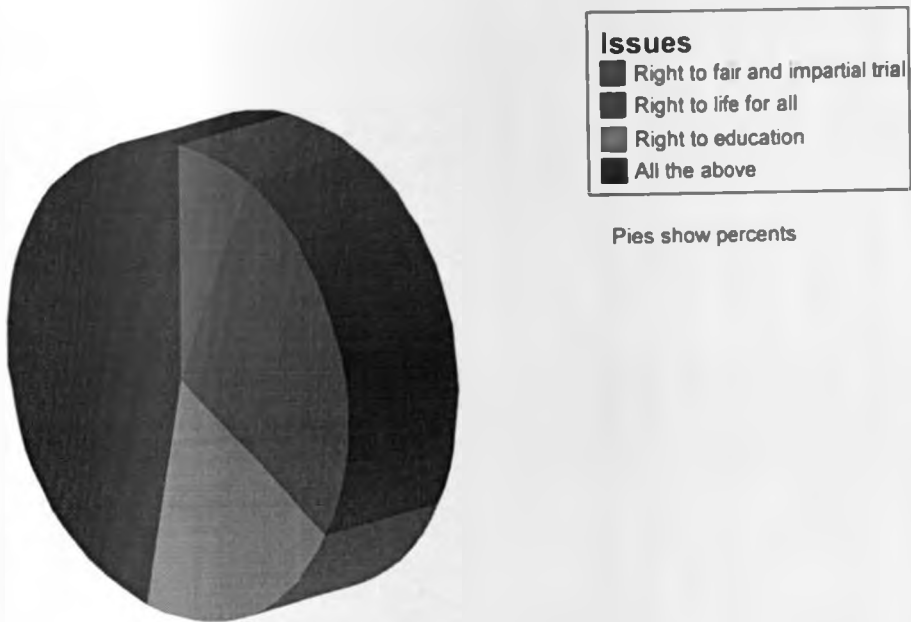


Table 4.17

Issues

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Right to fair and impartial trial	2	6.5	6.7	6.7
	Right to life for all	8	25.8	26.7	33.3
	Right to education	6	19.4	20.0	53.3
	All the above	14	45.2	46.7	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
<b>Missing</b>	System	1	3.2		
<b>Total</b>		31	100.0		

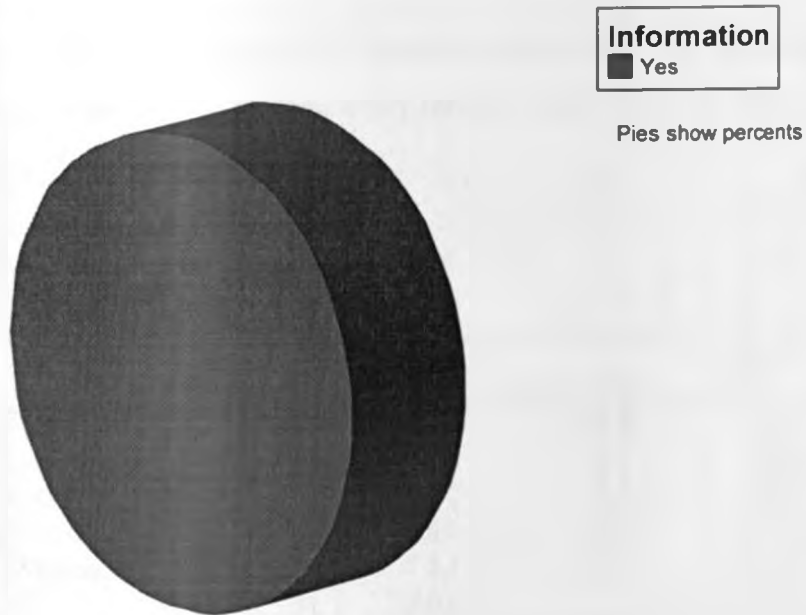
**12. Does Mega Fm keep you informed on the progress of the peace talks?**

Ninety-seven percent of the respondents affirmed that Mega FM keeps them informed on the progress of the peace talks. However as indicated earlier, only 58 percent said that the station promotes the peace process. This implies that inasmuch as many felt they were kept well informed, some felt unsure as to whether the station promoted the peace talks.

