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**EVADING THE ENDGAME IN AN INSURGENCY
UNDERTAKING: THE CASE OF THE LORD'S
RESISTANCE ARMY AND BEYOND**

by

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June 2015

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CASE OF THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY AND BEYOND**

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ABSTRACT

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency is Africa's oldest, lasting for over 25 years. This work studies the LRA to find out why it has survived so long and how. A combination of empirical methods was used to analyze data related to the LRA and the countries affected by the LRA insurgency. The findings show that the LRA prolonged its insurgency by taking advantage of its environment, including elevation, watered areas, the road network, land cover, proximity to state capital, and moderate population density. The LRA also exploited the political situations in the region, such as the rivalry between Uganda and Sudan, and the fragility of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, South Sudan, and Sudan. Last, the LRA modified its organizational structure according to the political and military situations it encountered, which enabled it to adapt and evade the threat of termination. The effectiveness of these methods of survival depended on the intuition of the LRA leadership. The author recommends both kinetic methods to manhunt LRA leaders and non-kinetic (psychological) operations to degrade the LRA's strength by encouraging mass defections from its ranks.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| AAG | Anti-Aircraft Gun |
| ACCORD | African Center for Constructive Resolution of Disputes |
| ADF | Allied Democratic Forces |
| AU RTF | African Union Taskforce |
| CAR | Central African Republic |
| CSFC | Commander Special Forces Command |
| CTFP | Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| ESRI | Environmental Systems Research Institute |
| FDLR | Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda |
| FFP | Fund for Peace |
| FNL | Forces for National Liberation |
| GOSS | Government of Southern Sudan |
| GP | Gun Position |
| GTI | Ground of Tactical Importance |
| HSM | Holy Spirit Movement |
| HSMF | Holy Spirit Mobile Force |
| ICC | International Criminal Court |
| ICG | International Crisis Group |
| IDP | Internally Displaced People |
| LDU | Local Defense Unit |
| LRA/M | Lord's Resistance Army/Movement |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NRA/M | National Resistance Army/Movement |
| OLT | Operation Lightning Thunder |
| OP | Observation Post |
| RSS | Republic of South Sudan |
| RTF | Regional Task Force |
| SAF | Sudanese Armed Forces |
| SAM | Surface to Air Missile |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| SNA | Social network analysis |
| SOF | Special Operation Force |
| SPLA/M | Sudan People’s Liberation Army/Movement |
| SPLA/M-IO | Sudan People’s Liberation Army/Movement–In Opposition |
| SRTM | Shuttle Rather Topography Mission |
| UCDP/GED | Uppsala Conflict Data Project/Georeferenced Event Data |
| UNLA | Uganda National Liberation Army |
| UPDA | Uganda People’s Democratic Army |
| UPDCA | Uganda People’s Democratic Christian Army |
| UPDF | Uganda People’s Defense Forces |
| UUGM | United Uganda Godly Movement |

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is a Ugandan insurgent outfit that was co-founded in 1992 by the African warlord Joseph Kony. This occurred after its predecessor, the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA), and the government army—the National Resistance Army (NRA)—resolved their differences through a peace deal and agreed to dissolve the former. Since its founding, the LRA has continually fought the Ugandan government up until the present day (2015). The LRA claims to be fighting to establish a government in Uganda that is based on the biblical Ten Commandments, which later changed to fighting for freedom and equal political and economic opportunities for all Ugandans.¹ The LRA has not been the only Ugandan rebel group; there have been several others. Most have either been defeated or, like the UPDA, have resolved their grievances with the government. The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), like the LRA, continues to fight the Ugandan government. One difference between the ADF and the LRA is the location of their respective sanctuaries: the ADF is located in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) while the LRA operates in northwestern DRC, southeastern Central African Republic (CAR), and parts of western South Sudan. The LRA is the older of the two.

The LRA is led by a semi-illiterate man (Joseph Kony), and has poorly trained forces, no logistic base, and no high-tech equipment or firearms. But it has frustrated many with its ability to evade termination for close to a quarter of a century. It is therefore interesting to explore in depth the strategies that the LRA has used to prolong its longevity and elude elimination. Identifying the LRA's survival strategies may provide policy makers and scholars with ideas as to how to derive viable solutions to tenacious insurgencies.

¹ See full story in Matsiko, Grace, "Uganda: LRA Peace Talks – The inside Story," *Africa Files*, February 9, 2008, accessed April 3, 2015, <http://www.africafiles.org/article.asp?ID=17171> and Scott Baldauf, "When Joseph Kony Almost Came in from the Cold," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 9, 2012, accessed April 3, 2015, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Keep-Calm/2012/0309/When-Joseph-Kony-almost-came-in-from-the-cold-Juba-peace-talks-video>.

Politicians, scholars, the local population in Uganda, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and, indeed, other countries affected by the LRA insurgency all have their own theories to explain the LRA's longevity. For example, a report by the International Crisis Group (ICG), an NGO, accuses the Ugandan government of not having the political will to end the LRA insurgency. According to the ICG, because the LRA no longer operates within Uganda, Uganda is no longer (or less) motivated to end the insurgency.² Another NGO, the African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), asserts that the LRA's survival is due to other factors, such as the support it receives from Sudan, the weakness of the counterinsurgency forces, and the benefits of war to some individuals charged with the duty of ending the insurgency.³

Unfortunately, such theories, which are based on subjective analysis, unless otherwise substantiated with empirical evidence, can divert us from the truth. It is therefore prudent to conduct a systematic analysis of the LRA insurgency so as to present an empirically supported theory of how and why the LRA has prolonged the longevity of their insurgency project.

This introductory chapter has four sections: the first states the objectives of this study, the second states the research question, the third describes the expected benefits that this study will contribute to knowledge about the LRA and similar insurgencies, and the last lays out this study's overall framework.

A. OBJECTIVE

If you ask the Ugandan government or any of the states fighting the LRA in Africa how the LRA managed to evade termination for such a long duration, you are likely to get a variety of reasons, as discussed above. This is because there is no

² See full discussion in International Crisis Group, "The Lord's Resistance Army." *International Crisis Group*, November 17, 2011, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/horn-of-africa/uganda/182-the-lords-resistance-army-end-game.aspx>.

³ See the full argument in John Adhere and Grace Maina, "The Never-Ending Pursuit of the Lord's Resistance Army: An Analysis of the Regional Cooperative Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA," *ACCORD Policy and Practice Brief*, March 2013, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://dSPACE.africaportal.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/33673/1/ACCORD-policy-practice-brief-24.pdf?1>.

systematically researched evidence to support a given narrative as to why and how the LRA prolongs its longevity.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore the LRA insurgency systematically so as to identify the factors that actually enhance the survivability and resilience of the LRA. In other words, it intends to identify the strategies used by the LRA to prolong its lifespan as an insurgency.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

What strategies have been used by the LRA to prolong the longevity of its undertaking?

C. THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY

Globally, the LRA is not the only insurgent group that has managed to prolong its lifespan. There are other non-state actors that have continued to project insecurity, not only to specific geographical locations but to the whole world, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Al Qaeda, the Al Shabaab in East Africa, and the Boko Haram in West Africa. Within East and Central Africa—a conflict-prone region—there are several insurgent groups that continue to destabilize the region, among them, the Seleka rebels in the Central African Republic (CAR) that are fighting the CAR government, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) that is fighting the Rwandan government, the Forces for National Liberation (FNL) that is fighting the Burundian government, and the recent breakaway faction of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army, the SPLA, which is fighting the SPLA government in Juba. The list is long, and there may not be an end to it; other insurgent groups may emerge in the future as well.

This study is designed to establish how and why the LRA, as a sample rebel group, continues to survive. Knowing the strategies that the LRA uses to evade termination would give state governments insights into formulating the best counterinsurgency strategies to use to deal with such myriad of insurgent groups, more especially in the East and Central African region. Each state affected by the LRA

insurgency has its own explanation as to why the LRA keeps surviving, despite the fact that they have joined efforts under the African Union Regional Task Force (RTF) to fight the LRA.⁴ This study will therefore contribute in one way or another to uniting the coalition of African forces in devising winning strategies to end the LRA and other similar insurgencies in the region.

D. THESIS FRAMEWORK

This work is composed of five chapters, in addition to this introductory one (Chapter I). Chapter II reports on the literature review or intellectual inheritance and the identification of the key theoretical strategies, according to scholars, that insurgents use to survive the counterinsurgent onslaught. Chapter III provides the historical background of the LRA to keep the reader abreast of the roots of the LRA insurgency and the events it went through to date. Chapter IV lays out the study's research design and covers the various methods of analysis used to answer the research question based on specific hypotheses. Chapter V is an analysis of the results, as well as the evaluation thereof. The final chapter (Chapter VI) draws conclusions based on the evaluation of the results, as well as provides policy recommendations for the readers of this work.

⁴ See the full explanation in Tumutegereize, "What Will It Take to End the Conflict with the LRA?" *Open Security: Conflict and Peacebuilding*, March 15, 2012, accessed March 3, 2015, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/kennedy-tumutegereize/what-will-it-take-to-end-conflict-with-lra>.

II. INTELLECTUAL INHERITANCE

This chapter introduces the contributions of other authors to the study of civil conflicts, insurgent organization design and management, and factors that shape and influence an insurgent organization's survival. This intellectual inheritance is what this study is based on. The section that follows describes the onset of civil wars where the discussion focuses on the creation or formation of a counter-state organization that undertakes to challenge the state establishment. The third section examines the theory of the design of the insurgent organization and how it fits into the environment of operation. The fourth section looks at the survival strategies of insurgent organizations. The last section relates the literature reviewed to the LRA as an insurgent organization.

A. THE ONSET OF CIVIL WARS

The popular explanations for onset of civil wars are ethnic discrimination, wealth inequalities, access to contrabands, and availability of safe havens. Contrary to this claim, Halvard Buhaug and Jan Ketil Rod have empirically shown that territorial conflicts are more likely to occur in sparsely populated areas, near national borders, far from the capital cities, and in less rough terrain. Their findings also suggest that civil wars aimed at capture of state power are more prone in densely populated areas and near natural resource mines, like diamond mines.⁵

The argument that ethnic and wealth diversity have less effect on the onset of civil war is supported widely by other authors including Fearon and Laitin,⁶ and Staniland⁷ Abdulkader H. Sinno, in support of this claim, argues that ethnic groups, social classes, peoples, civilizations, religions, and nations do not engage in conflict or strategic interactions, but organizations do. It is organizations, formed deliberately or ad hoc, that

⁵ For full discussion, see Halvard Buhaug and Jan Ketil Rod, "Local Determinants of African Civil Wars, 1970–2001," *Political Geography* 25 (2006): 315–35.

⁶ This is examined in detail by James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (February 2003): 75–90, doi:10.1017/S0003055403000534

⁷ For full discussion, see Staniland, Paul, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 17–35.

leverage ethnic or social agenda to attract its members and wage conflict in their name.⁸ Furthermore, Michelle Hale Williams argues that, although ethnic divisions may exist and be used for mobilizing ethnic groups, such divisions are not static but, rather, more dynamic. Williams goes on to assert that language and religious differences can prove so flexible that they become central in fostering relationships that are more inclusive than ethnocentric among different ethnic groups.⁹ These arguments show that there is no conflict that is instigated purely by an ethnic or any other form of social groupings. It is organizations that organize and portray conflicts to be based on social groupings.

Salehyan, however, challenges Buhaug and Rod's claim about extraterritorial havens. He argues that no insurgency can survive without having safe havens outside the confines of the target state.¹⁰ Both the claims by Buhaug and Rod, and by Salehyan have their intrinsic limitations. The National Resistance Army (NRA) insurgency in Uganda (1981–1986) shows that the insurgents operated near the capital Kampala. The NRA's intent was to capture state power, and therefore it is in line with Buhaug and Rod's second claim.¹¹ The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) insurgency in Sudan (1983–2005), however, shows that the insurgents operated far from the capital Khartoum. Like the NRA, the SPLA's intent was to capture state power; however, contrary to Buhaug and Rod's argument they did not operate near the state's base.¹² Neither the NRA nor the SPLA relied on extraterritorial haven to sustain their insurgency project, but

⁸ See full explanation in Abdulkader H. Sinno, "Armed Groups' Organizational Structure and Their Strategic Options," *International Review of the Red Cross*, June 30, 2011, accessed March 12, 2015, <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/article/review-2011/irrc-882-sinno.htm>.

⁹ For details of the argument, see Michelle Hale Williams, "Grappling with Ethnic Difference in Multicultural Societies," in *The Multicultural Dilemma: Migration, Ethnic Politics, and State Intermediation*, ed. Michelle Hale Williams (New York: Routledge, 2013), 15–29.

¹⁰ See details in Idean Salehyan, *Rebels without Borders: Transnational Insurgencies in World Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 19–61 and Idean Salehyan, "Transnational Insurgencies and the Escalation of Regional Conflict: Lessons for Iraq and Afghanistan," *Strategic Studies Institute*, March 4, 2010, accessed March 12, 2015, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=971>.

¹¹ For a full discussion, see Ondoga Ori Amaza, *Museveni's Long March from Guerrilla to Statesman* (Kampala, Uganda: Fountain Pub Ltd, 1998), 69–102 and Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed: The Struggle for Freedom and Democracy in Uganda* (London: Macmillan Education, 1997), 124–175.

¹² For full discussion on this, see Arop Madut-Arop, *Sudan's Painful Road to Peace: A Full Story of the Founding and Development of SPLM/SPLA* (Charleston, SC: BookSurge Publishing, 2006), 59–386.

instead they operated from within the borders of their respective countries.¹³ This is contrary to Salehyan's claim that all insurgents must have safe haven outside the target state's boundaries to operate successfully. Therefore, there is need to conduct further investigations to ascertain the most sustainable argument. Currently, both the NRM (the political wing of the NRA) and the SPLA are in government. The NRA captured state power in 1986, while the SPLA used peace talks and a popular referendum to gain state power, officially, in 2011.

James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin claim that insurgencies are caused by conditions like poverty, as marked by state's weakness, thus favoring rebel recruitment; political instability; rough terrain; and large population. Through empirical analysis, Fearon and Laitin show that there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that ethnic or religious diversity, stronger political grievances, and the end of the cold war as the root causes of insurgencies.¹⁴

Fearon and Laitin's arguments are supported by Yoweri Museveni and Ondoga Ori Amaza. The two authors, members of the NRA, participated in a protracted popular insurgency that was fought within the confines of Uganda's borders, which are densely populated area, and are fairly rough terrain. The NRA declared war on President Obote's government after the 1980 elections were reportedly rigged. The NRA claimed to be fighting to establish freedom and democracy in Uganda. Uganda, by then, was experiencing political instability and was more of a failed state than not.¹⁵ This argument is also in line with that of Buhaug and Rod that wars aimed at capture of state power are fought near the base of the state (the capital city) and resource deposits, and in densely populated areas.¹⁶ However the NRA insurgency was not based in areas richly endowed with mineral deposits. Instead, it relied on the local population for its basic logistic

¹³ See full discussion in Ibid. 59–386 and Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed*, 159–151.

¹⁴ For full discussion, see Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," 75–90.

¹⁵ For full discussion, see Amaza, *Museveni's Long March from Guerrilla to Statesman*, 23–54; Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed*, 105–39; and Godfrey Mwakikagile, *Uganda: A Nation in Transition: Post-Colonial Analysis* (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: New Africa Press, 2012), 217–287.

¹⁶ For full discussion, see Buhaug and Rod, "Local Determinants of African Civil Wars, 1970–2001," 315–35.

supplies. However, it must be noted that, much as state weakness has influence in determining the onset of civil conflicts, Nicolas Berman and Mathieu Couttenier show that economic shock in the form of a drop in external income affects only the intensity and geography of conflicts within countries. It has less effect on the location of the onset of conflicts. Most conflicts start in remote areas that are not susceptible to economic shocks.¹⁷

B. ORGANIZING THE INSURGENCY

Richard L. Daft defines organizations as social entities that are goal-directed, designed as deliberately structured and coordinated activity systems, and linked to the external environment. Organizations shape the lives of their members, and well-informed managers can shape organizations. There are two dimensions of organizations. First, the structural dimension, which describes the internal characteristics of organizations, is used to measure and compare the efficiency as well as effectiveness of the organization. It comprises the elements of formalization, specialization, hierarchy of authority, and centralization within the organization. The second dimension of an organization is its contingency factors, which are the large elements that influence and shape the structural dimension. These include organizational size, technology (the processes that convert inputs into outputs), environment (every element outside the organization that influences it), culture (the values, beliefs, understandings, and norms of the organization), and goals and strategy (the purpose and competitive edge that differentiate the organization from others). Organizations fall within two extreme design modes: the mechanistic or the organic. The mechanistic design is characterized by large size, efficiency strategy, stable environment, and rigid culture, and is normally used in manufacturing technology setup. Organic design, on the other hand, is characterized by small size, innovation strategy, changing environment, and adaptive culture, and is normally applicable in services technology setup.¹⁸

¹⁷ See details of this point of view in Nicolas Berman and Mathieu Couttenier, *External Shocks, Internal Shots: The Geography of Civil Conflicts*, SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, March 1, 2014), accessed March 7, 2015, <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2444917>.

¹⁸ For full discussion, see Richard L. Daft, *Organization Theory and Design*, 11th ed. (Mason, OH: Cengage Learning, 2012), 1–169.

Daft's argument is that the organization shapes the activities and thus the behavior of its members. He also claims that the leadership of the organization shapes the organization. In other words, the leadership shapes the behavior of the members of the organization by designing and shaping the structure of the organization. Daft also noted that the environment in which the organization operates cannot be ignored because it has direct influence on the operations and thus survival of the organization. It will, therefore, be interesting to find out whether LRA depends on its leadership and environment to prolong the longevity of its survival, based on Daft's arguments.