Table 4.18

		Information			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	96.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

Chart 4.19



**13. Does Mega Fm encourage rebels to return home?**

Ninety percent of the respondents sampled felt that Mega FM has played a positive role in encouraging the LRA rebels to return home. This key to ensuring peace in northern Uganda because the fewer the rebels, the less likely it is that the conflict will persist.

Table 4.20

		Rebels			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	28	90.3	93.3	93.3
	Do not know	2	6.5	6.7	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

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**14. Does Mega Fm encourage peaceful coexistence?**

Eighty-seven percent of Mega FM listeners sampled felt that the station encourages peaceful coexistence between community members and rebels who have abandoned the insurgency and returned home.

Table 4.21

		Coexist			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	27	87.1	90.0	90.0
	No	2	6.5	6.7	96.7
	Do not know	1	3.2	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

### 15. Does Mega Fm cover IDP issues?

A majority of the respondents sampled (81%) said that Mega FM airs programmes that cover the plight of internally displaced people. Some of the most mentioned programmes include 'Kabake', 'Wangoo', 'Teyat''Lobo Pa Lupor', NGO programme on IDPs, and Mega Forum.

Table 4.22

		IDPs			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	25	80.6	83.3	83.3
	No	1	3.2	3.3	86.7
	Do not know	3	9.7	10.0	96.7
	4.00	1	3.2	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

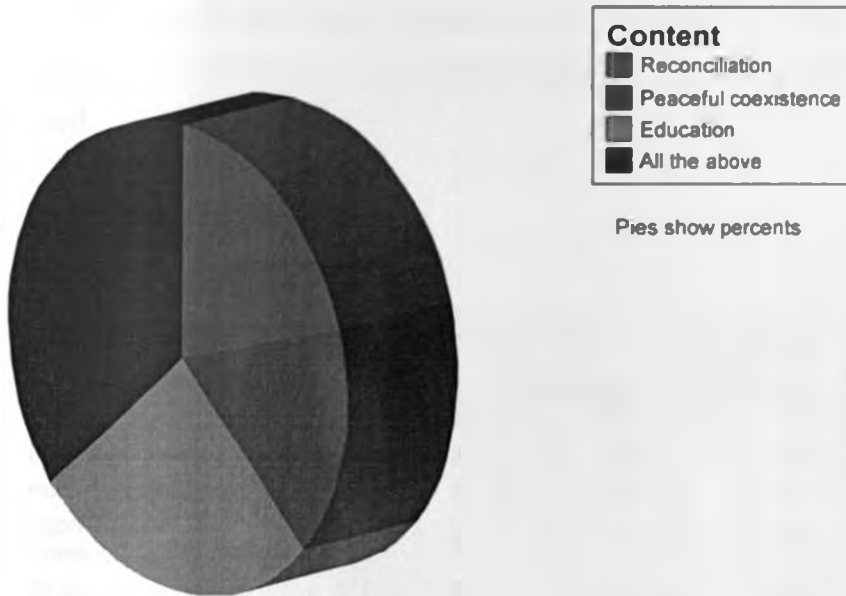
### 16. What is the general content of Mega FM's programmes?

Thirty-six percent of respondents felt that Mega FM's programme content is on a combination of education, peaceful coexistence, and reconciliation. The implication here is that the station is carrying programming suitable to the context of a region that has and is facing conflict.