Idean Salehyan argues that rebel organizations are not confined to a single geographic unit (country) but rather, they span international boundaries. Civil wars thus often result in international disputes and sometimes escalate into interstate wars. Therefore, there is nothing "domestic" about civil wars and conflicts because they always result in inter-state tensions. Salehyan asserts that war must be viewed beyond the confines of the state (state-centric); we must take into account the regional dynamics of the conflict and the linkages between civil and international wars.¹⁹ Salehyan thus argues that states must recognize the transnational nature of insurgencies and take it as their common problem. They may therefore need to engage in constructive dialogue and common counterinsurgency strategies. This will also enhance friendly interstate relations. The lack of these cooperative steps may escalate the conflict to regional status.²⁰

Salehyan's arguments are correct but not without exceptions. The SPLA/M fought with the Sudanese government from within the confines of Sudan's borders.²¹ Again, the NRA/M did not have any external base; it launched and accomplished its mission from within the confines of Uganda.²² Maybe the argument should be based on the target

¹⁹ This is explained fully in Salehyan, *Rebels without Borders*, 19–61.

²⁰ See detailed discussion in Salehyan, "Transnational Insurgencies and the Escalation of Regional Conflict: Lessons for Iraq and Afghanistan."

²¹ For full discussion on this exception, see Madut-Arop, *Sudan's Painful Road to Peace*, 59–391 and others including Peter Adwok Nyaba, *The Politics of Liberation in South Sudan* (Kampala, Uganda: Fountain Publ., 1996) and Lam Akol, *SPLM/SPLA: The Nasir Declaration* (New York: iUniverse, Inc., 2003).

²² For full discussion, see Amaza, *Museveni's Long March from Guerrilla to Statesman*, 54–117 and Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed*, 105–177.

state's ability to control its sovereign territory and deny it to the counter-state elements rather than the availability of safe havens across the border. Some states are weak and unable to prevail in all their sovereign territory. That is why there is this phenomenon of ungoverned spaces that are under the control of non-state actors. The non-state actor can thus use the ungoverned territory as a safe haven or base to coordinate its activities against the state establishment and may eventually overrun the state authority altogether.

Paul Staniland reports that how insurgents are organized influences their survivability. He further argues that the organization of insurgents is shaped by the prewar networks of the insurgent leaders. This may result in any one of four types of insurgent organizations: **integrated**—characterized by leadership unity, discipline, and high level of local compliance; **vanguard**—characterized by robust central control but fragile local control; **parochial**—characterized by having weak central discipline but robust local control; and **fragmented**—characterized by its lack of organizational control, at either the central or local levels. This also explains why insurgent groups with a similar ideology, ethnicity, state enemy, and resource flows still have different forms of organization. However, the organizational styles also change with prewar politics, counterinsurgent strategies, the insurgents' innovations, and international interventions during the war. The cohesion of the insurgents shapes how the war is fought, how the war ends, and how politics plays out after the war. The prospects for peaceful negotiations and state building after the war also depend on the cohesion and the organization of the insurgents. Staniland argues that focusing on state structure and policies, material resources, ideology, and mass support to explain insurgent organization “suffers from important limitations.”²³ He stresses that the study of insurgent groups must take the historical connotations of the conflicts seriously.²⁴

Although it is true that insurgents change organization structure in response to changes in the prevailing conditions, such as change in counterinsurgent's strategies and the reciprocal insurgent innovations, it may not be absolutely correct to say that ideology and the quest for mass mobilization do not play roles in determining how insurgents

²³ For detailed discussion on this, see Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*, 1–59.

²⁴ See *Ibid.*, 5.

organize. For instance, the organization structure of the NRA was based on the ideology the leaders held; that is, a force whose relationship with the population is sacrosanct. As such, it had/has political positions within its military structure with the role of linking the military with the population.²⁵ This structure serves the purpose of ideology, but in the process it also acts as a mass mobilization tool.

Abdulkader H. Sinno shows that the organizational structure of armed groups affect their strategic options during conflict and at the time of entering peace agreements. They may have either a centralized, decentralized, networked, or patronage-based organizational structure. Conversely, only centralized armed organizations have the leverage to make strategic options like “divide and conquer,” “co-option,” and “hearts and minds,” and also engage in successful peace agreements. Furthermore, centralized insurgent organizations are especially vulnerable, when they do not have safe haven in the contested territory. This also explains why counterinsurgent forces are less interested in peace talks with centralized insurgent organizations.²⁶

Eli Berman, Jacob N. Shapiro, and Joseph H. Felter found empirical support for Sinno’s “winning hearts and minds” argument and showed that improved service provision and coercion reduces insurgent violence. A government seeking to curtail insurgent violence can thus use the strategy of “hearts and minds.”²⁷ Sinno’s argument about the vulnerability of centralized insurgent organizations is in line with that of Gordon McCormick. McCormick argues that the state, as the prevailing authority in a country, has force advantage. Therefore, if the insurgent is centralized, then it is visible (they have specific positions where the counterinsurgent can find them), and so the state has to simply apply force to destroy it. On the other hand, the decentralized insurgent organization, instead, has information advantage and is not visible (hidden) to the state forces. In this case, the state may be powerful but will have nowhere to unleash its

²⁵ See details in Amaza, *Museveni’s Long March from Guerrilla to Statesman*, 34–37 and Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed*, 178.

²⁶ For full discussion, see Sinno, “Armed Groups’ Organizational Structure and Their Strategic Options,” 1–99.

²⁷ For details on this, see Eli Berman, Jacob N. Shapiro, and Joseph H. Felter, “Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq,” *Journal of Political Economy* 119, no. 4 (August 2011): 766–819.

superiority.²⁸ This argument is also supported by Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom in their book *The Starfish and the Spider*, where they argue that centralized organizations are vulnerable to destruction like the spider—pluck off the head of a spider, and its life ends—while decentralized organizations, like the starfish, are more resilient to destruction—cut off a finger of a starfish, and it still survives.²⁹

Jeremy M. Weinstein argues that there are two types of insurgent organizations: one that is resource independent and one that is resource strained. The former, because of being resource content, unleashes indiscriminate violence against civilian populations, whereas the latter does not because it depends on the civilian population for its resource base. Weinstein thus argues that most resource independent rebel groups are composed of undisciplined, materialists, and are unlikely to succeed in their endeavors. Resource-constrained rebels, on the other hand, maintain a cordial relationship with the civilian population, which enhances their recruitment drive and hence survivability. In other words, the cause of insurgent violence is rooted in the organizational structure of the group.³⁰

Weinstein draws a link between resources, organization, and violence. His argument is supported by Museveni, who argues that the relationship between the insurgent forces and the civilian population is sacrosanct. This argument is also supported by Museveni's colleague Ori Amaza.³¹ However, this line of thinking does not account for the relationship between the state and the insurgents and between the population and the state. These missing links may be significant contributors to the behavior of the insurgent forces. If the civilian population sides with the state, the insurgents may treat them differently than when they support the insurgents and vice versa.

²⁸ For full discussion, see Gordon H. McCormick and Frank Giordano, "Things Come Together: Symbolic Violence and Guerrilla Mobilization," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007): 295–320, doi: 10.1080/01436590601153705 and Gordon H. McCormick, "Seminar in Guerrilla Warfare" (Lectures, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, winter 2014).

²⁹ For full discussion, see Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom, *The Starfish and the Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations*, Reprint edition (New York: Portfolio Trade, 2008), 1–29.

³⁰ See detailed explanation in Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1–96.

³¹ See full discussions, in Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed. 177–180* and Amaza, *Museveni's Long March from Guerrilla to Statesman*, 54–69.

C. KEEPING THE INSURGENCY PROJECT SURVIVING

Halvard Buhaug, Scott Gates, and Paivi Lujala, using a contest-success function model, show that geographic factors such as **location**, **terrain**, and **natural resource deposits** interact together with the **military capacity of the rebels** to determine the duration of a conflict. They explained that civil conflicts that are fought far from the base of the state and are located at remote international borders that are endowed with rich mineral deposits, contribute significantly in determining the longevity of the conflict. They conclude that the distance counterinsurgent forces have to travel to project power, the rebels' fighting capacity, and the geographical characteristics of the conflict region affects how the civil war is fought and who will eventually prevail.³²

This is an interesting argument that warrants further investigation. Some of the factors mentioned in this argument are independently supported by other authors. For instance, Weinstein argues in support of resource availability and military capacity, which is in part determined by organization structure. Fearon and Laitin argue in support of the factors of terrain and location as important in insurgent operations.³³ It will be interesting to explore and find out whether the LRA relied on these factors to prolong the longevity of its insurgency project.

Anne Clunan and Harold Trinkunas contend that states are sometimes unable to prevail in all spaces within the domain of their sovereignty, which results in ungoverned spaces. They further claim that such ungoverned spaces attract alternative governments that try to fill the gap left by the absence of the state. Such non-state centric governments, they argue, are there to provide what the state has failed to provide as a legal authority. They recommend that if the non-state government poses no threat to international

³² See detailed discussion in Halvard Buhaug, Scott Gates, and Päivi Lujala, "Geography, Rebel Capability, and the Duration of Civil Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4 (August 1, 2009): 544–69, doi: 10.1177/0022002709336457.

³³ For full discussion, see Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, 163–198; Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," 75–90.

security, then states should cooperate with them in a phenomenon called softened sovereignty.³⁴

Rabasa and his co-authors at the RAND Corporation argue that ungoverned territories emerge as a result of failure of the state to control all its sovereign territory. They identify three types of ungoverned territories: contested, incomplete, and abdicated. *Contested territories* are those in which the state and the alternative government (non-state actor) are contesting to establish their authority. The *incomplete territory* is where the state has some control, but not absolute control. The *abdicated territory* is where the state decided to relegate authority to the non-state actor. They assert that ungoverned territories are responsible for harboring insurgents and terrorists, hence a source of global insecurity. They recommend stronger states to support weaker states to get rid of ungoverned territories prevalent in developing nations.³⁵

Ungoverned territories are characterized by, among other things, an absence of state authority, remote environment far from the base of the state, rough terrain, poor social services like water sources, health centers, and infrastructure. Other factors are informal business activities and ephemeral local administration. Insurgent and terrorist groups like the LRA, which is armed with firearms and therefore more powerful than local authorities, may invade and take over such territories. In East and Central Africa, such territories are plentiful, and this could be the reason why the LRA keeps surviving despite having no logistic base.

D. THE LITERATURE AND THE LRA

Is it true that an insurgent's duration of sustaining a conflict is dependent on its location, terrain, natural resource deposits, and military capacity, as argued by Buhaug and co-authors? Could it be how the LRA is organized that is responsible for its ability to evade termination? Is it because of the presence of ungoverned spaces that the LRA

³⁴ For full discussion, see Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas, eds., *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Studies, 2010), 17–34.

³⁵ See detailed explanation in Angel Rabasa et al., *Ungoverned Territories: Understanding and Reducing Terrorism Risks*, Advance review copy edition (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007), 1–44.

thrives in East and Central Africa? The author intends to use these arguments, theories, or models derived from the literature reviewed as part of the hypotheses to ascertain why the LRA insurgency has survived for such a long duration (27 years since 1988). An overview of the LRA insurgency shows some truth in these arguments. The LRA is hundreds of miles from Uganda. The terrain in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), Republic of South Sudan (RSS), and Sudan is relatively rough. These countries are blessed with various types of natural resources. And the LRA seems to have mastered guerrilla warfare in its crudest form. There are also, arguably, plenty of ungoverned spaces in this region.³⁶ It may also be interesting to know why the LRA did not relocate eastwards to Somalia, Ethiopia, or Kenya, because it was operating nearer those countries, instead of crossing the Nile (an obstacle) to go westwards to the DRC.

³⁶ See details in IHS, "Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)," *Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism*, July 2014, accessed March 2, 2015, <https://janes.ihs.com/Grid.aspx>, and Enough Project Team, "Kony to LRA: 'Bring Me Ivory, Gold, and Diamonds' | Enough," *Enough: The Project to End Genocide and Crimes against Humanity* (November 19, 2014), accessed August 29, 2014, <http://www.enoughproject.org/reports/kony-lra-bring-me-ivory-gold-and-diamonds>.

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III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE LRA INSURGENCY

This chapter provides a brief history of the LRA as an insurgent organization from the time it was created up until 2015. For the purpose of easy comprehension, coherency, and clarity, the chapter has been divided into five sections. The first section narrates the story of the origin of the LRA as an amalgamation of insurgent groups from Acholi districts. The second describes the operations of the LRA as an insurgent organization, that is, how the LRA engaged in and conducted the business of insurgency. The third tells the story of how the LRA game changed when the Sudanese decided to sign a peace deal, and how the LRA used the wake of the Sudanese peace deal to succeed in its next maneuver. The fourth reports on how things fell apart when the LRA snubbed the signing of the Juba peace agreement. The fifth and final section is the conclusion to the chapter.

A. THE GENESIS OF THE LRA INSURGENCY

On July 27, 1985, Tito Okello, Basilio Okello, and their cohort, then soldiers of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), mutinied against the government of President Milton Obote and dislodged him from power in a coup d'état. Tito Okello was appointed President. This group was composed mostly of people from the Gulu and Kitgum districts, that is, members of the Acholi tribe who accused Obote of tribalism. Obote was from the Langi tribe, which neighbors the Acholis in northern Uganda. During this chaotic situation, the National Resistance Army (NRA) was busy fighting the Obote government from the outskirts of Kampala city. Tito Okello's government, in a bid to co-opt the NRA and stabilize the country, called on the NRA to talk peace. Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi offered to mediate the talks in the Kenyan capital city of Nairobi, and a peace deal was reached in December 1985. The Okellos thus expected the NRA to join them in a new transitional umbrella government by 1986.³⁷

³⁷ For full discussions on this, see Mwakikagile, *Uganda, 217–281*; Heike Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & the Holy Spirits: War in Northern Uganda 1986-97* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2000), 22–36; Amaza, *Museveni's Long March from Guerrilla to Statesman, 5–23*; and Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed, 169–175*.

On January 25, 1986, to the astonishment of the Okellos, the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) marched on Kampala, dislodging the Okellos from power. Probably, the NRA/M had little or no confidence in the transitional government to be established. The following day, January 26, the NRA/M officially announced the takeover of government. Tito Okello and his cohort fled the country, with many of them taking refuge in neighboring Sudan (currently South Sudan). By April 1986, the NRA had reached the northern border of Uganda, further displacing remnants of the UNLA into Sudan. In late 1986 and early 1987, the former UNLA soldiers and some members of the Acholi tribe displaced by the civil war regrouped as Uganda Peoples' Democratic Army (UPDA) and launched counter offensive against the NRA/M government in Uganda with the support of the Sudanese government.³⁸

In 1986, as the NRA/M was still trying to settle as a government, an Acholi priestess, Alice Auma, a traditional healer, formed a parallel rebel group to that of the UPDA. Auma claimed that she was possessed by a spirit called *Lakwena*, meaning the “messenger.” She accordingly proclaimed to be a mystical spiritual conduit for Lakwena to the Acholi and Uganda at large. Her Holy Spirit Movement/Mobile Force (HSMF) fought against the NRA, capturing substantial part of northern and eastern Uganda. In 1987, however, the HSMF suffered a defeat when it reached Jinja, about 80 kilometers from Kampala city, and Auma and some of her followers fled to Kenya where she eventually died from illness in 2007.³⁹

Joseph Kony, the current leader of the LRA, comes from a small village near Gulu call Odek. He was brought up in the Catholic faith but dropped out of school at an early age. By 1987, Kony was a soldier in the UPDA at the age of 26 years. One day, while at home on leave, he was reported to have been possessed by some spirits and

³⁸ See detailed discussions in Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed*, 180–183; Christopher Day, “The Fates of Rebels: Insurgencies in Uganda,” *City University of New York* 43, no. 4 (July 2011): 439–58; IHS, “Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)””; and Timothy Kalyegira, “Uganda after 1986: Insurgencies in the North and East (Part One),” *The Daily Monitor*, December 11, 2012, accessed September 13, 2014, <http://www.monitor.co.ug/SpecialReports/ugandaat50/Uganda-after-1986--Insurgencies-in-the-north-and-east--Part-One-/-/1370466/1640922/-/r3rf7/-/index.html>.

³⁹ For full discussions on this, see Day, “The Fates of Rebels: Insurgencies in Uganda,” 439–58; IHS, “Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)””; and Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & Holy Spirits*, 22–100.

could not speak for three days. Later, when some Christians (Balokole) joined hands in prayers and drove away the evil spirits, he opened his mouth. It is reported that from that time onwards, he became a conduit for ten different spirits (see Appendix A for list), which he claimed were holy ones. Heike Behrend, partly quoting de Heusch, reported thus:

In his first speech, he [Kony] said he had been sent by God to liberate humanity from disease and suffering. But, he added, he had discovered that healing was senseless as long as those who were healed were killed. So he resolved to fight to destroy all those who wanted to fight. The struggle would last until no one had the wish to fight any longer. He said he had not come to topple government, but to destroy the evil forces in the world as well as the *abila* (the shrines of the ancestors), amulets, and all forms of witchcraft and sorcery. He said he had come to teach people to follow God. His coming to Acholi [the territory] did not mean he was privileging the Acholi [the tribe], but that he wanted justice and righteousness to reign throughout the country [Uganda].⁴⁰

Immediately after acquiring the mediumship for the spirits, Kony embarked on mobilizing troops by mainly attacking other insurgent groups within Acholi region. These included the UPDA, HSMF, and other minor spirit-based resistance groups. His mission was to co-opt all of them under his command (see list of co-opted spirits in Appendix B). Those refusing to join Kony's Holy Spirit soldiers, by then called the Lord's Army, were imprisoned or ransomed for logistical supplies. The Lord's Army operated like Alice Auma's HSMF: it had Holy Spirit safety precautions (see Appendix C) as its rules and regulations, and the Holy Spirit tactics, which they used for fighting their enemy.

Meanwhile, the UPDA, under its commander Odong Latek, continued the fight against the NRA/M until 1988 when its faction under Angelo Okello decided to sign a peace agreement with the Ugandan government. President Museveni had already announced an amnesty for any insurgent who wished to renounce rebellion and return home. The agreement between Angelo Okello and the NRA co-opted some of the UPDA's forces, while others became members of the Local Defense Units (LDUs), whose responsibility was to protect the villages from attacks by insurgents. This

⁴⁰ See quote in Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & Holy Spirits*, 179.

agreement also temporarily halted Sudanese support to the UPDA. However, the UPDA, under Odong Latek, did not agree with the terms of the agreement and thus decided to join hands with Joseph Kony, who was by this time the leader of his reformed Uganda People's Democratic Christian Army (UPDCA). The UPDCA also recruited some members of Alice's defeated forces to boost its strength. Odong Latek, a trained military officer, seemed to have had profound influence on Kony. By 1992, the UPDCA changed name to the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) and changed from Holy Spirit tactics to classical guerrilla warfare. By this time, the LRA was the only Acholi-originated insurgency still fighting the government of Uganda.⁴¹

B. THE BEGINNING OF THE QUARTER-CENTURY-LONG RESISTANCE

The LRA/M reactivated ties with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) so as to receive military supplies and special training from the Sudanese government. The government of Sudan had also granted the LRA sanctuaries within its territory. This facilitated the operations of the LRA greatly by giving the LRA the opportunity to rearm, train, farm, and maneuver back to Uganda to conduct operations. President Museveni was a former classmate of Dr. John Garang (the leader of the Sudanese rebel movement, Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army/Movement—SPLA/M) while at Dar es Salaam University in Tanzania. The two leaders, naturally, cemented the ties between their armies. The SPLA operated from within the borders of Sudan, but it received supplies through the territory of Uganda. In essence, a proxy war situation was established: the LRA supported by SAF, fighting the Ugandan government, and SPLA supported by NRA, fighting the Sudanese government.⁴²

In 1994, the Islamic Republic of Iran tried to mediate a peace agreement between the governments of Uganda and that of the Sudan, but it never worked. The two countries

⁴¹ See full discussions in Day, "The Fates of Rebels: Insurgencies in Uganda," 439–58 and Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & Holy Spirits*, 172–191.

⁴² See details in Day, "The Fates of Rebels: Insurgencies in Uganda," 439–58 and IHS, "Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)."

continued to support the insurgents of each other, and so the proxy war situation continued.⁴³

On October 8, 1995, Uganda enacted a new constitution that transformed the NRA into a national military called Uganda Peoples' Defense Forces (UPDF).⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the UPDF continued the fight against the LRA. It was just a change of name, but the operations and other routine activities of the UPDF continued unchanged.

Between 1994 and 2004, the NRA and the UPDF (after 1995), continued to fight not only the LRA in northern Uganda, but also other insurgent groups in West Nile and the Western regions of the country. The LRA also kept making incursions from its base in Sudan to conduct operations in Uganda. The operations included mostly abductions, attacking weak UPDF detachments, raiding internally displaced people's (IDP) camps, and ambushing both the UPDF and civilians. Several peace initiatives were organized by the local religious and political leaders to end the insurgency but to no avail. The fight between the LRA and the government of Uganda raged on.⁴⁵

In 2002, Uganda and Sudan negotiated a deal to allow the UPDF to cross the border into Sudan to conduct limited operations for three-month duration. As per the terms of the agreement, Uganda was given a red line south of Juba city that it could not cross while pursuing the LRA. Uganda renewed the mandate over eight times. Meanwhile, the LRA relocated beyond the red line and kept bypassing the UPDF to conduct operations in Uganda.⁴⁶

The last serious incursion of the LRA into Uganda was in 2004. The LRA moved through northern to eastern Uganda. They were contained by locally mobilized militias

⁴³ See Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & Holy Spirits*, 197.

⁴⁴ See details in Government of Uganda, "The Constitution | State House Uganda," *The State House of Uganda*, 1995, accessed June 17, 2014, <http://www.statehouse.go.ug/government/constitution>.

⁴⁵ See full discussions in Apuuli Phillip Kasaija, "Civil Society and Conflict Resolution: The Role of the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI) in the Northern Uganda Conflict," in *Annual Conference of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)*, vol. 7, ICG Africa Report No. 77 (Northern Uganda: Understanding and Solving the Conflict, Bangkok, Thailand: International Crisis Group (ICG), 2006).

⁴⁶ See the full story in IRIN, "UGANDA: Operation Iron Fist Agreement Renewed amid Tensions," *IRINnews*, September 15, 200, accessed October 7, 2014, <http://www.irinnews.org/FR/Report/46151/UGANDA-Operation-Iron-Fist-agreement-renewed-amid-tensions>.

called Amuka boys from the Lango tribe and Arrow boys from the Itesot tribe. These groups were armed with rifles to defend the IDP's camps in northern Uganda and the villages in eastern Uganda respectively. The plan was that the locally organized militias would protect the rear territory (parts of northern and eastern Uganda) while the UPDF confronted the LRA at the front in southern Sudan.⁴⁷ However, because the LRA operated with small covert groups, they managed to penetrate deep behind the UPDF lines. As the militias confronted them together with some UPDF rear units, the LRA withdrew back to Sudan, leaving behind trails of massacres in their wake.⁴⁸

C. THE SUDANESE COMPREHENSIVE PEACE AGREEMENT AND UGANDAN PEACE “JOKES”

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Sudanese government and the SPLA/M in 2005 changed the proxy war status quo. According to the CPA, SPLA/M was granted authority to govern southern Sudan semi-autonomously,⁴⁹ which meant that the whole of southern Sudan came under the control of SPLA/M. Because SPLA/M was an ally of Uganda, it meant that the LRA had lost its ally's control of the sanctuary territory. The sanctuary that the LRA reverted to during all the previous years had by then shifted into the control of the SPLA/M—an enemy of the LRA by extension. The LRA thus had four options: it could relocate to the countries in the west of Sudan (the DRC or the CAR); it could relocate eastwards to Ethiopia, Somalia, or Kenya; it could talk peace with Uganda government; or it could stay within the vast territory of southern Sudan and use guerrilla tactics to survive.

⁴⁷ See full discussions in Maja Janmyr, “Recruiting Internally Displaced Persons into Civil Militias: The Case of Northern Uganda,” *Nordic Journal of Human Rights* 32, no. 3 (July 3, 2014): 199–219, doi:10.1080/18918131.2014.937203 and Peter Eichstaedt and Joseph Elunya, “Ugandan Militia Fights Off LRA,” *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, January 24, 2006, accessed March 23, 2015, <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/ugandan-militia-fights-lra>.

⁴⁸ See details in IRIN, “UGANDA: Focus on LRA Attack on Barlonyo IDPs Camp,” *IRINnews*, February 25, 2004, accessed November 30, 2014, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/48732/uganda-focus-on-lra-attack-on-barlonyo-idps-camp>.

⁴⁹ See full document in Government of Sudan and SPLA/M, “Comprehensive Peace Agreement between Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement.” 2005, accessed January 2, 2015, <http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/comprehensive-peace-agreement-between-government-republic-sudan-and-sudan-peoples>

The LRA chose two options: First, it relocated to the west, in Garamba National Park in the DRC. Probably, the leaders of LRA realized the richness of game parks in terms of food supplies and plenty of ground with favorable terrain to maneuver in case of counterinsurgent onslaught. The DRC also harbors a number of other insurgent groups, and the LRA probably hoped to link up with them or survive independently. Second, it accepted the offer of a peace negotiation by the semi-autonomous government of southern Sudan (GOSS). Dr. Riek Machar, the GOSS vice president was selected to be the mediator. The Ugandan government also agreed to the talks, commonly referred to as the Juba peace accord. Given how events unfolded thereafter, one may also argue that the LRA could have used the peace talk option to achieve the relocation option.

In 2006, as peace-talks were being held in Juba, with the LRA represented by the so-called LRA external wing, the LRA-proper relocated to Garamba National Park in the DRC. By late 2007, the peace-talks were through and the final signing of the agreement was to be held in Juba. However, to the astonishment of many, including the LRA negotiators, Kony decided to snub the agreement at the last minute. By this time, the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant of arrest for Kony and his other top four commanders had been issued. This could have contributed to Kony's refusal to sign the agreement. He wanted the charges against him and his commanders dropped before he would sign the agreement.⁵⁰ There are also reports that Kony was actually not interested in the peace agreement. Therefore, he had to find a reason to snub the agreement, and this was the best opportunity he had.⁵¹

⁵⁰ See details in Thomas Reuters, "Uganda Violence," Thomson Reuters Foundation (January 1, 2011), accessed March 27, 2015, <http://www.trust.org/spotlight/uganda-violence/>.

⁵¹ For full explanations on this, see Scott Baldauf, "When Joseph Kony Almost Came in from the Cold: Juba Peace Talks (+video)," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 9, 2012, accessed March 27, 2015, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Keep-Calm/2012/0309/When-Joseph-Kony-almost-came-in-from-the-cold-Juba-peace-talks-video> and Dylan Hendrickson and Kennedy Tumutegereize, "Dealing with Complexity in Peace Negotiations: Reflections on the Lord's Resistance Army and the Juba Talks | Conciliation Resources," *Conciliation Resources: Working Together for Peace*, January 2012, accessed March 27, 2015, <http://www.c-r.org/resources/dealing-complexity-peace-negotiations-reflections-lord%E2%80%99s-resistance-army-and-juba-talks>.

D. THINGS FALL APART! BACK TO THE SWORD

In 2008, Uganda responded by launching a concerted attack on the LRA positions in the DRC in an operation dubbed Operation Lightning Thunder (OLT). The LRA was dispersed, and some of its members fled to the CAR, Sudan's Darfur Region, and parts of Chad. By the time of this writing, LRA members are suspected to be located in the countries mentioned above, including parts of the new country—the Republic of South Sudan (RSS).⁵²

Since then, the LRA has continued to abduct and terrorize the civilian population in the DRC, CAR, and RSS. In 2011, the African Union officially designated the LRA a terrorist group. Since October 14, 2011, the United States has also joined the African Union Taskforce (AU RTF) deployed to track down the LRA. U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) serves as adviser to the AU RTF, which consists of forces from Uganda, the DRC, RSS, and CAR.⁵³

Since 2008, the RTF has scored a number of successes. Several junior to medium LRA commanders have been eliminated, and other senior commanders like Opio Makasi, Caesar Acellam, and Dominic Ongwen surrendered. The use of force may not be very effective now, but the non-kinetic method seems to be yielding some good results of

⁵² See full discussions in IRIN, "DRC: Civilians Suffer as Uganda Takes on LRA," *IRINnews*, January 20, 2009, accessed March 27, 2015, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/82475/drc-civilians-suffer-as-uganda-takes-on-lra>; Richard Downie, "The Lord's Resistance Army | Center for Strategic and International Studies," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, October 18, 2011, accessed March 28, 2015, <http://csis.org/publication/lords-resistance-army>; and Ledio Cakaj et al., "LRA Crisis Tracker," *LRA Crisis Tracker/The Invisible Children + Resolve*, 2014, accessed July 3, 2014, <http://lra-crisistracker.com/#analysis>.

⁵³ See details in UNOCA, "Fight against the LRA," *United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa: UNOCA*, September 18, 2014, accessed February 4, 2015, <http://unoca.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=3760&mid=6487&ItemID=539864>; Enough Project Team, "The United States and the LRA," *Enough: The Project to End Genocide and Crimes against Humanity*, 2015, accessed July 3, 2014, <http://www.enoughproject.org/conflicts/lra/us-government-and-lra>; and Downie, "The Lord's Resistance Army."

depleting the LRA senior command structure. Several defections have been recorded as a result radio communications encouraging LRA fighters to quit.⁵⁴

E. CONCLUSION

The long story of the LRA clearly requires further investigations to ascertain exactly why this insurgent group managed to survive for so long. Could it be how the LRA is organized and the tactics it is using to fight that gives it such longevity? Is it the wise selection of sanctuaries and areas of operation that actually favors the LRA's survival? What role do the population and the regional politics play in the survival of the LRA? The brief history of the LRA described in this chapter only provides clues about some of the factors mentioned in the above questions. It is therefore imperative that further investigation is conducted. It is hoped that such inquiry will give policy makers and scholars a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of insurgent survival.

⁵⁴ See details in Max Delany, "Could LRA Commander's Capture Help Net Joseph Kony? (+video)," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 14, 2012, accessed April 2, 2015, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2012/0514/Could-LRA-commander-s-capture-help-net-Joseph-Kony-video>; and Moses Akena, "Ongwen Speaks Out on Why He Quit LRA," *Daily Monitor*, January 19, 2015, accessed April 2, 2015, <http://mobile.monitor.co.ug/News/News/Ongwen-speaks-out-on-why-he-quit-LRA/-/2466686/2593818/-/format/xhtml/-/aafw52z/-/index.html>.

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IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter describes the analytic strategy of this study. The overall purpose is to gain knowledge in the area of insurgent survival techniques, more specifically, to understand the strategies used by the LRA to prolong the longevity of its insurgency project. According to the reviewed literature, there are specific factors that insurgents like the LRA rely on to sustain their insurgency undertaking. This analytic strategy therefore uses the data on LRA activities and relates it to those factors that other researchers have found to be responsible for prolonging the longevity of insurgencies.

It must be noted that there are factors that affect both the insurgents and the counterinsurgents equally. The difference arises from the point of effective utility of one's advantage. The state is a powerful organ that has more resources than the insurgents, and, as such, it has a force advantage over the counter-state. The counter-state, on the other hand, is less powerful but possesses an information advantage over the state, represented by the counterinsurgent. The state has a responsibility to maintain peace and security in the country. The counter-state, on the other hand, strives for survival and keeping the counterinsurgent engaged in battles or a "hide and seek" insurgency game at a time and space of its choice. The longevity of the insurgency therefore depends on how well the counter-state and the state play this game. The state fights to end the insurgency while the counter-state fights to survive and weaken the state, thus prolonging the insurgency.⁵⁵

This chapter has three sections. The first describes the data on the LRA's significant activities, which is the dependent variable for this work. The second describes some of the factors that are believed to contribute to the longevity of insurgency projects based on the literature reviewed. The last section outlines the method of analysis used to analyze the dependent and the independent variables.

⁵⁵ See full discussion in McCormick and Giordano, "Things Come Together: Symbolic Violence and Guerrilla Mobilization." *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007): 295–320.

A. THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable data used in this work are from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, Georeferenced Events Datasets (UCDP/GED), which was last updated in 2012. UCDP/GED data captures instances of political violence in Africa quite sufficiently.⁵⁶ However, for the purpose of this work, only datasets related to the LRA insurgency have been extracted for analysis. The instances recorded in that data consist of violence against civilians by the insurgents, battles between the insurgents and the counterinsurgent forces, and non-violent activities such as peace talks, setting up of defensive locations, or engaging in a peaceful way with civilians. The data also captures the date of each data point in addition to the approximate geographical location of each event. It must be noted that whatever activity is recorded, as long as it concerns the LRA, it is considered a data-point for this analysis. This is because each of the events happened with the overall mission of operations against the LRA insurgency. In other words, it does not matter whether the event is peaceful or violent as long as it has that overarching link to the LRA insurgency where each side strives to win through any means available to them.

B. THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The independent variables consist of factors that are thought to be responsible for the survival of an insurgent group like the LRA. The hypotheses stated under this section have been derived from the literature review covered in Chapter II. The factors have been categorized into three broad categories, including geographical, political, and organizational and leadership components. Each of these categories is represented by various elements that the author and the literature reviewed alluded to as essential ingredients for insurgent survival.

⁵⁶ See the full data codebook in Ralph Sundberg, Mathilda Lindgren, and Ausra Padskocimaite, “Georeferenced Event Datasets,” *UCDP GED Global Instances of Political Violence*, November 15, 2012, accessed October 23, 2015, <http://www.ucdp.uu.se/ged/data.php> and for quality of the data see Kristine Eck, “In Data We Trust? A Comparison of UCDP GED and ACLED Conflict Events Datasets,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 47, no. 1 (2012): 124–41.

1. Geographical Factors

The term *geography* refers to the study of places and the relationship between people and their environment. Geography has two main branches: physical geography, which studies landforms, seasons, streams, atmosphere, and soils; and human geography, which studies the distribution of networks of people and cultures on earth.⁵⁷ This section covers the physical and human geography elements that are essential for the survival of an insurgent group.

a. Physical Geography

The essential physical geography elements that are key in influencing the operations and livelihood of an insurgent organization that is using the terrain for survival are elevation, the vegetation cover, mineral deposits, and the location of the base of the state—state capital. Each of these elements play a unique role in enhancing the longevity of an insurgent group like the LRA.

(1) Elevation

Elevation is a description of the shape of the earth's surface in terms of height above sea level. In simple terms, it describes the shape of the earth in terms of mountains, hills, planes, and valleys. Of interest here is how elevation influences the activities and the livelihood of the insurgents. As a military organization, an insurgent group would draw from the tactical advantages the terrain that a territory would offer. For example, raised grounds offer suitable observation posts (OPs), which the insurgent would use as look-out positions to spot the counterinsurgent forces long before they approach their positions. This gives the insurgents information advantage over the counterinsurgent forces. It lets them prepare tactical actions, like laying ambushes or finding hideouts if they do not wish to engage in a battle. Raised grounds also offer suitable gun positions (GP) for weapons like surface to air missiles (SAM), anti-aircraft guns (AAG), anti-personnel machine guns, and artillery guns of various calibers. When such weapons are placed on raised ground, they have wider fields of fire for engaging potential targets.

⁵⁷ See details in National Geographic, "What Is Geography?," *National Geographic Education*, 2015, accessed March 17, 2015, <http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/what-is-geography/>.

Such grounds are also suitable for setting up defensive positions. The logic here is that an adversary who is located on raised ground is much harder to uproot than one who is located on lower ground. Terrain with such unique advantages is called ground of tactical importance (GTI) in military terms.⁵⁸

There is 30m Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) elevation data available for each country from the DIVA GIS website.⁵⁹ The author used this data to visualize the landscape of East and Central Africa and thereafter analyze its relationship with the LRA insurgency in this region. It must be noted that elevation as a geographical element does not change much in a period of a century, so the age of the data does not have any significant influence on the integrity and reliability of the data. The author's assertion in using elevation as a geographical effect factor is stated in the first hypothesis thus:

H1 The LRA activities are positively associated with the high grounds in East and Central Africa.