Table 4.23

		Content			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Reconciliation	6	19.4	20.0	20.0
	Peaceful coexistence	5	16.1	16.7	36.7
	Education	8	25.8	26.7	63.3
	All the above	11	35.5	36.7	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

Chart 4.24



**17. Does Mega Fm Promote Justice?**

Many interviewees (87%) felt that Mega FM promotes justice whereas 10 percent could not determine whether it does or does

Table 4.25

		Justice			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	27	87.1	90.0	90.0
	Do not know	3	9.7	10.0	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

**18. What justice system does the station promote?**

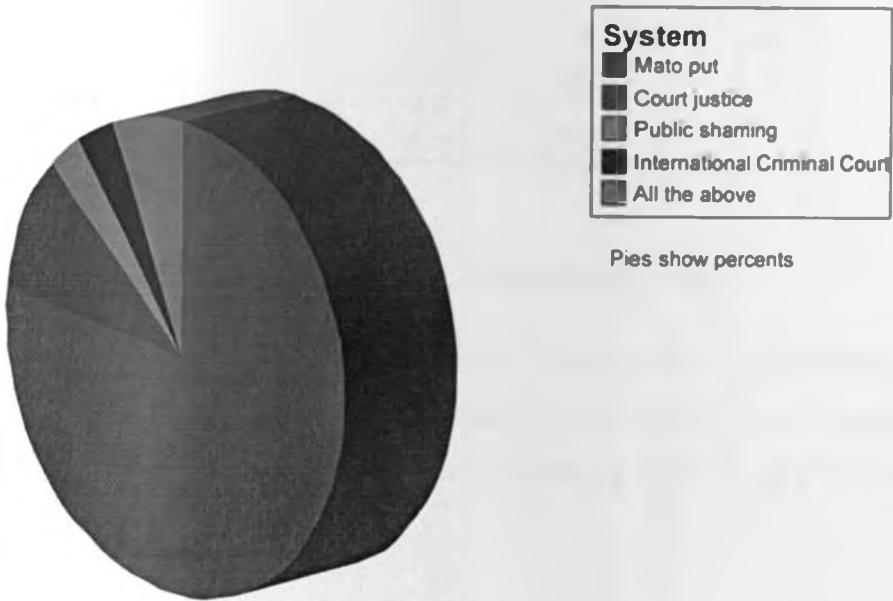
Mega FM promotes justice and the main system it promotes is a local means of justice known as 'Mato Put'. Ten percent of respondents felt that the station promotes the court justice system. This implies that Mega FM being a mass medium is a mirror of society and is portraying the situation as it is in northern Uganda. The local justice system is what is preferred.

Table 4.26

		System			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Mato put	23	74.2	76.7	76.7
	Court justice	3	9.7	10.0	86.7
	Public shaming	1	3.2	3.3	90.0
	International Criminal Court	1	3.2	3.3	93.3
	All the above	2	6.5	6.7	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		



Chart 4.27



**19. Does Mega Fm report responsibly?**

Eighty-four percent of those interviewed felt that Mega FM reports responsibly on the peace process in the sense that they are respectful in their language, fair and impartial and decent in their reporting.

Table 4.28

		Responsible			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	26	83.9	86.7	86.7
	No	1	3.2	3.3	90.0
	Do not know	3	9.7	10.0	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

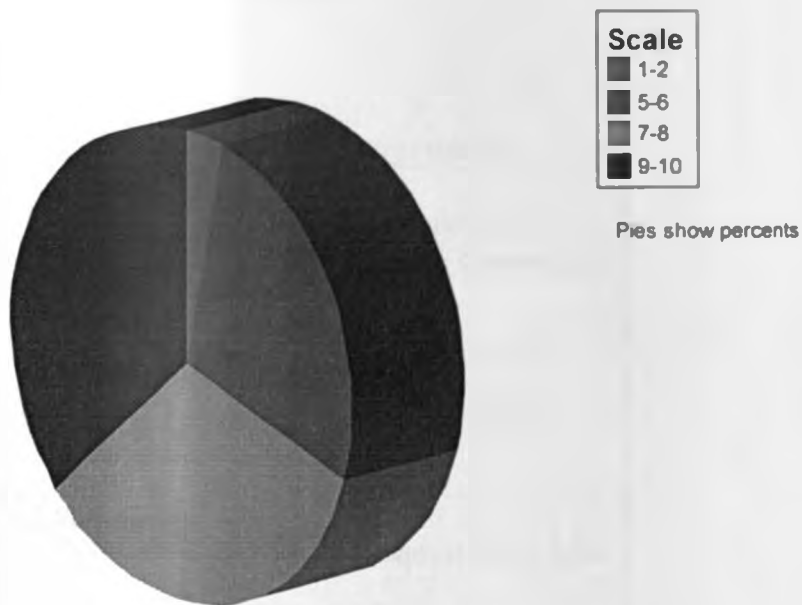
**20. On a scale of 1-10 how would rate Mega FM's peace coverage?**

Rating Mega FM'S peace coverage on a scale of 1-10, 36 percent of respondents gave Mega FM 9-10, and 32 percent gave 7-8. The scale of 7-10 received a total percentage of sixty-eight. This implies that Mega FM is perceived positively by many of its listeners.

Table 4.29

		Scale			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-2	1	3.2	3.3	3.3
	5-6	8	25.8	26.7	30.0
	7-8	10	32.3	33.3	63.3
	9-10	11	35.5	36.7	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

Chart 4.30



#### 4.0.3 Programming of Mega FM

Mega FM's programming as shown in the schedule below is centred around peace-building, entertainment targeted at various demographic segments and information on income-generating activities.

Programmes such as Dwog Cen Paco, Twog Paco and Ter-yat preach a return to peace by trying to persuade rebels to abandon rebellion and accept a government amnesty as well as promoting reconciliation and peaceful co-existence between internally-displaced people and returnee rebels.

Other programmes, such as The Big Breakfast, Bac-Mac, Northern Top20 and Tekwaro, provide entertainment to young people who are deemed very likely to embrace rebellion if their energies are not engaged in non-harmful activity.

Table 4.31

**Mega FM programme schedule**

Monday-Friday

<b>Time</b>	<b>Programme</b>
6.00am 10:00am	The Big Breakfast Show (This includes discussions, talk shows)
10.00am 7.00pm	Music, and in-studio discussions
1.00pm 2.00pm	The all request lunch hour
2.00pm 3.00pm	Lobo Pa Lupur, Lobo Pa Lee ( Programme on farming)
3.000pm 5.00pm	Afternoon variety mix (Music and sports discussion)
5.00pm 9.00pm	Evening Express (Music and general entertainment programme)
9.00pm 9.30pm	Wilobo Tini (Press review)
9.30pm 11.00pm	Dwog Cen Paco( Programme aimed at persuading LRA fighters to abandon rebellion and take advantage of a government amnesty.

<b>11.00pm 12.00pm</b>	<b>Mega Relationship</b>
<b>12.00pm 6.00am</b>	<b>BBC World Service news</b>

**On top of every hour there is a news broadcast in either English, Luo or Madi followed by announcements**

### **Saturday Programs**

<b>6.00am 9.00am</b>	<b>Saturday comfort (country music)</b>
<b>9.00am 10.00am</b>	<b>Winye-ber (Children's programme)</b>
<b>10.00am 12.00pm</b>	<b>Ter-yat (Talk show on peace and development issues)</b>
<b>12.00pm 3.00pm</b>	<b>Music and general entertainment</b>
<b>3.00pm 4.00pm</b>	<b>Tekwaro ( Culture)</b>
<b>4.00pm 6.00pm</b>	<b>Northern Top20 (Music show)</b>
<b>6.00pm 7.30pm</b>	<b>Biashara (Business)</b>
<b>7.30pm 9.00pm</b>	<b>Entertainment programme</b>