The assumption the author makes is that the East and Central Africa region provides suitable GTIs for the LRA, which the LRA uses to gain tactical advantage over the counterinsurgent forces. These tactical advantages offer the LRA the cumulative gains that enhance its operations and longevity.

(2) Water Coverage

Water coverage plays a very critical role in enhancing the life of all living things. An insurgent group like the LRA that does not have modern equipment to drill the ground for water or ferry water from clean water sources to supply its forces would have to rely on Mother Nature for its water supply. The DIVA GIS website offers water coverage data, including locations of rivers, canals, and lakes for countries in East and

⁵⁸ See full explanation in US Army, "Tactics in Counterinsurgency FM-24.2," *Active FM: Army Doctrine and Training Publications*, April 2009, accessed March 17, 2015, http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/Active_FM.html.

⁵⁹ See details of data source in DIVA-GIS, "Free Spatial Data," *DIVA-GIS Free Spatial Data*, 2015, accessed March 3, 2015, <http://www.diva-gis.org/Data>.

Central Africa.⁶⁰ This DIVA GIS data was last updated in 2000, which is midrange of the dependent variable's data range (1989–2010). The author is aware of the impact of climate change on watered areas, but since the data is a midpoint data, it is assumed that the effect of climate change will not have significant integrity and reliability effects. The second hypothesis is stated as follows:

H2 The LRA activities are positively associated with the proximity of water bodies in the region.

The assumption the author makes is that the water drainage in the region greatly enhances the survivability of the LRA insurgents and therefore the longevity of the insurgency.

(3) Landcover or Vegetation

The vegetation described here refers to the cover of the earth's surface with grass, shrubs, trees, and so forth. The DIVA-GIS website has data on landcover of all the East and Central African countries where the LRA operates. Vegetation, unlike elevation data, is affected by change in climate and human activity. However, the DIVA-GIS Data was last updated in 2011, which means it reflects the true vegetation in the region within the time period under consideration (1989–2010).⁶¹ In military tactics, vegetation plays an important role of ensuring cover and concealment. In military terms, cover, as provided by vegetation, refers to protection mainly from visibility, but sometimes protection from small firearms that do not penetrate through wood to hurt a person. Concealment, on the other hand, refers to achieving protection by blending with the surrounding area through camouflage or other means that prevents the adversary from observing the difference between the environment and what is being concealed. Vegetation also provides firewood for cooking and warming, and poles for shelter construction for forces camped in the bush. Some trees and shrubs are also medicinal and are therefore used to treat various types of diseases. Besides, some trees provide human beings with food through their fruits, leaves, stems, and roots. Very thick vegetation cover, however, has negative

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

effects as well. Thick jungles inhibit maneuverability of forces and reduce visibility, thus the enemy can easily close in unnoticed. Furthermore, jungles are infested with dangerous snakes, among other perils. It may therefore be prudent for the insurgents to locate themselves in areas with moderate vegetation cover. In other words, moderate vegetation cover directly contributes to the livelihood of man. The third hypothesis can therefore be stated thus:

H3 The LRA activities are positively related to the location of areas with moderate vegetation cover.

The assumption of the author is that the vast vegetation cover of East and Central Africa greatly enhances the operations and the livelihood of the LRA insurgents. The LRA does not have a well-organized logistic system; it depends entirely on nature and the local population for its supply of food and shelter. It also employs the landcover to enhance its tactical maneuvers.

(4) Mineral Resources

Mineral Resources are important sources of income for both states and non-state actors. The source of data for the mineral variable is from U.S. Geographical Society database, which covers all mineral works in East and Central Africa.⁶² The author used this data to test the relationship between mineral deposits in East and Central Africa region and the LRA insurgency. The data is in shapefile format and includes all mineral mining and prospective mining locations in Africa. The general assumption here is that the insurgents need the minerals to finance their undertaking. Items like firearms and ammunition are not easily obtainable without formidable financing. Yet funds are not easily obtainable without business activities involving huge exchange of money. Deals in diamonds, gold, and or other precious metals that attract a lot of cash for a small quantity are highly marketable. Based on this assumption, the fourth hypothesis is stated thus:

H4 LRA activities are closely associated with the presence of mineral resources.

⁶² See details of data in USGS, "Mineral Operations outside the United States," *United States Geographical Society*, 2015, accessed March 3, 2015, <http://mrddata.usgs.gov/mineral-operations/>.

(5) Road Networks

Road networks form another important factor that influences the operations of both insurgent and counterinsurgent forces. The data for this variable was obtained from Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI) free shapefiles for Africa. The data is up to date as of 2014.⁶³ Roads are, however, more sought after by the counterinsurgent forces because they need them for supplies and maneuvering especially when using combat vehicles. The absence of roads greatly affects the efficiency of counterinsurgent forces given their heavy armament. On the other hand, the insurgents only use the roads network to facilitate their movement when the counterinsurgent forces are far from their location. The LRA, in particular, depends less on roads but more on paths. This is because their primary means of transport is walking. The counterinsurgent forces are armed with combat vehicles, which make it easier for them to catch up with the insurgents if the insurgents use roads. It must be noted that it is not uncommon to find roads well marked on a map but "unmotorable" on the ground, especially during rainy seasons in Africa. For the purpose of this work, the author assumes all the roads are functional. Therefore, based on this assumption, the fifth hypothesis can be stated thus:

H5 LRA activities are not positively associated with the proximity of roads network in the region.

(6) Distance to the State Capital

Distance from the state capital is one of the factors that determine where the insurgent operates. Insurgents, according to Buhaug and co-authors, prefer to operate near the capital city if their intention is to take over state power. Territorial insurgents, however, tend to operate far from the state capital.⁶⁴ As noted earlier, the LRA claims to be fighting to capture state power. However, it has no significant activities that indicate it has actually operated near the capital of Uganda. The author thus advocates for the null

⁶³ See details of data in ArcGIS, "Download Free African Continent ArcGIS Shapefile Map Layers," *Map Cruzin*, September 9, 2014, accessed March 3, 2015, <http://www.mapcruzin.com/free-africa-arcgis-maps-shapefiles.htm>.

⁶⁴ See full discussion in Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala, "Geography, Rebel Capability, and the Duration of Civil Conflict."

hypothesis. It must be noted that keeping away from the state capital makes the state feel less irritated by the activities of the insurgents. In other words, the farther away the insurgents are located, the less threatened the state is, and therefore, the less determination the state administrators have to act against the insurgents. Logic also shows that an insurgent cannot win state power by force of arms if it stays away from the capital. The hypothesis can therefore be stated thus:

H6 LRA operations are not positively associated with close proximity to Uganda's capital, Kampala.

b. Human Geography

There are human activities that have direct or indirect influence on the activities of insurgent groups. The essential element of human geography that the author thinks greatly influences the activities of the LRA is population density.

(1) Population Density

An insurgent group like the LRA, which does not have a strong logistics base, depends on the population for most of its food supplies. The assumption, therefore, is that it will most likely operate in moderately populated areas. Densely populated areas are, on the one hand, unsafe for hiding because the likelihood of bumping into civilians will always be high, thus alerting the counterinsurgent forces. On the other hand, unpopulated areas lack steady food production and supply. The insurgent must therefore choose an area that is moderately populated to remain hidden but also have steady access to food supplies. Based on this assertion, the seventh hypothesis is stated thus:

H7 LRA operations are positively associated with moderately populated areas.

There is data on population density of the whole of Africa from the Worldpop website. The author used the datasets for 2005 Africa population data to show the correlation between the LRA activities and the population distribution in the region.⁶⁵ If

⁶⁵ See details of data in Andrew Tatem, Catherine Linard, and Andrea Guaghan, "Worldpop: Download Dataset," *Worldpop GeoData Institute*, 2005, accessed March 3, 2015, <http://www.worldpop.org.uk/data/summary/?contselect=Africa&countselect=Whole+Continent&typeselect=Demography+2005>.

the hunch is correct, it is expected that LRA activities are located in areas that have moderate population density.

2. Political Factors

Politics always has some influence on the onset and sustenance of an insurgency. The author has identified two political factors that are thought to be very essential in determining the fate of an insurgency within a country: the economy of the country, and whether that country has a competing interest with its neighbor.

a. State Economy

The economy of a country determines its resource base and therefore its military capability. A country that is economically weak has a correspondingly weak military and most often, a weak military indicates a weak economy. The Fund for Peace project (FFP) has calculated the Fragile State Indices from 2006 to 2014 for the world. This data highlights a state's fragility by using several contributing parameters, such as poverty, security apparatus, public services, legitimacy of the government, unevenness of economic growth, human flight, and refugees and IDP camps, among other measures. These parameters spotlight the fragility of the state. Weak states have a higher total fragility index score than do stronger ones. The author used this data to show the relative weakness levels in the region of East and Central Africa and then correlates it with the activities of the LRA. The assumption is that the weaker the state, the more it will fail to contain or deter the LRA from operating within its sovereign territory. The eighth hypothesis can therefore be stated thus:

H8 LRA activities are positively associated with the fragility of the state in which it operates.

b. State Rivalry

When two or more states have competing interests, opposition groups are likely to take advantage of that to pursue their own interests against the state. The rival state hosts the opposition elements in safe havens in its territory, and the target state does the same

with the opposition of the competing country.⁶⁶ Data compiled by William R. Thompson shows states that were rivals between 1816 and 1999.⁶⁷ This duration covers the first phase of the LRA insurgency. Using the same approach Thompson used, one can extrapolate the data using other references to indicate rivalry between states in the region after 1999. The ninth hypothesis is therefore stated thus:

H9 LRA operations are positively associated to the presence of rivalry between Uganda and the states hosting the LRA in the region.

If this hypothesis is true, then it is expected that the LRA is predominantly located in states that have competing interests with Uganda. This is because such states do not allow the Ugandan counterinsurgent forces to operate in its territory, which is another way of protecting the LRA from destruction, thus prolonging its longevity.

3. Organizational and Leadership Factors

The survival of an organization depends on two major elements: the organizational structure and its leadership. How the organization is structured determines how it fits into the environment in which it is located, and this is made possible by the approach and quality of the leadership. The leadership of the organization forms the most important component of the organization, holding the keys to both the survival and at the same time the death of the organization.

a. Organization Structure

Organizations are created with specific goals and purposes. The goals are those internal mission sets that the organization strives to achieve. The purposes are those that encompass responsibility to the society where the organization is located. In other words, the purpose of an organization is what determines its acceptability in the society where it operates. An organization does not fit within its environment if its purpose contradicts the

⁶⁶ See full discussion in Salehyan, *Rebels without Borders*; Salehyan, "Transnational Insurgencies and the Escalation of Regional Conflict: Lessons for Iraq and Afghanistan."

⁶⁷ See details of data and a detailed explanation of how it was compiled in William R. Thompson, "Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (December 1, 2001): 557–86.

requirements of the environment; it will ultimately fail and collapse. The structure of the organization is determined by its functionality. According to Henry Mintzberg, organizations have three basic components based on their functionality. First, the key component, which is the strategic apex assisted by the middle-line managers, determines the success or failure of the organization. The second is the coordinating component that links the organization within and without, and it consists of the techno-structure and the support staff. The last component is the operating core, which performs the basic work related to production and services of the organization. These three components must work hand-in-hand to ensure the success of the organization internally as well as externally.⁶⁸ The organizational structure of the LRA plays an essential role in ensuring its survival. If the LRA's purpose contradicts the requirements of its environment, it is expected to fail to survive where it operates. The tenth hypothesis is therefore stated thus:

H10 The LRA modifies its organization structure to fit into its environment so as to enhance the longevity of its undertaking.

The assumption the author makes here is that the LRA shapes and reshapes its organization such that it fits the prevailing conditions in the environment. In other words, the LRA practices doctrinal and organizational flexibility as a survival tool. If this assertion is true, then there must be a link between how the LRA is organized at a particular time and space to survive counterinsurgent onslaught. There is data on how the LRA is organized over the years from the literature: these include Jane's world insurgency and terrorism website (IHS),⁶⁹ Christopher Day's article,⁷⁰ Heike Behrend's book about Alice Lakwena and her Holy Spirit organization,⁷¹ and data from the website of the LRA crisis tracker.⁷²

⁶⁸ For full discussion on this, see Lindsay Sherwin, "Mintzberg's Model," *Managing Change Toolkit*, 2014, accessed August 29, 2014, http://www.lindsay-sherwin.co.uk/guide_managing_change/html_change_strategy/07_mintzberg.htm and Fred C. Lunenburg, "Organizational Structure: Mintzberg's Framework," *International Journal of Scholarly, Academic, Intellectual Diversity* 14, no. 1 (2012): 1–8.

⁶⁹ See details of the description in IHS, "Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)."

⁷⁰ See full explanation in Day, "The Fates of Rebels: Insurgencies in Uganda," 439–58.

⁷¹ See detailed description in Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & Holy Spirits, 183–184*.

⁷² See full description in Ledio Cakaj, "Evolution of LRA Command Structure," *LRA Crisis Tracker*, 2012, accessed October 23, 2015, <http://lracrisistracker.com/command/evolution>.

b. Organizational and Leadership Networks

Organizations influence the activities and hence the lives of its members. Organizations, however, depend on their leaders for structuring. In other words, the leadership of the organization shapes the framework and, therefore, the survival of the organization.⁷³ One may therefore assert that the leadership of the organization influences the activities and the lives of its members indirectly.

H11 The most influential individuals in the LRA leadership network contribute to its longevity.

C. METHODS

Three methods of analysis are used to investigate the relationship between the LRA activities and the factors that have been thought to contribute to prolong its longevity. The first is visual analysis of the relationship between the plotted insurgent activities and the independent variable factors. This is done by using ArcGIS software that displays the two variables concurrently and one is able to see the relationship.⁷⁴

The second method is using quasi-Poisson regression models for the dependent and independent variables. This method involves dividing the countries affected by the LRA into equal gridded resolutions of 50km², 100Km², and 200Km². Interpolates of data of dependent and independent variables in each grid resolution are estimated to show the relationship between the two datasets. The purpose of this method of analysis is to counter check or validates the first method that is based on visual analysis only.

The last method involves the use of social network analysis (SNA) tools to analyze and determine the most influential leaders in the LRA leadership network. It also includes visual display of the LRA organizational structure over the years. This method identifies the most important leaders of the LRA and also shows how the LRA modifies its organization structure to evade destruction by the counterinsurgent forces. For details

⁷³ See full discussion in Daft, *Organization Theory and Design*, 1–67.

⁷⁴ See details in ENSR, *How Do You Cite ArcGIS?*.

on how this method of analysis works, refer to Sean Everton's book, *Disrupting Dark Networks*.⁷⁵

D. CONCLUSION

This research is designed to use the geographical, political, and organizational and leadership factors to test the overall hypothesis that the LRA depends on the factors mentioned above to prolong the longevity of its insurgency project. It must be noted that the elements in each of the factors mentioned contribute as part of the collection of elements to have significant effects. Of course, each element has different degrees of effect. Nevertheless, none is adequate on its own to determine the survivability of the insurgent forces.

The next chapter reports on the findings of the analysis of the variables discussed in this chapter. It also covers the evaluation of the results in an attempt to interpret the findings. The purpose of Chapter V is therefore to prepare for the conclusion and the recommendations thereof for this research work.

⁷⁵ See full discussion on this in Sean F. Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013) 49–315.

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V. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND EVALUATION

This chapter reports on the findings of the analysis of the data used in this research work. The results are displayed graphically, as well as in a data table format. Overall, the findings support the hypotheses discussed in Chapter IV with three exceptions—the relationship between LRA activities and the distances to mineral deposits, roads network, and the state capitals in each of which case the null hypothesis is true, contrary to the author’s hypothesizing.

The results are presented in two sections: the first reports on the results of the regression models, ArcGIS, and SNA analysis of the LRA activities and the various factors discussed early in this work, including geographical, political, and organizational and leadership factors that are thought to contribute to enhancing the longevity the LRA insurgency project. The second provides a summary of the findings.

A. RESULTS

The correlation between the insurgent activities and the geographical factors are displayed by map plots showing the two variables concurrently. The results are further supported by quasi-Poisson regression models’ results, where applicable, as summarized in Table 1. The regression results show the dependent variable (LRA significant activities/events) against the covariates of the independent variables. The column for Model 1 shows the results for grid resolution of 50 square kilometers consisting of 2,046 observations. Model 2 shows the results for grid resolution of 100 square kilometers consisting of 547 observations. Model 3 shows the results for grid resolution of 200 square kilometers consisting of 155 observations. The implication of this is that the smaller the grid resolution, the larger the number of observations. However, for the purpose of this work, the author chose 100 square kilometers as the standard resolution for the baseline regression analysis because the LRA events are assumed to have significant effects within a radius of 100 kilometers from the point of action. Overall, the results become statistically less significant at higher and lower resolutions.

Table 1. Quasi-Poisson Regression Results for LRA Activities

| Covariates | <i>Dependent variable:</i> | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| | LRA Significant Activities | | |
| | 50km ² Coefficient ^{p-value} (standard error) | 100km ² Coefficient ^{p-value} (standard error) | 200km ² Coefficient ^{p-value} (standard error) |
| Elevation | 0.0001 (0.0003) | 0.001*** (0.0003) | 0.0003 (0.001) |
| Distance to Water | -0.003* (0.001) | -0.012*** (0.002) | -0.020 (0.013) |
| Distance to Minerals | 0.013*** (0.001) | 0.010*** (0.002) | 0.002 (0.005) |
| Distance to Resources | 0.006*** (0.001) | 0.012*** (0.003) | 0.016 (0.010) |
| Distance to Roads | -0.013*** (0.003) | -0.015*** (0.004) | 0.001 (0.016) |
| Distance to Kampala | -0.004*** (0.0004) | -0.006*** (0.001) | -0.010** (0.005) |
| Population Density | -0.090* (0.048) | -0.107*** (0.035) | -0.005 (0.018) |
| Distance to Border | -0.006*** (0.002) | -0.009*** (0.003) | -0.008 (0.007) |
| Constant | 2.580*** (0.531) | 4.307*** (0.747) | 4.626* (2.524) |
| Observations | 2,046 | 547 | 155 |
| <i>Note:</i> | p>0.1 *p<0.1 | **p<0.05 | ***p<0.01 |

1. Elevation (Altitude)

According to the findings of the analysis of the variables, there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between height above sea level and the insurgent activities. As seen in Figure 1, the insurgent activities are clustered along the raised grounds in the region. The regression results also show positive and statistically significant relationship between the insurgent activities and elevation using the baseline model at conventional confidence level. This further supports the findings shown in Figure 1. At lower and higher grid resolutions than the baseline resolution of 100 square kilometers, the regression results are still positive but not statistically significant,

meaning that the elevation plays a more significant role in LRA activities at 100 kilometer radius.

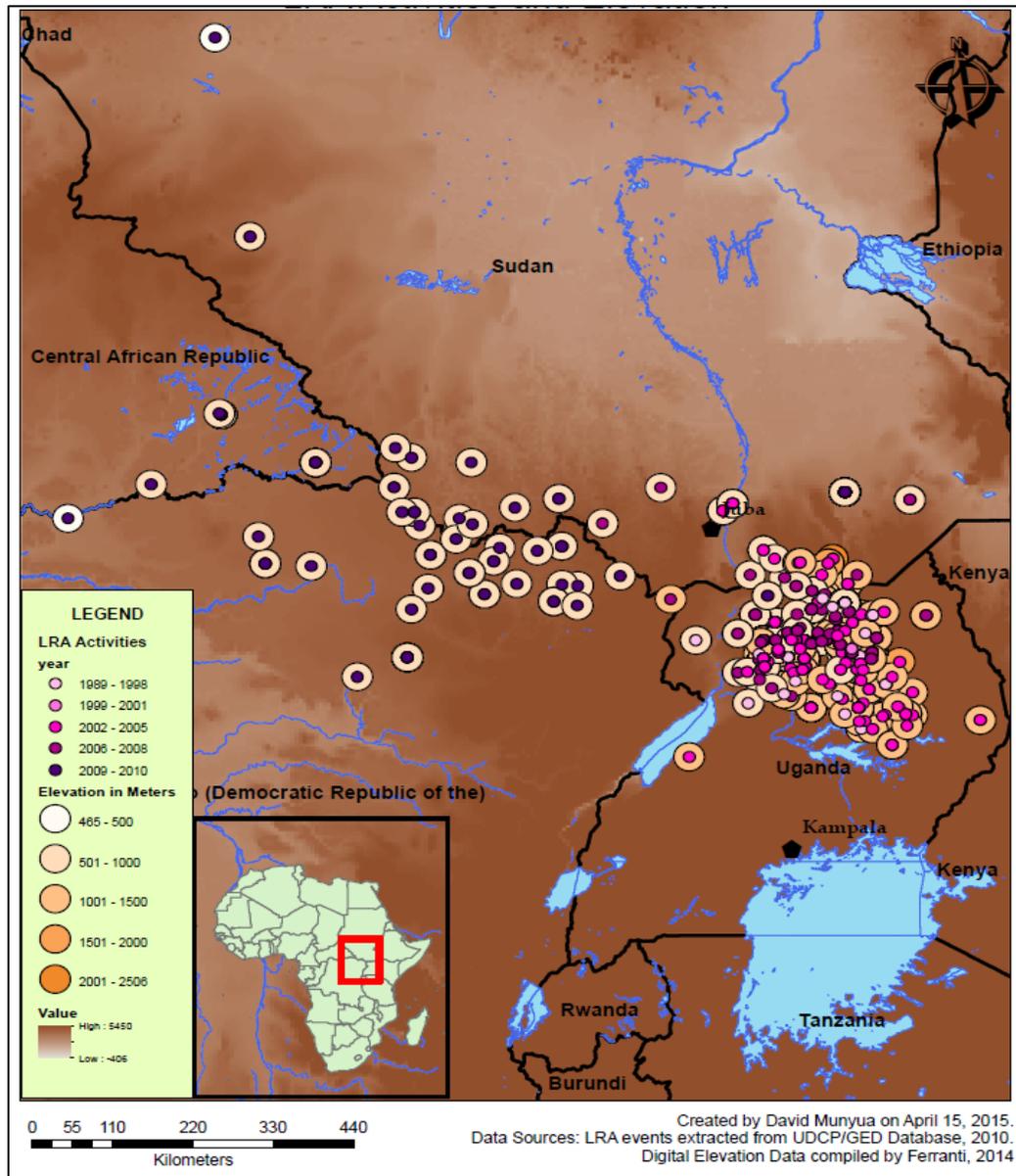


Figure 1. LRA Activities and Elevation

Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1) that the LRA sees high grounds as having tactical importance (Grounds of Tactical Importance—GTIs) to enhance the longevity of its insurgency is supported. This finding is in agreement with previous findings by other

studies that suggest that elevation has a positive effect on the prevalence of armed conflicts.⁷⁶

2. Water Coverage

According to the findings of the visual analysis as shown in Figure 2, there is a positive relationship between locations of water bodies and the LRA activities. It should be noted here that bigger water bodies are, however, more of a disadvantage than an advantage because they act as obstacles that can curtail the maneuverability of the insurgents. The insurgents will therefore choose water-sheds, which are normally found on high grounds as the most suitable sources of fresh water for all purposes. As can be seen in Figure 2, the activities of the insurgents are clustered around the water sheds for the major rivers in the region. This finding is further supported by the baseline regression analysis results in Table 1, which shows negative and statistically significant estimates for the distance to watered areas. In other words, the LRA activities occur more frequently near watered areas. However, this finding is not statistically significant at 200 kilometer grid resolution, although it remained negative.

⁷⁶ For full discussion on this, see Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala, “Geography, Rebel Capability, and the Duration of Civil Conflict,” 544–569; Buhaug and Rod, “Local Determinants of African Civil Wars, 1970–2001,” 315–335; and Halvard Buhaug, “The Geography of Armed Civil Conflict - PRIO,” *Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)*, January 2002, accessed March 2, 2015, <http://www.prio.org/Projects/Project/?x=706>.

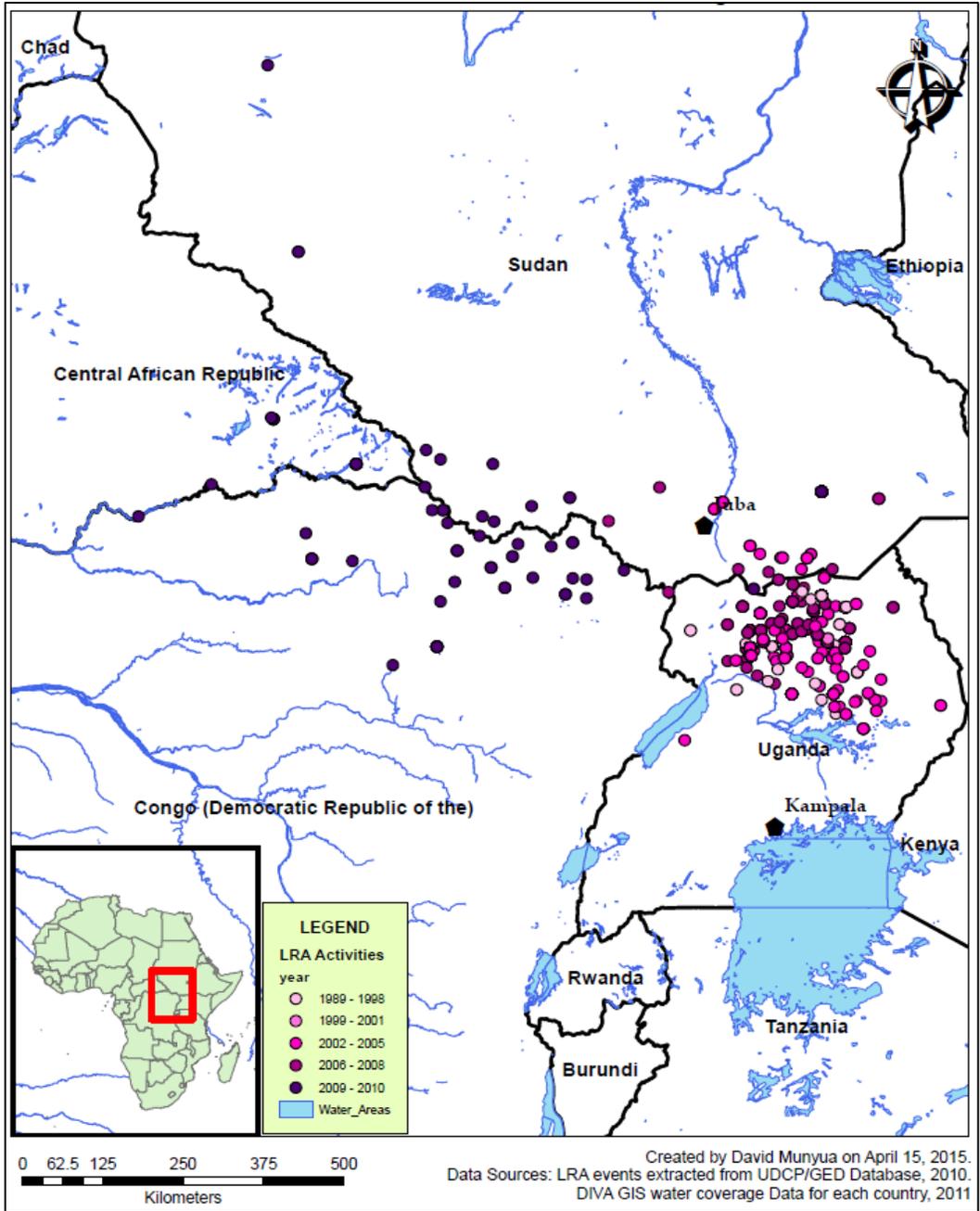


Figure 2. LRA Activities and Water Coverage

This finding thus provides evidence to the second hypothesis (H2) that the LRA’s insurgency project is significantly supported by the water coverage in the East and Central African region, thus contributing to its longevity. This finding is also consistent

with the findings of Buhaug et al. and of Fearon and Laitin, although the latter talked of terrain in general terms.⁷⁷

3. Vegetation (Landcover)

The findings of this research work shows that there is a positive association relationship between the density of the land cover and the intensity of activities of the LRA insurgents. The results are displayed visually in Figure 3. Careful observation also shows that the insurgent activities are clustered in areas that are moderately covered. In other words, very thick vegetation and very less dense vegetation are unsuitable for the insurgents. This is probably because the thick vegetation is an obstacle to free maneuverability, as well as being less inhabitable to humans. The less thick vegetation, on the other hand, does not offer the tactical and social advantages associated with moderate vegetation covers.

⁷⁷ See full discussions in Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," 75–90 and Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala, "Geography, Rebel Capability, and the Duration of Civil Conflict," 544–69.

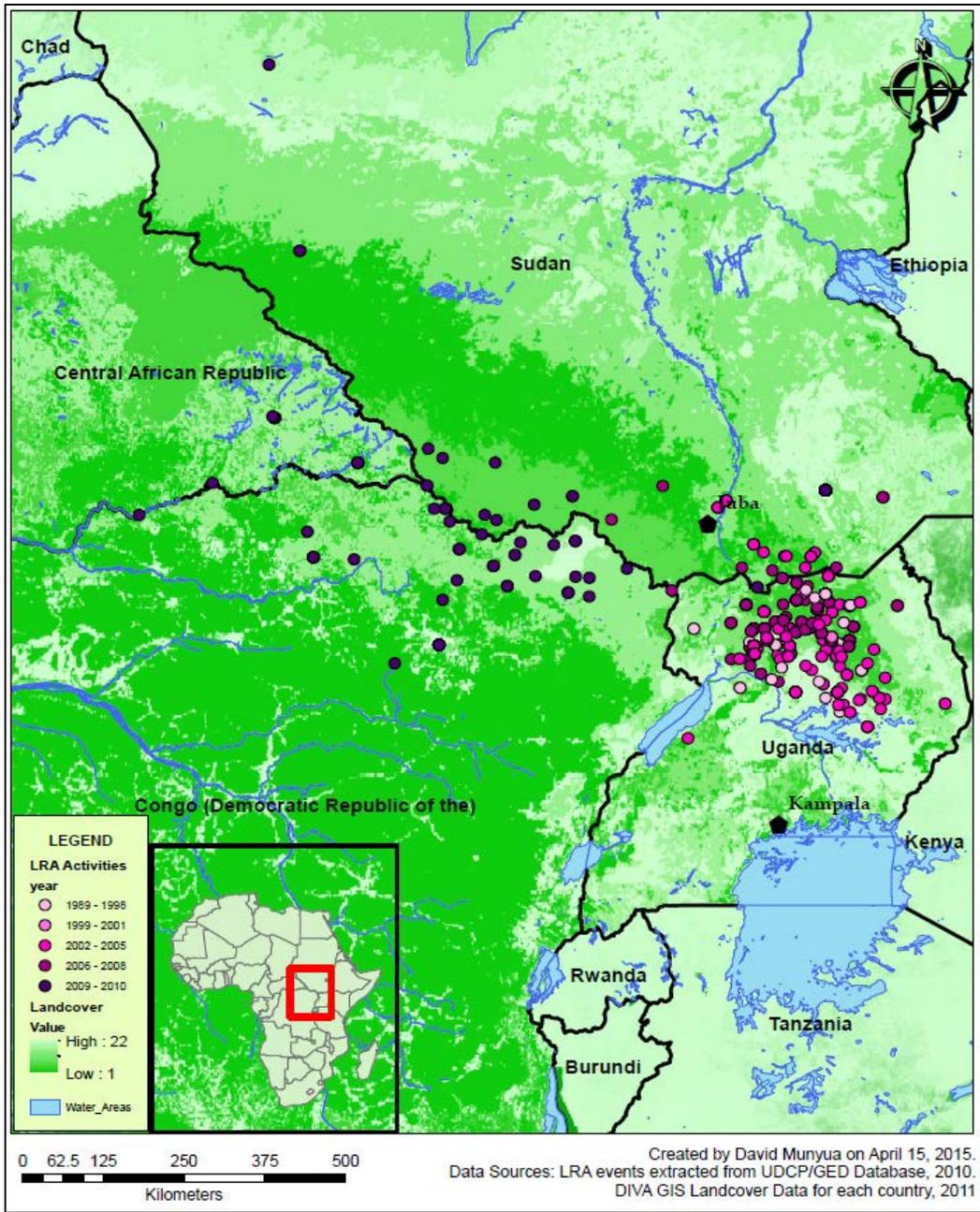


Figure 3. LRA Activities and Landcover

This finding therefore supports the third hypothesis (H3) that the LRA uses the land cover in the region socially and tactically to enhance the longevity of its insurgency project.

4. Mineral Resources

The results of the analysis show that there is a positive relationship between the activities of the insurgents and distance to the locations of mineral deposits. In Figure 4 shows that where the minerals are deposited is not where some of the LRA activities are found, except in parts of the DRC and CAR. This finding is further supported by positive coefficients across model 1 and model 2 regression results in Table 1 with statistically significant estimates at conventional confidence levels. The meaning of this is that the LRA activities are more frequent at distant places from the locations of the mineral deposits, therefore suggesting that the LRA does not rely on minerals to support its operations. However, the results are not statistically significant at 200 kilometer grid resolution.

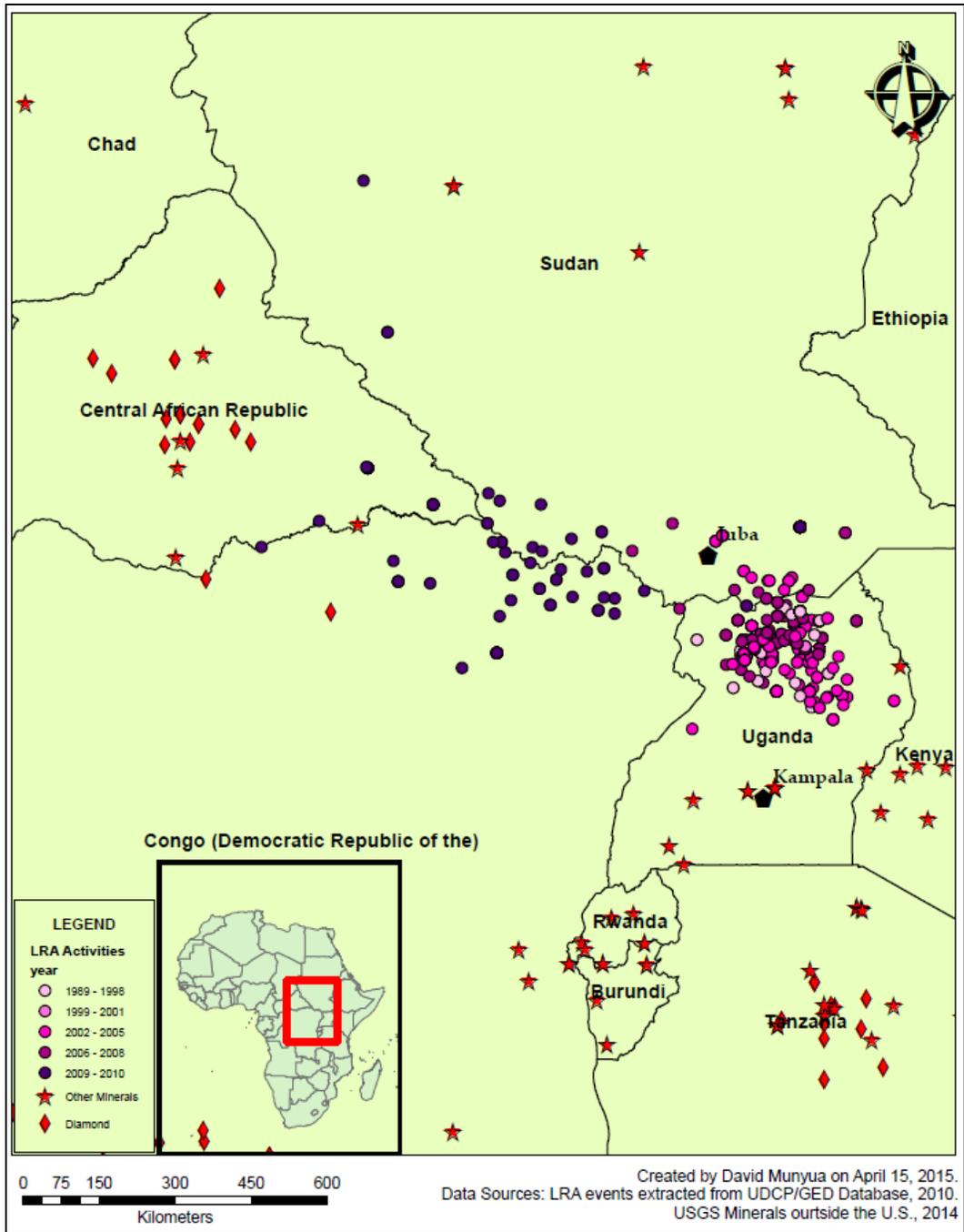


Figure 4. LRA Activities and Mineral Resources

This finding therefore rejects the fourth hypothesis (H4) and supports the null hypothesis that the LRA does not fund its insurgency project using mineral deposits in the region. This finding is contrary to the findings of Buhaug and co-authors that

insurgents depend on mineral resources in the operation area to sustain their insurgency project.⁷⁸

There is an unconfirmed report that shows that the LRA has dealings in wildlife resources such as elephant tusks (ivory) and other related benefits.⁷⁹ The fact that the LRA has continued to operate in Garamba National Park may attest to this claim. The regression results in Table 1 include a “resources” variable, which includes wildlife resources. However, the coefficients are positive as well, which do not support H4 and are consistent with the results for mineral deposits.