<b>9.00pm 10.00pm</b>	<b>Twog-Paco (Peace programme)</b>
<b>10.00pm 1.00am</b>	<b>Bac-mac (Traditional music)</b>

On top of every hour there is a news broadcast in either English, Luo, or Madi followed by announcements

**Sunday programs**

<b>6.00am 10.00am</b>	<b>Sunday Gospel explosion (Prayer and gospel show)</b>
<b>10.30am 12.00pm</b>	<b>Kabake (Pre-recorded debate on issue affecting the community)</b>
<b>12.30pm 1.00pm</b>	<b>Programme on crime</b>
<b>1.00pm 3.00pm</b>	<b>Back to the 60s (Programme on 1960's music)</b>
<b>4.00pm 5.00pm</b>	<b>Talk show</b>
<b>5.00pm 6.00pm</b>	<b>Mega classrooms (Educational programme targeting primary and secondary school students)</b>
<b>6.00pm 7.00pm</b>	<b>Talk show</b>

<b>7.00pm 9.00pm</b>	<b>Talk show</b>
<b>9.00pm 12.00am</b>	<b>Survivors (Old time music</b>

## CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

### 5.0 THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION AGENDA BY MEGA FM

According to McQuail “ The belief of the power of mass media was initially based on the observation of their great reach and apparent impact...there was already a strongly held and soundly based view that mass publicity was effective in shaping opinion and influencing behaviour.” He outlines several roles or ways in which the media set the agenda in society. The study found out that Mega FM has played the following roles that could bring about conflict resolution:

**1. Social integration:** Mega FM has been instrumental in forging social integration by strengthening the ties that bind people, by reinforcing shared values, as well as social and civic participation. Mega FM through programs like Tekwaro (culture) seeks to remind people of their commonalities.

**2. Mass education:** The media can also act as a mass educator. McQuail says the media could be a potent force for public enlightenment, supplementing and continuing the new institutions of universal schooling, public libraries and popular education. There has been an economic lag in northern Uganda because as other parts of Uganda were developing, the energy of the people in the north was diverted from development to conflict. Part of the conflict resolution process has involved the rehabilitation of the social and economic infrastructure that was damaged by the war. Mega FM has been instrumental in encouraging people to embark on income-generating activities and shun conflict. This has been through programs like Lobo Pa Lupur, Lobo Pa Lee, for farmers, Biashara, for business people, Mega Classroom for students, among programmes.

**3. Facilitating the peace process:** The most important role of the media in a conflict or post-conflict situation is to make a contribution to progress by spreading ideas of peace. Mega FM has been used to encourage rebels to return home through interactive talk shows like Dwog Cen Paco (peace programme on LRA war), Twog Paco (peace programme), Kabake (debate on a topical issue by community members), among others.



**4. Entertainment:** The media can provide harmless enjoyment for ordinary people to distract them from injurious thoughts and dispositions to war. Through radio, people can listen to music, drama and so on. Radio can be a vital companion in times of conflict and can thus help maintain psychological balance. Through its various entertainment programmes like the Big Breakfast Show, the All Request Lunch Hour, Music and Sports, Mega FM has done so.

**5. National unity:** In the same vein, the media do play the vital role of promoting national identity and unity, which is a seminal pillar of reconstruction and development. Mega FM through its news and talk shows brings together people with different experiences and frames of reference. There is unity in diversity.

**6. Reconciliation:** In seeking to influence attitude change, the media helps to discourage vengeance and encourage forgiveness as well as portray the truth of what happened in a sensitive and contextual framework. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu said while chairing South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "The purpose of finding out the truth is not in order for people to be prosecuted. It is so that we can use the truth as part of the process of healing our nation." Mega FM has continuously encouraged those harmed by the conflict to forgive their perpetrators, and the perpetrators to seek forgiveness of the victims.

**7. Human Rights:** The media should publicize principles of human rights and other moral norms. They should enforce these norms by publicizing violations. Mega Fm has advocated for human rights principles especially the right to life for all, the right to education, and right to a fair and impartial trial for rebels.