5. Road Networks

According to the results of the analysis, the LRA activities are clustered in areas that are heavily networked with roads. The result shown in Figure 5 clearly supports this argument, although northern DRC does not have the roads network, as seen in South Sudan and northern Uganda. This claim is further supported by the regression models shown in Table 1. There are consistent negative and statistically significant estimates for the distance to roads on the activities of the insurgents. The results are statistically significant at conventional confidence levels for 50km and 100km grid resolutions, but not for 200km grid resolution.

⁷⁸ See detailed explanation in Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala, “Geography, Rebel Capability, and the Duration of Civil Conflict,” 544–569.

⁷⁹ See full discussion in Enough Project Team, “Kony to LRA: ‘Bring Me Ivory, Gold, and Diamonds’ | Enough.”

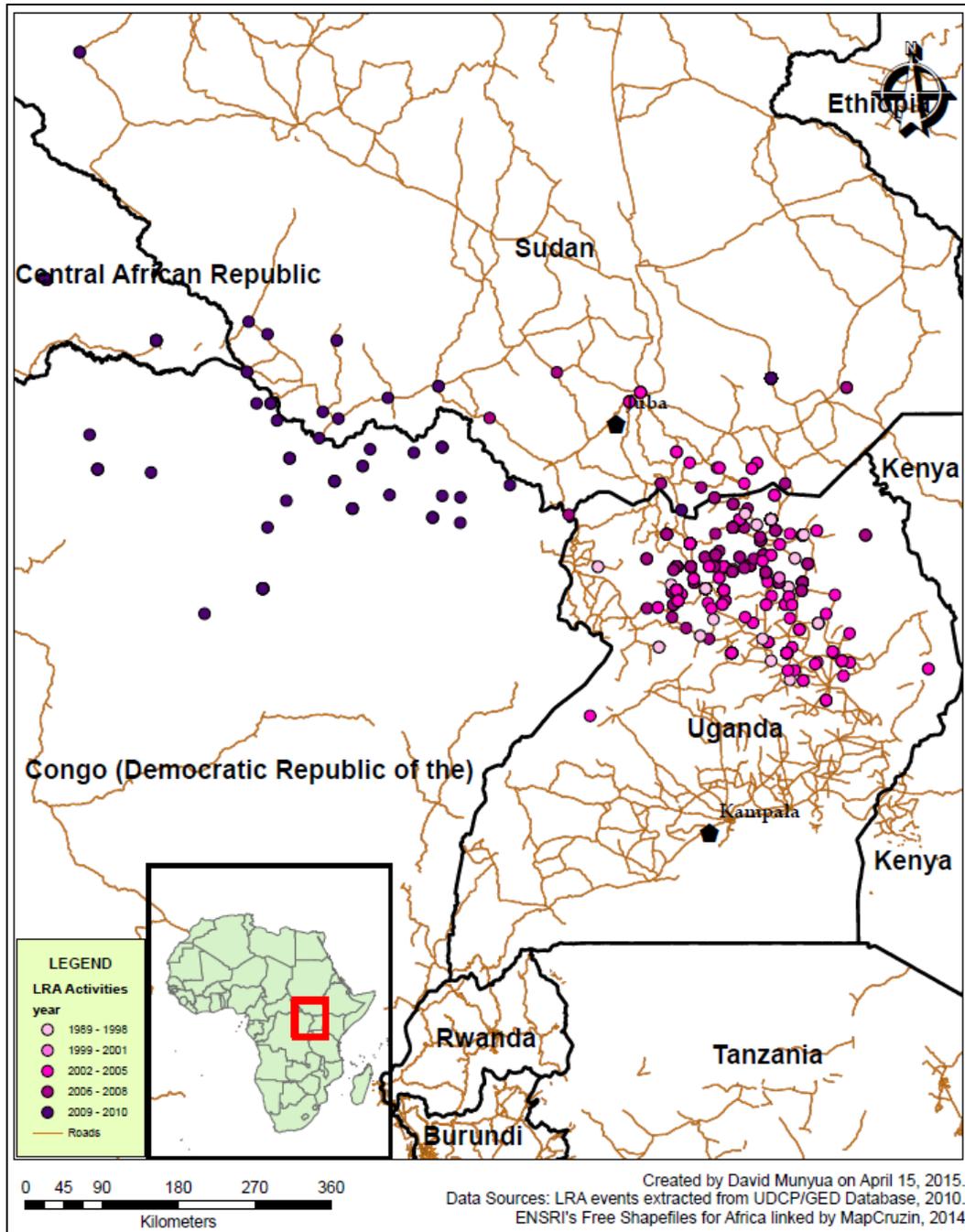


Figure 5. LRA Activities and Roads Network

Therefore, the fifth hypothesis (H5) that the road networks in the region do not contribute to the enhancement of the longevity of the LRA insurgency is rejected. This finding, however, agrees with the findings of Rabasa and co-authors of the RAND Corporation that insurgents operating in ungoverned spaces require roads infrastructure to

facilitate their operations.⁸⁰ The interpretation of this could be that the civilian population and the counterinsurgent forces in the region are settled alongside the roads, and it therefore follows that most of the significant activities, which are the interaction between the LRA and counterinsurgents, or between the LRA and civilians, are recorded near roads. Ideally, it is the counterinsurgents that require roads because they use combat vehicles that rely on roads for smoother and faster operations. Civilians also need the roads to commute from one location to another in the region. The insurgents, on the other hand, mainly move on foot and use small arms as their main choice of weapons.

6. Distance to the Capital (Kampala)

According to the findings shown in Figure 6, the LRA activities are generally negatively associated with the distance to the capital of Uganda. That is, the LRA operates near the location of the capital. This finding is further supported by the results of the regression models shown in Table 1, which indicate consistent negative and significant estimates for the distance to Kampala. The results are statistically significant at conventional confidence levels across all the three models.

⁸⁰ For full discussion on this, see Rabasa et al., *Ungoverned Territories*, 1–44.

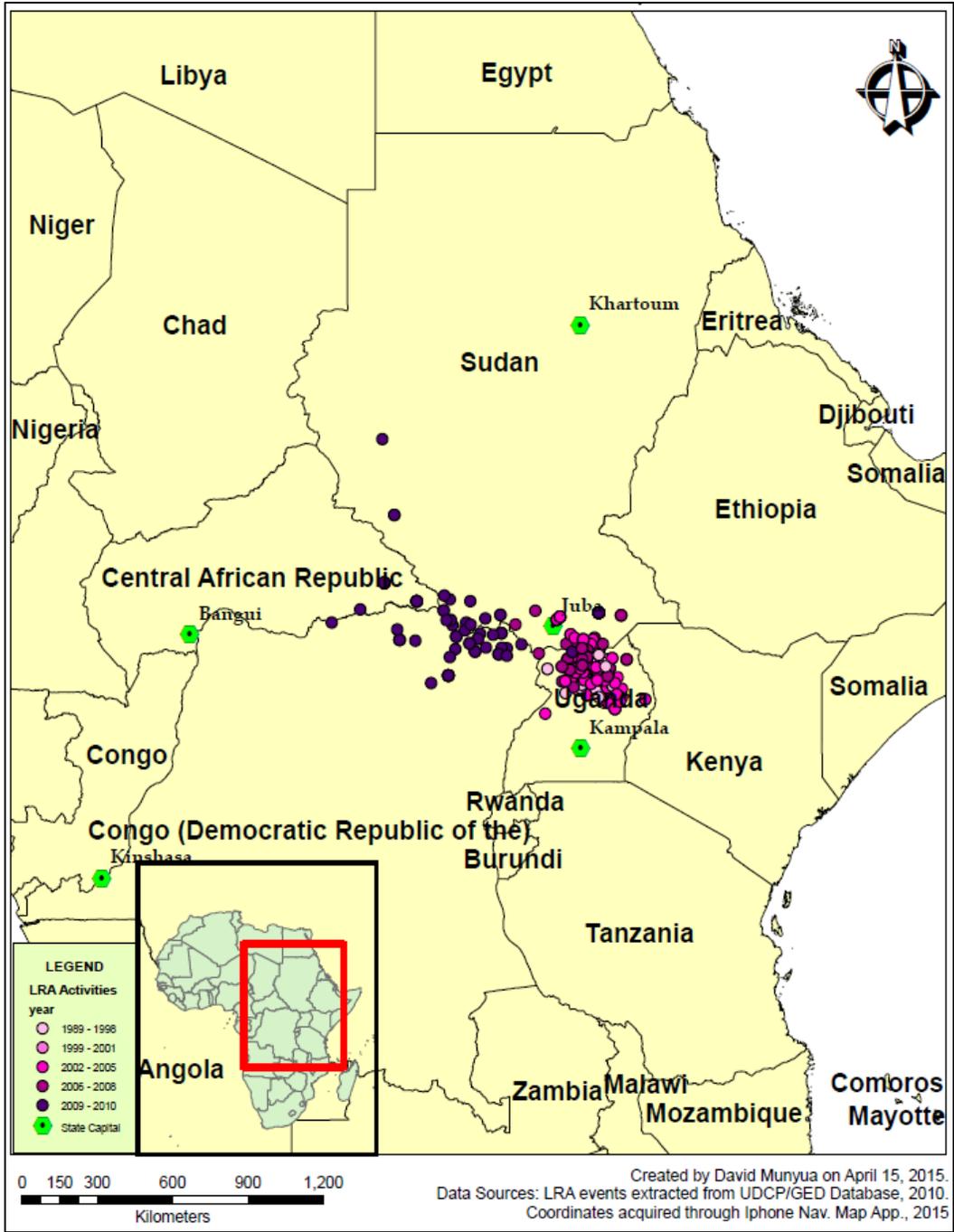


Figure 6. LRA Activities and Location of State Capitals

This finding rejects the sixth hypothesis (H6) that the LRA does not operate near state capitals. The interpretation of this result could be because the insurgent activities are located closer to Kampala, the capital of Uganda, relative to the window of the analysis,

which includes the borders of all the four countries (Uganda, Sudan, the DRC, and CAR) as a unitary area of analysis. In that case, Kampala is much closer to the activities of the LRA, but within the borders of Uganda alone, it may not be true.

7. Population Density

According to the results shown in Figure 7, the LRA operates in areas that are moderately populated. The border areas in all the affected countries have minimal population density, which is suitable sanctuary for insurgents. This finding is supported by the baseline regression model results of the 100-kilometer as well as that of 50-kilometer grid resolutions, which show negative coefficients for estimates of population density against insurgent activities, which are statistically significant at conventional confidence levels. The result is, however, not statistically significant at the 200 kilometer grid resolution.

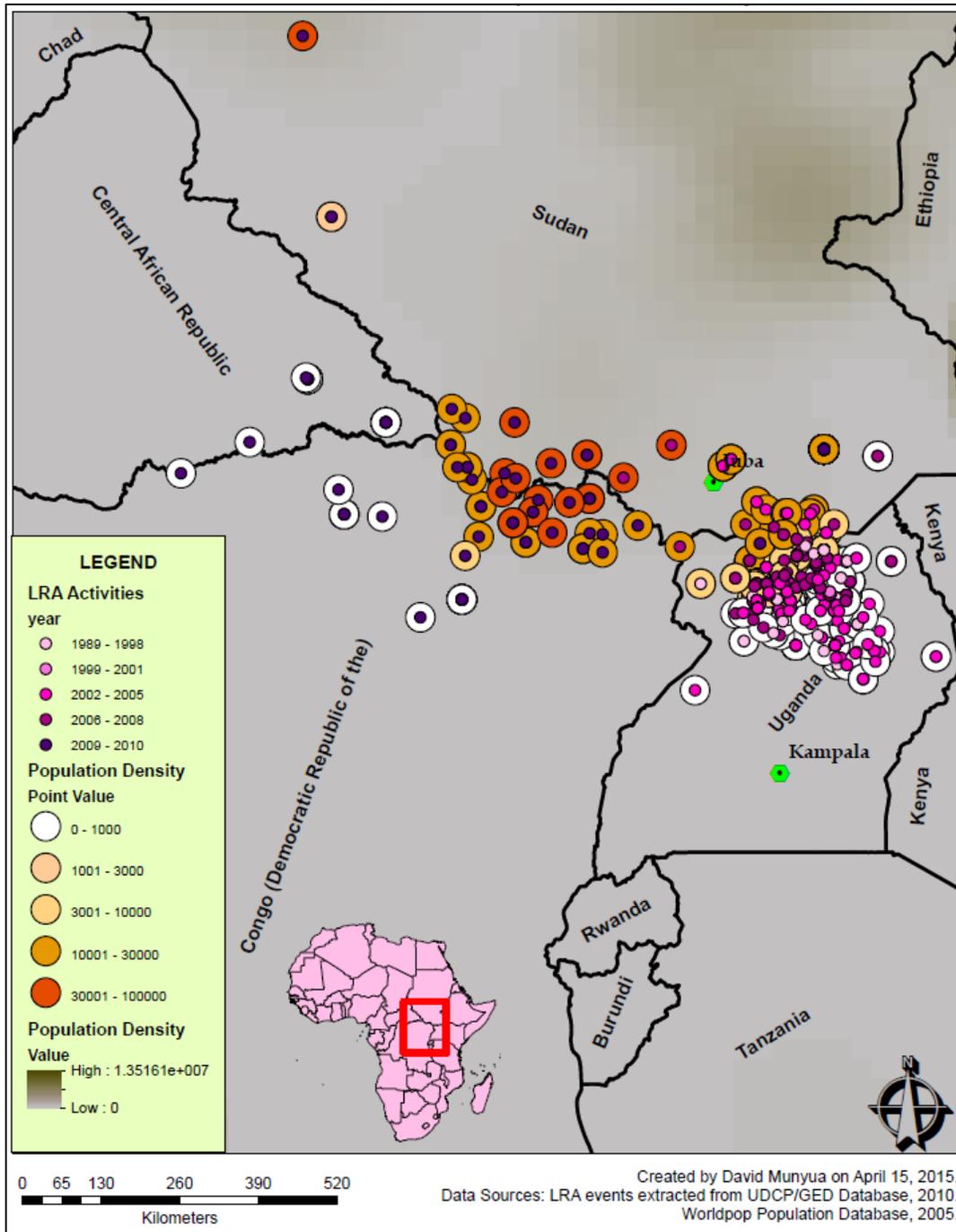


Figure 7. LRA Activities and Population Density

This finding supports the seventh hypothesis (H7) that the LRA operates in moderately populated areas to insure the longevity of its insurgency project.

8. State Economy

The finding for the relationship between the state economy, which in this case is measured in terms of several factors that are collectively called fragility index, and the insurgent activities, is positive. As shown in Figure 8, the countries that rated higher fragility index are the ones that the LRA favored as sanctuary—indicated by more frequent LRA activities. This could be partly the reason that the LRA decided to relocate to the DRC and CAR after 2006, instead of moving eastwards to Kenya or Ethiopia, despite the lack of obstacles on that route.

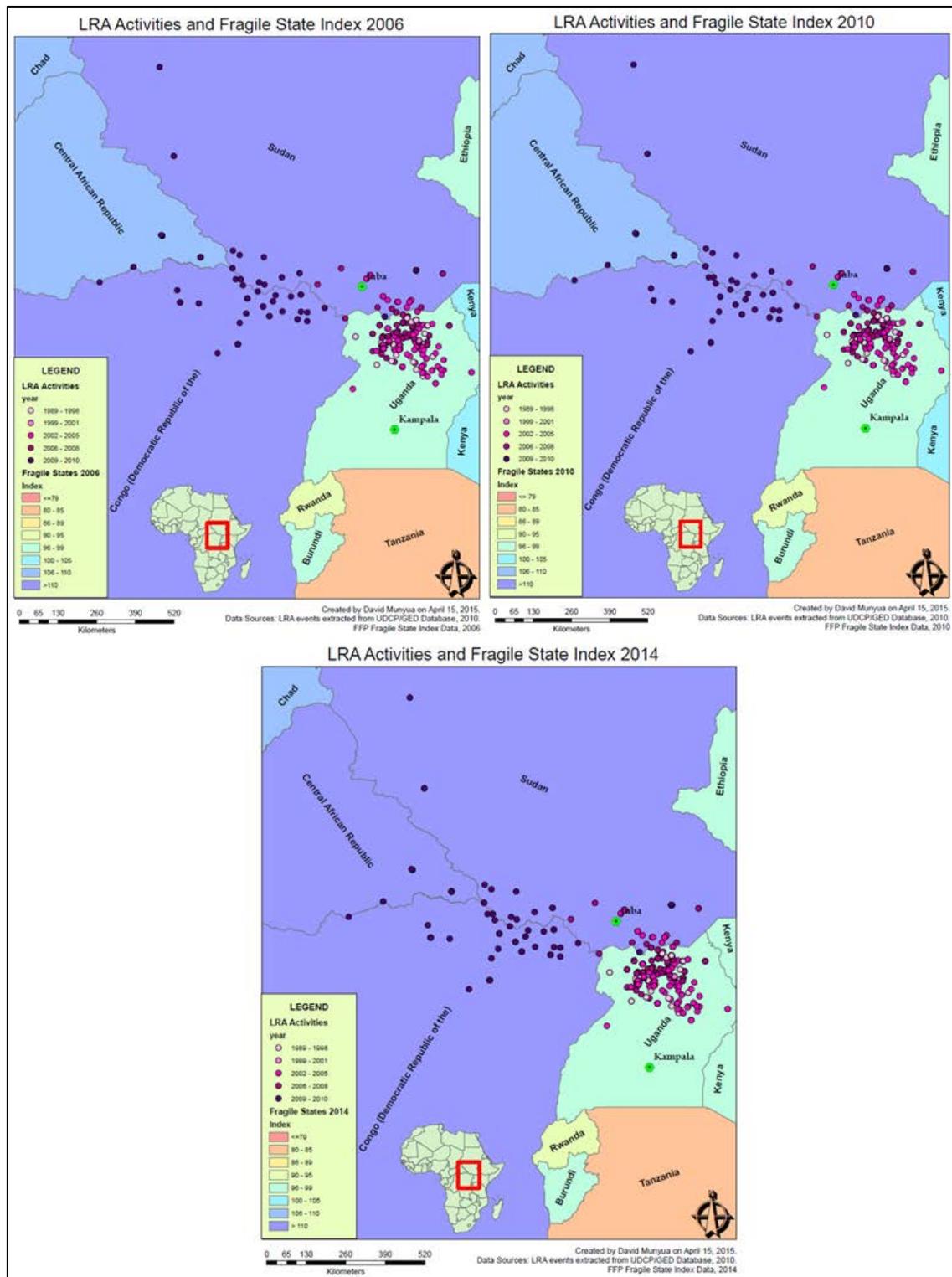


Figure 8. LRA Activities and Fragile States Index

This finding supports the eighth hypothesis (H8) that the LRA prolonged its insurgency project by selectively operating in states that are fragile or weak. This finding is further supported by the regression models' results for distance to state borders, which are negative, meaning that the insurgents operate more frequently near the state border areas. Although these results are not statistically significant at 200-kilometer grid resolution, they give some clues. Another interesting observation in Figure 8 is that after the LRA invaded the CAR, its fragility index worsened. This is in agreement with the findings of Idean Salehyan that transnational insurgents crisscross international borders and that states that are neighbored by weak states riddled with civil conflicts are likely to catch the conflict as well.⁸¹

9. State Rivalry

From the table of interstate rivals compiled by William R. Thompson, it is Uganda and Sudan that have been captured as rivals from 1963 to 1972 and again from 1994 to 1999.⁸² Uganda invaded the DRC from 1997 to 2003, but since then, the two states have had a cordial relationship.⁸³ This suggests that the LRA actually used the rivalry between Uganda and Sudan to sustain its insurgency and provides support to the ninth hypothesis (H9) that the LRA uses rival states as sanctuaries to prolong the longevity of its insurgency project.

10. Organizational Structure

From the time of its founding, 1988 to 1997, the LRA's organizational structure has been based on simple mechanistic bureaucracy typical of a conventional military formation. It was also an unstable organization structure because the high command exercised direct control of the operating core. This structure is shown in Figure 9.⁸⁴

⁸¹ For full discussion on this, see Salehyan, *Rebels without Borders*; Salehyan, "Transnational Insurgencies and the Escalation of Regional Conflict: Lessons for Iraq and Afghanistan."

⁸² See detailed explanation in Thompson, "Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics," 557–86.

⁸³ For full discussion on this, see "Congo: The First and Second Wars, 1996–2003 | Enough Project." Accessed March 26, 2015, <http://www.enoughproject.org/blogs/congo-first-and-second-wars-1996-2003>.

⁸⁴ See full description of this in Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & Holy Spirits*, 179–190.

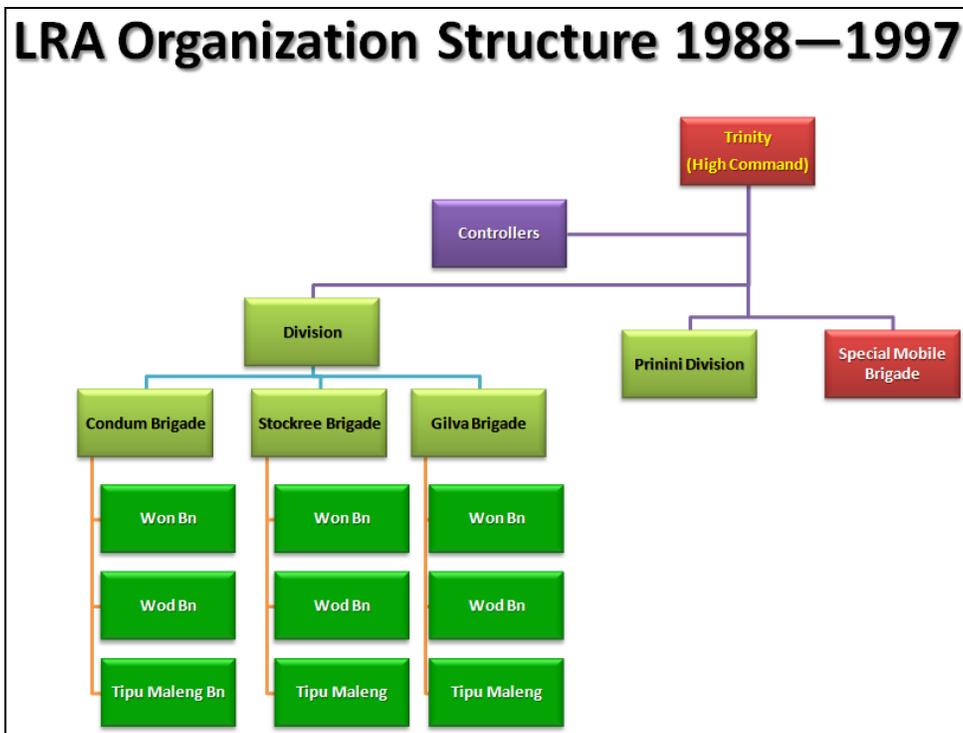


Figure 9. The Organization Structure of LRA between 1988 and 1997⁸⁵

From 1998 to 2001, the LRA’s organization was more complex and based on professional bureaucracy. This was after it discarded the Holy Spirit tactics and adopted formal, classical guerrilla warfare after it received professional training from the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), as seen in Figure 10.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ See full descriptions of this in Ledio Cakaj et al., “Evolution of LRA Command Structure,” *LRA Crisis Tracker*, 2014, accessed October 23, 2014, <http://lra-crisistracker.com/command/evolution> and Day, “The Fates of Rebels: Insurgencies in Uganda,” 439–458.

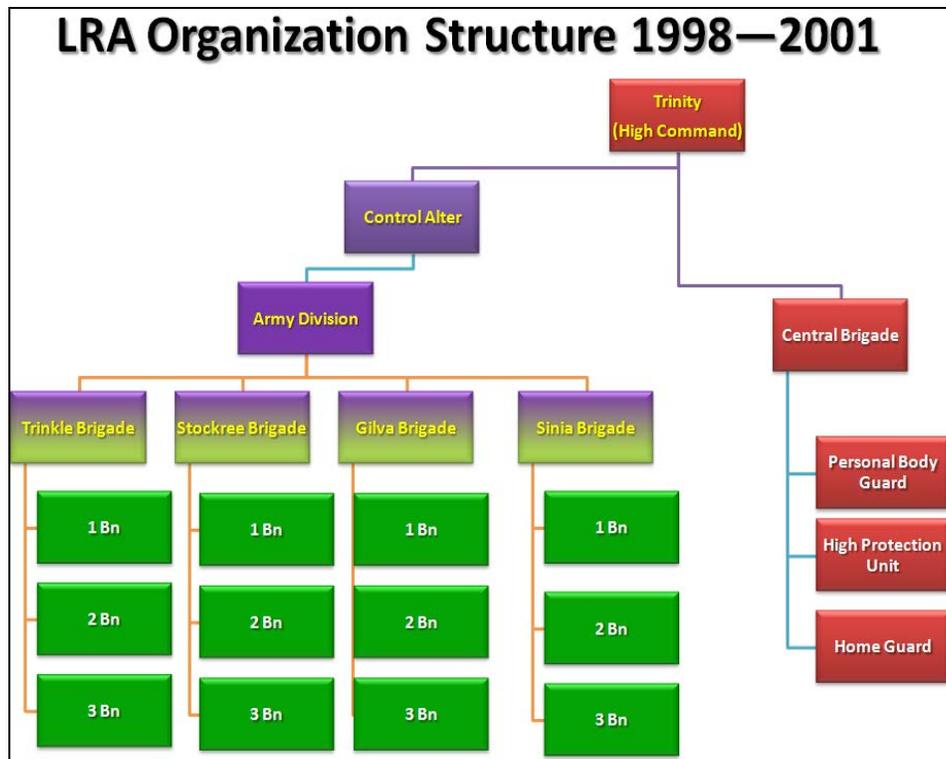


Figure 10. Organization Structure of LRA between 1998 and 2001⁸⁷

Between 2001 and 2005, Sudan granted Uganda permission to cross its borders to pursue the LRA in southern Sudan. The LRA dismantled its organization structure and operated in small groups, each reporting directly to the high command. This is a divisional type of organization. The LRA uses this type of organizational structure to become, literally, invisible to its enemy. It offers no frontline to the counterinsurgent forces to engage; its members are nowhere but everywhere. In other words, the LRA practiced strategic centralization and tactical decentralization.⁸⁸

From 2006 to 2008, the LRA again organized itself into simple and mechanistic bureaucracy. All the other structures are there but somehow rendered redundant because the high command preferred to have direct control of the operational core and not through

⁸⁷ After Cakaj et al., “Evolution of LRA Command Structure.”

⁸⁸ For full description of this, see IHS, “Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)”; Cakaj et al., “Evolution of LRA Command Structure.”

the middle line structure (see Figure 11).⁸⁹ This is an example of doctrinal flexibility applied to guarantee the survival of an insurgency project.

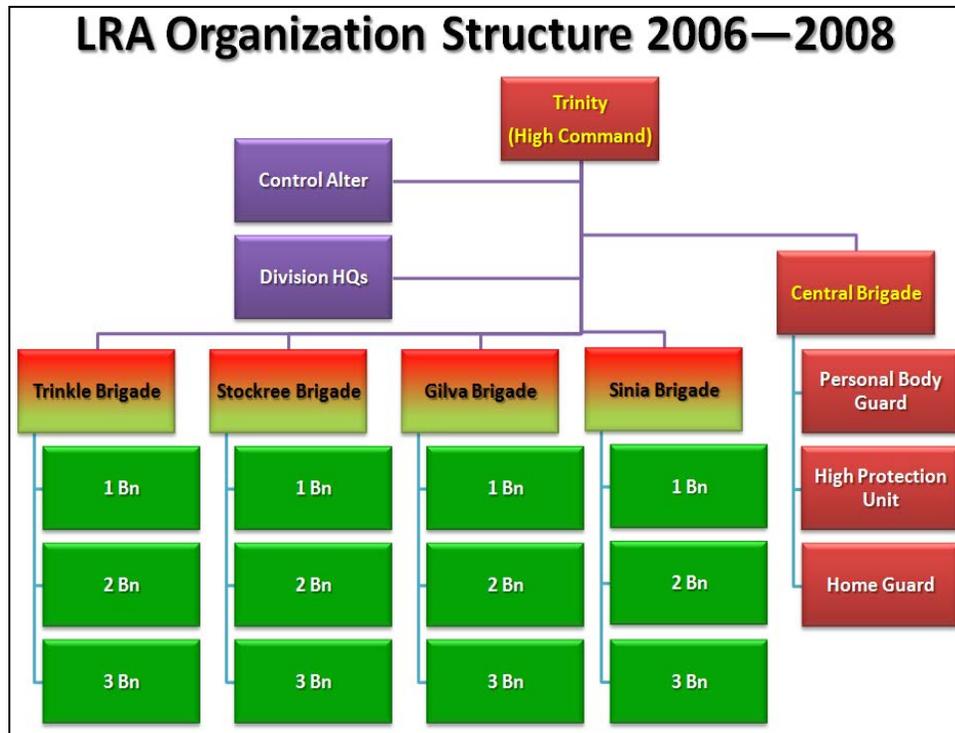


Figure 11. Organization Structure of LRA between 2006 and 2008⁹⁰

After Uganda conducted Operation Lightning Thunder (OLT) in 2008, the LRA reverted back to the divisional type of organization—strategic centralization and tactical decentralization. It operated in small groups, each reporting directly to the High Command. It has maintained this structure up to the time of the writing of this work.

Although it is impossible to demonstrate that the ways in which the LRA adapted its organizational structure to the prevailing military situation contributed to its longevity (H10), the results of this analysis are consistent with this assertion. The LRA practiced doctrinal flexibility involving emphasis on strategic centralization and tactical

⁸⁹ See full descriptions in Cakaj et al., “Evolution of LRA Command Structure” and IHS, “Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA).”

⁹⁰ After IHS, “Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)” and Cakaj et al., “Evolution of LRA Command Structure.”

decentralization to survive counterinsurgent onslaught. The evidence used to derive these LRA organization structures are those provided by the authors cited. There is no way of verifying this claim other than using documentary evidence sourced directly from the LRA leadership, which is not available.

11. Key Leaders in the LRA Leadership Network

Figure 12 is a sociogram showing the network of the LRA leadership. The nodes or actors that are marked blue are those that are no longer involved in active insurgency. That is, they are either dead (marked with a + sign) or alive but surrendered or captured (marked with blue circle). Those still in active in the insurgency are marked in red. Small red circles indicate leaders who are staff officers, while bigger red circles are commanders. Overall, the network is centered on Joseph Kony as the commander in chief of the LRA. The other influential commanders are shown in Table 2, which presents the results of centrality measures for degree, closeness, betweenness, and eigenvector. The ranking of each commander alludes to the order of their importance in the LRA organization. The first seven (marked in red) are the key leaders that have the most influence in the organization.

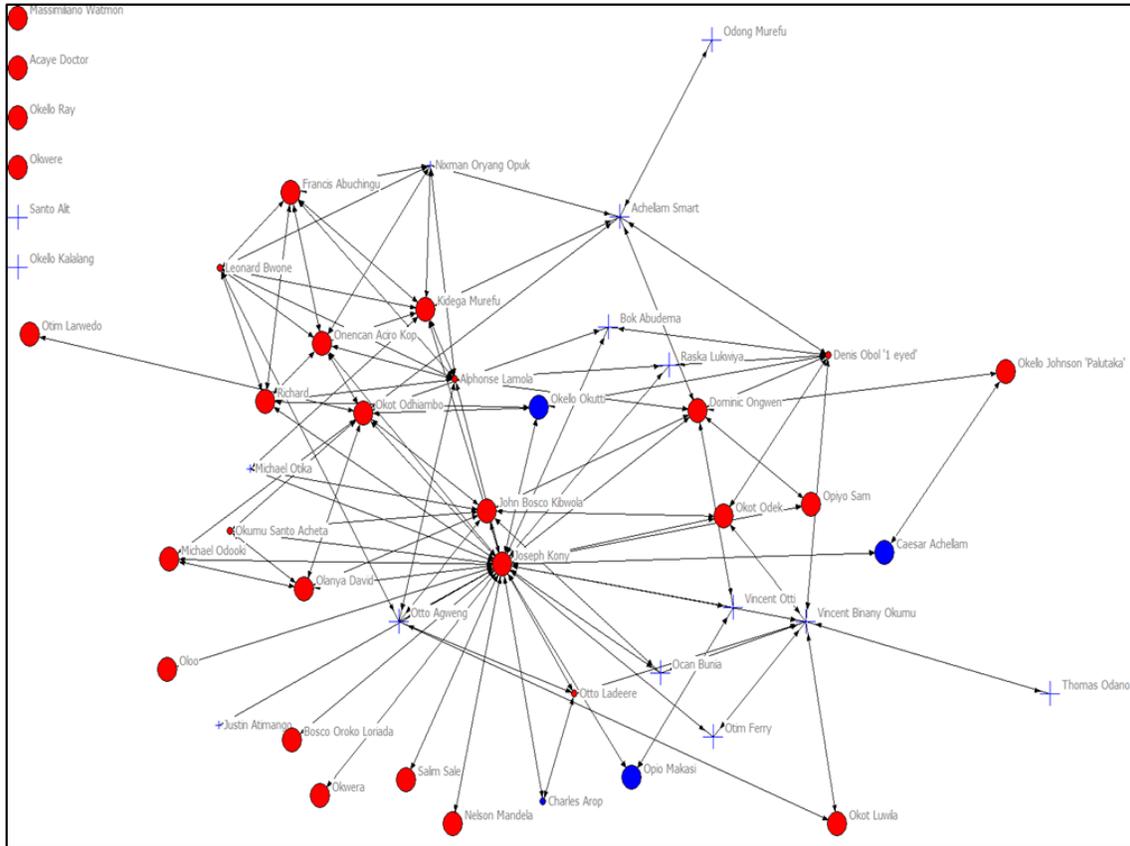


Figure 12. The Sociogram of the LRA Command Network

Table 2. Centrality Measures for the LRA Commanders' Network

| Ranking | Degree | | Closeness | | Betweenness | | Eigenvector | |
|---------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| | Actor | Value | Actor | Value | Actor | Value | Actor | Value |
| 1 | Joseph Kony | 1.375 | Joseph Kony | 0.716 | Joseph Kony | 0.523 | Joseph Kony | 0.519 |
| 2 | Okot Odhiambo | 0.500 | Okot Odhiambo | 0.487 | Okot Odhiambo | 0.067 | Onencan Aciro Kop | 0.291 |
| 3 | Alphonse Lamola | 0.438 | Alphonse Lamola | 0.477 | Dominic Ongwen | 0.057 | Alphonse Lamola | 0.280 |
| 4 | Onencan Aciro Kop | 0.438 | Dominic Ongwen | 0.468 | Alphonse Lamola | 0.033 | Okot Odhiambo | 0.272 |
| 5 | Dominic Ongwen | 0.375 | Onencan Aciro Kop | 0.468 | Onencan Aciro Kop | 0.032 | Richard | 0.248 |
| 6 | Richard | 0.375 | Richard | 0.458 | Richard | 0.023 | John Bosco Kibwola | 0.227 |
| 7 | John Bosco Kibwola | 0.375 | John Bosco Kibwola | 0.458 | Okello Okutti | 0.020 | Kidega Murefu | 0.222 |
| 8 | Francis Abuchingu | 0.313 | Okello Okutti | 0.449 | Caesar Achellam | 0.016 | Olanya David | 0.206 |
| 9 | Leonard Bwone | 0.313 | Kidega Murefu | 0.441 | Kidega Murefu | 0.015 | Dominic Ongwen | 0.190 |
| 10 | Olanya David | 0.313 | Olanya David | 0.432 | John Bosco Kibwola | 0.013 | Leonard Bwone | 0.186 |