## 5.1 Recommendations

In view of the internal and external hindrances facing the northern Ugandan media with regard to promoting peace and helping ensure conflict resolution, it is important that pressure be exerted upon the media – in this case Mega FM – and other non-media stakeholders such as the government of Uganda, and civil society groups, if the media is to play its role with maximum effect.

### To the government of Uganda:

- Provide additional funding to media in northern Uganda to enable them to cover the peace process with more ease. More funding would allow Mega FM, for example, to send reporters to Juba, the venue of the peace talks, to accurately and speedily report the story and would make it easier for it to hire, train and retain journalists and other essential staff.
- Formulate clear policy on media in crisis areas, acknowledging that they work in particularly difficult circumstances compared to media in conflict-free areas, and affording them a measure of affirmative action.
- Deliberately use the media, in addition to other measures, as a tool for ending the conflict. This could be done by harnessing the media's mass information, education, mobilization and entertainment roles and letting the voices of all parties in the conflict-government, rebels, mediators and civil society – be heard.
- Improve the infrastructure to improve ease of access to the media. For example, the government should speed up rural electrification providing a cheaper source of energy by cutting reliance on battery cells.

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### **To the media:**

- Adhere to universal journalistic principles such as accuracy, decency, fairness, impartiality and observe professional ethics.
- Provide background and context in reporting to give the full picture, rather than merely covering events. The media should strive to give a balanced depiction of the conflict through investigative reporting and insightful analysis that provides possible solutions.
- Train journalists on conflict reporting, how to work in hostile environments and on journalistic principles and ethics. Media houses could, given their budgetary limitations, forge alliances with international media charities such as BBC World Service Trust, Thomson Reuters Foundation and InterNews Network, to train their journalists.
- Provide clear channels of communication between the government and the governed, present fresh perspectives and as a watchdog check the government and society and sound a genuine alarm where need be.

### **To civil society:**

- Rather than write reports on conflict and criticize the media for poor or biased coverage, support media in conflict areas in terms of training, funding and equipment while allowing them to maintain a measure of independence. This would enable the media to be more effective and efficient in their work.
- Partner with the media in advocacy efforts. On issues like human rights, education, health and other socio-economic issues, select and use the appropriate media / medium to disseminate programs on these. Coverage on the media is likely to have wider and faster reach.

- Help facilitate the peace process. Prepare the people in northern Uganda to fully integrate the LRA rebels who return home. Christian and Islamic leaders should use their position in society to support and initiate the peace and reconciliation process.

**To the international community:**

- Exert pressure on the concerned governments particularly that of Uganda, Sudan and the DRC to influence Kony to agree to the ongoing peace process and sign the comprehensive peace agreement. Sudan has been and the DRC now is a hideout for Kony and his rebels. This makes the two countries parties to the conflict.

- Actively encourage the continuation of the peace process whenever it seems to be stalling as it often does. Sustained support for negotiations could be helpful to the government and society.

- International media should stop sensationalizing the conflict in northern Uganda, especially the notion of clinging to stories of the past like the daily migration of children from villages to spend the night in town– the so-called night commuters - something which does not happen anymore. Northern Uganda is a region on the road to recovery yet the international media want to keep portraying it as a war-torn area. This should stop.

## APPENDICES

### 1. *Interview Questionnaire – Mega FM Management*

**Study:** To contextualize the contribution of Mega FM to the peace process in northern Uganda.

**Content under study:** Mega FM's programming

#### GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT MEGA FM

1. Year of incorporation of Mega FM \_\_\_\_\_
2. Radio frequency \_\_\_\_\_
3. Owner of radio station \_\_\_\_\_
4. Business or political affiliations \_\_\_\_\_
5. Sponsors \_\_\_\_\_
6. Transmission power and coverage \_\_\_\_\_
7. Number of journalists \_\_\_\_\_
8. Number of correspondents \_\_\_\_\_
  - I. Local \_\_\_\_\_
  - II. National \_\_\_\_\_
  - III. International \_\_\_\_\_
9. Brief history of the radio station
10. Who listens to your radio station?
  - a) Children ( 6-12)

- b) Teenagers (13-19)
- c) Young adults (20-29)
- d) Adults (30-49)
- e) Senior citizens (50 and above)

11. How many people listen to your station each week?

- a) 1000 – 5000 people
- b) 6000 – 10,000
- c) 10,000 – 15,000
- d) 20,000 – 25,000
- e) 26,000 and above

12. What determines the content of your programming?

- a) Ratings
- b) Political elite interests
- c) Owners interests
- d) Desire to educate and inform
- e) Social responsibility

13. I. Do you think you set the political agenda?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Not sure

II. If yes, which political agenda?

14. What are your station's news sources?

15. What languages do you broadcast in?

16. How does your station address cultural differences in the region?

## **2. Questionnaire – Listeners of Mega FM**

**Study:** To find out the impact that Mega FM's peace process and entertainment programmes have had on community members. Have they contributed to conflict resolution or not?

**Content of study:** Listeners opinions

**Instructions:** Please tick or underline your answer and explain if required.

### **SECTION 1**

1. Age

- a) 13 - 19
- b) 20 - 29
- c) 30 - 49
- d) 50 and above

2. Gender

- a) Female
- b) Male

3. Marital Status

- a) Married
- b) Single

4. Education

- a) Primary
- b) Secondary
- c) Tertiary (university or college)

5. Employment status

- a) Employed
- b) Self-employed
- c) Unemployed

6. Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION 2

1. How often do you listen to Mega FM?

- a) Sometimes
- b) Always
- c) Occasionally
- c) Regularly

2. What do you like about Mega FM?

- a) News
- b) Drama
- c) Music
- d) Presenters
- e) All the above

3. What is your favorite programme on Mega FM?

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4. I. Do you think that Mega FM promotes the peace talks between the government of Uganda and the LRA?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

II. If yes, what programmes on the radio station do so? (Please list them below).

5. Do you think that Mega FM gives equal coverage to the government of Uganda and the LRA in its news reports?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

6. What aspects of the peace process does the radio station focus on?

- a) Peace talks
- b) Call for rebels to abandon insurgency
- c) Reconciliation
- d) Justice
- e) Human rights
- f) All the above



g) Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Does Mega FM keep you informed on the progress of the peace talks as they take place?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

8. I. Has Mega FM been at the forefront in encouraging rebels to return home?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

II. If yes, does the station also encourage peaceful coexistence between community members and rebels who return home?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

9. I. Do you think that the station promotes human rights issues?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

II. If yes, what human rights issues?

- a) Right to fair and impartial trial for rebels
- b) Right to life for community members
- c) Right to education for child soldiers
- d) Right to a secure society
- e) All the above
- f) Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10. I. Does the station air programmes for the Internally Displaced Peoples?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

II. If yes, which ones? Please list them below.

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III. What is the general content of these programmes?

- a) Reconciliation – forgiveness, mercy, truth
- b) Peaceful coexistence with returned rebels
- c) Education – trade, agriculture, etc
- d) All the above
- e) Other (Specify)

11. I. Does Mega FM promote justice?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

II. If yes, what kind of justice system does the station promote for the rebels?

- a) 'Mato put'
- b) Legal justice
- c) Public shaming
- d) All the above
- e) Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. What effects do the programmes on the peace process have on you? Please explain below.

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13. Generally, do you feel / think that Mega FM reports responsibly on the peace process?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Do not know

14. On a scale of 1 -10, how would you rate Mega FM's programming on the peace process?

18 On a scale of 1 – 10, how would you rate Mega FM's entertainment programmes?

*Thank you!*

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