Although the results do not prove the last hypothesis, H11, they are consistent with it. They indicate that the LRA leadership network is centered around Joseph Kony, and the centrality analysis further supports the claim that Kony and a few of his close commanders including Okot Odhiambo, Alphonse Lamola, Onencan Aciro kop, Dominic Ongwen, Richard (single name identified), and John Bosco Kibwola are the movers and shakers of the LRA organization. Again, this analysis is based on the evidence derived from the references used to code the SNA data. What is quite clear is that the LRA leadership practices doctrinal and organizational flexibility of strategic centralization and tactical decentralization so as to benefit from the advantages of decentralized forces, which are hard to contain or destroy while maintaining a centralized leadership for firm control. This is not contrary to John Arquilla's argument that decentralized groups are more effective than the centralized ones.⁹¹ The LRA actually benefits from decentralization while maintaining strategic (high command) advantages associated with centralization.

B. CONCLUSION

In general, the results show that the LRA makes use of its surrounding environment, which includes the physical features such as the elevation, water sources and land cover, and the human geography factor such as the population density. The LRA also made use of the interstate politics and the weaknesses of the states in the region to gain some time for its insurgency project. The findings of this work further confirm that the LRA modifies its organizational structure to adapt to the changing military and political situations so as to evade termination by the counterinsurgent forces. This, however, cannot be possible without the intuition of the LRA leadership, meaning that the LRA leadership plays important role in making decisions that contribute significantly to the longevity of its undertaking.

Contrary to the author's hypotheses, the findings of this work suggest that the LRA does not depend on mineral deposits in the operation area to fund its insurgency

⁹¹ For full discussion on this, see John Arquilla, *Swarming and the Future of Conflict* (Rand Corporation, 2000), 25–89.

project. The results also show that the LRA operates, in general, at the proximity of the state capital, contrary to the hunch of the author. The LRA further operates at the proximity of the roads in the region. However, this could be due to the fact that the events recorded are mostly encounters with counterinsurgent forces and civilian population, which are, incidentally, nearby roads. Counterinsurgent forces prefer locating their defensive positions near access routes for the purpose of easy supplies. Civilians, as well, prefer to settle near roads for easy access and protection by the counterinsurgent forces. It is therefore inevitable that the records should show the insurgent activities near roads. However, this does not mean the insurgents exclusively rely on roads for their operations.

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VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research was designed to determine whether the LRA uses the geographical, political, and organizational and leadership factors suggested by previous research works as survival enhancement incentives. The findings here show that, indeed, the LRA, like other insurgent groups, depends on most, but not all, of the geographical, political, and organizational factors to prolong its longevity. Thus, these findings give clues to governments and counterinsurgent forces battling the LRA as to how the LRA keeps its insurgency project surviving. Through this knowledge, it is hoped that the concerned policy makers—African states and their partner, the U.S.—will develop sound strategic solution to the LRA crisis.

In the sections that follow, the author discusses the synthesis and implications of the findings of this research work, the limitations encountered, and options for further research work, and make practicable recommendations for policy makers. Last but not least, the final section draws an overall conclusion to this thesis work.

A. SYNTHESIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The Ugandan Military (UPDF) has been battling the LRA since late 1980s up until the writing of this research work. The UPDF mostly depends on intelligence information and analysis to combat the LRA. Uganda, at large, also relies on intelligence information and analysis to assess the progress of the war against the LRA insurgency, and formulates strategic courses of action on that basis. This research gives another perspective on how to study the LRA insurgency based on readily available, open-source information, empirical analysis, and is supported by previous knowledge on similar insurgency projects. It is therefore hoped that combining the findings and recommendations in this work with intelligence information will help Uganda and other affected African states to formulate better strategies to combat the LRA insurgency.

The LRA, according to the findings of this work, makes good use of its environment to keep surviving. This is not surprising because even wild animals, quite intuitively, use their surroundings to facilitate their survival. It is, however, important to

note that not all humans are capable of surviving in the same environment for such a long duration without making concessions for peace talks to succeed. This means that the LRA has mastered how to adapt and live comfortably in harsh environments such as the thick and rough terrain in the DRC and CAR. The LRA has clearly demonstrated expertise in the selection of sanctuaries that guarantee its prolonged longevity.

Countering the LRA by denying it access to life-supporting environmental factors, however, may not be so feasible because it will be a daunting task to try, for instance, to deny the LRA access to water sources, wood supplies, and raised grounds. This is because these geographical features are plentiful and spread throughout the region. It will require enormous human and other types of resources to accomplish such a task. This means that other measures should be opted for as a solution to the LRA insurgency.

The LRA, according to the findings of this research, also takes opportunities presented to it by the prevailing political situations in the region. That is, it chooses sanctuaries based on the capability of the hosting state or host state's relationship with Uganda. For example, as seen earlier in this work, from 1988 to 2005, the LRA had sanctuaries inside southern Sudan and parts of Uganda that are less populated or completely uninhabited. This was because Uganda and Sudan had competing interests, which played quite well for the LRA's survival. After 2006, the LRA decided to relocate to the DRC and later to CAR because these two countries do not have the capability to police their borders effectively.

It should be noted that the LRA did not choose the DRC and CAR by coincidence. It had the easy option of going eastwards to Kenya, Ethiopia, or Somalia, rather than crossing the Nile, an obstacle, to go westwards to the DRC and CAR. The most probable reasons are that, when compared to the countries in the western side, the countries on the eastern side are densely populated, with rougher terrain and stronger state power, and friendlier to the Ugandan government. Therefore, cordial interstate relationships and concerted efforts to combat insurgents in the region could be an agreeable solution to that effect. That is by denying havens to the insurgents.

Another strategy that the LRA uses to prolong its longevity is that of changing its organizational and leadership structures according to the prevailing military and political situations. For instance, as discussed earlier in this work, the LRA constructs its organization structure similar to that of a professional bureaucracy when it had gained strength and is able to face the counterinsurgent onslaught. However, it dismantles the same organization down to smaller units when it is faced with possible defeat and termination. This tactic affords the LRA survival because it is hard for the well-organized counterinsurgent forces to fight an insurgent that is disintegrated into smaller fighting groups.

The LRA seems to know very well that this tactic works and incapacitates the advanced force advantage that the counterinsurgency forces have over it. This could be one of the reasons why the LRA leader, Joseph Kony, preferred to maintain direct control over the core operatives when they reorganized into a more mechanistic bureaucracy after 2006. After Operation Lightning Thunder, it was easy for the LRA to revert back to small groups, divisional style organization, which it still uses at the time of this writing. According to Brafman and Beckstrom, the best way to fight an organization that operates in small units is to self-divide into smaller units corresponding to the target organization.⁹² Will this strategy work in the military setting? This is another research question altogether. The author thinks the best way to control water in a flooded house, as an analogy, is first to shut the tap from which the water originates before mopping it; otherwise, it will be a waste of time and effort. In other words, when the insurgents are nowhere and everywhere, the best strategy is to go for the control center: high command manhunt. Because much as the groups operates independently, they still report to and are controlled by the high command.

B. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of challenges that the author encountered while trying to conduct this research. One very important limitation is lack of availability of data, let alone being up to date, on most African countries. There is general lack of knowledge on

⁹² See full discussion in Brafman and Beckstrom, *The Starfish and the Spider*, 159–209.

several African issues because of lack of research works, which also stems from lack of data for conducting the research study. The author sees great opportunity in creating a project that specializes in data collection on African issues. If the world desires to know more about Africa, it has no choice but to fund data collection projects.

From the results of the data analysis, it is seen that most of the countries in the region are categorized as fragile states. However, neither are all the states riddled with insurgency, nor do insurgents find them suitable sanctuaries. Furthermore, some states that were previously destabilized by insurgency managed to push out the insurgents from within their territories. The author sees a great research opportunity in the area of effectiveness of governance in the region. Why do some of the states have ungoverned spaces, and how can they reduce the prevalence of those ungoverned spaces so as to get rid of insurgency in their sovereign territory?

The author is grateful to the LRA Crisis Tracker for collecting data on the LRA and participating in the struggle to end the insurgency. However, the author thinks that the LRA command data as provided by the LRA Crisis Tracker requires some updating. There are, most probably, younger LRA commanders less known to the world that are slowly but surely taking mantle of the insurgency. It is therefore prudent that more efforts should be directed towards identifying those upcoming leaders and their biographies. This will, in turn, facilitate more credible analysis and evaluation of the LRA insurgency.

C. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has provided supporting evidence that the LRA uses its environment to facilitate the longevity of its insurgency project, meaning that, it relies, partly, on geography to survive. It is therefore recommended that the counterinsurgent forces consider deploying strategically in positions that have resources that provide livelihood to the insurgents, especially water sources. However, this means more manpower is needed to cover all the water sources in the region. Foot patrols may also be used to enhance domination of the territory. This will deny the insurgents access to those critical resources and thus pressure them to give up the insurgency.

The LRA is unlikely to relocate to another state other than where it is right now. Further north is desert terrain, which the LRA is not used to. Further west is Cameroon, which is a formidable state, according to African standards, and it is likely to fight and deny the LRA sanctuary. To the east and south there are the joint African Union forces, which means that the LRA can be defeated kinetically, if the CAR, DRC, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda can work jointly and effectively under the African Union regional task force. It appears that the challenge right now is the lack of manpower to cover the vast territory in which the LRA is roaming. This recommendation can be implemented with good results if the strength of the counterinsurgent forces is boosted.

The LRA has, as of this writing, decided to break up its organization structure. It operates in small divisional groups that report directly to the high command of the LRA. The author thinks the best way to defeat such an insurgency project is to identify the key players—the movers and shakers—of the insurgency and eliminate them from the equation. Eliminating the connection to the high command will most probably cause the organization to crumble because the groups won't have the direction and purpose of fighting. The challenge with this recommendation is to find the apparently invisible high command members. A multifaceted approach may have to be used to locate and capture the leaders of the insurgency. This may include phone tracking, human intelligence, signal intelligence, and drones, among other methods.

The most cost-effective method that the author thinks can end the LRA insurgency is the use of psychological operation methods to encourage mass defection from the LRA ranks. The LRA high command will have no one to command if the fighters defect, and the high command itself will have no choice but to give up the undertaking. This method will not only be, as Gordon McCormick would say, a “strong win,” but it would be a “complete win” as well, because the leadership of the LRA won't have that motivation to continue to fight if there are no people to use as fighters.⁹³ In short, we must capitalize on degrading Joseph Kony's fighting strength—manpower—

⁹³ For full explanation, see Gordon H. McCormick, “The Complete Win,” in *Gangs and Guerrillas*, ed. Michael Freeman and Hy Rothstein, Chapter 1 (Monterey, CA: NPS, 2011), 3–7.

because that is what keeps him motivated, surviving, and busy running the insurgency project.

The data on the LRA is getting outdated. The LRA most probably is changing face in terms of new commanders taking the mantle of the LRA leadership. Data collectors have to research more and update their data on the LRA to unveil the identities and biographies of the upcoming LRA leaders. The more we keep track of the LRA leadership, the easier it is to derive effective strategies to end the insurgency.

D. CONCLUSION

The LRA insurgency is the oldest of all insurgent projects in Africa, lasting for over a quarter of a century. Several theories have been put forward by different government and non-governmental organizations to explain why the LRA has been able to survive for such a long duration. Academics also have their own theories as to why and how insurgents in general prolong the longevity of their insurgency project. The author designed an empirical study to find out why and how the LRA has prolonged the longevity of its insurgency project for such a long duration.

The findings of this study support the hypotheses that the LRA uses its environment to facilitate its survival by socially and tactically harnessing the life-supporting elements of nature. It does this by carefully selecting the terrain of operation, which provides it with a tactical advantage over the counterinsurgent forces, and implementing social survival incentives. The LRA also takes into account the prevailing political and military situations in the region before selecting a territory for its activities. For instance, between the late 1980s and 2005, the LRA took advantage of the rivalry between Uganda and Sudan to gain sanctuaries in Sudan. Later, after 2006, the LRA carefully chose to relocate to the DRC and CAR instead of Ethiopia and Kenya because the former are more fragile states than the latter. It is apparently easier for an insurgent group to survive in a fragile state than in a sturdy one. The LRA also modifies its organization structure to fit to the prevailing political and military situation. When under pressure from counterinsurgent forces, the LRA breaks up into smaller groups to evade

destruction, and vice versa. The LRA has used this philosophy over the years to prolong the longevity of its insurgency project.

Last but not least, this study focused on the LRA in particular, but there are several other insurgent groups out there with similar or completely different ideologies and doctrines of operations. The author recommends that other people interested in conflict studies undertake these projects. Until such studies are conducted, it will be very difficult to state assertively a theory of insurgent survival. The challenge may also arise from the constantly changing political and military situations in Africa. The changes in the situations inevitably pressure insurgents to change tactics. This further complicates the quest to formulate a standing theory of insurgent survival.

Conducting a research study on Africa or its member states is a very challenging task, due mostly to lack of data on basic issues affecting the continent. The author therefore thinks that if one really wants to know more about Africa, more must be done to fund data collection projects to unveil the vast information hidden in that vast continent. The rest of the work of analysis and evaluation of the data will be done by institutions of higher learning.

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APPENDIX

A. LIST OF SPIRITS USING KONY AS A MEDIUM

The following list gives the names of the spirits that Joseph Kony claims communicate and act through him as a sole medium. Whenever he is possessed by one of the spirits, Kony wears a white *kanzu* (long white robe) and a rosary around his neck and communicates while standing at the *yard* (a “holy” place surrounding the Alter). Clerks record whatever he says because he won’t remember after the spirit is gone. The following are the names of the spirits that operated through Kony:

1. Juma Oris: a minister under President Idi Amin (1971–1979); this was Kony’s chief spirit and chairman.
2. Silli Silindi: a female spirit in charge of operations.
3. Ing Chu: a Chinese or Korean spirit who controls the bullets of the enemy.
4. El wel Best: another Chinese or Korean spirit in charge of battle plans and tactics.
5. Silver Koni: a spirit from Zaire (the current DRC) also in charge of controlling enemy bullets.
6. King Bruce: a spirit from the U.S. in charge of the support component of the resistance movement.
7. Major Bianca: a female spirit from the U.S. responsible for the yard.
8. Jim Brickey: another spirit from the U.S. responsible for secret intelligence.
9. Doctor Salam or Saline: the spirit in charge of medical services.
10. Other spirits with no details were Ali and Jacob.⁹⁴

B. OTHER SPIRITS AND THEIR MEDIUM CO-OPTED BY KONY

Unlike Alice Auma, who was the only medium of all spirits in her movement, Joseph Kony allowed and accepted other people with different spirits. However, he co-opted them into his movement. The following are some of the spirit mediums and their respective spirits Kony co-opted into his movement:

1. Nelson Odora was possessed by the spirit Maliaka (Angel) Gabriel. Gabriel had the power of predicting enemy movements and controlling their fired bombs. He had a following of 30–50 people.
2. Odora worked with two other men possessed by Saint Paul and Saint John the Baptist. These men had the power of healing and preaching the gospel.

⁹⁴ Heike Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & the Holy Spirits*, 185–86.

3. Poline Angom, a female, was possessed by 12 spirits, each responsible for different tasks, who worked for Kony's movement.
4. Santa Lawino, another female, was also possessed by 12 spirits who worked for Kony.⁹⁵

C. THE HOLY SPIRIT SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

The Holy Spirit safety precautions were adopted from Alice Auma's movement, the Holy Spirit Movement. Kony did not have his own spiritual precautions. Possibly, this explains why he enforced it reluctantly to discipline his forces. The Holy Spirit safety precautions are as follows:

1. Thou shalt not have any kind of charms or remains of small sticks in your pocket, including small pieces used as toothbrush.
2. Thou shalt not smoke cigarettes.
3. Thou shalt not drink alcohol.
4. Thou shalt not commit adultery or fornication.
5. Thou shalt not quarrel or fight with anybody.
6. Thou shalt not steal.
7. Thou shalt not have envy or jealousy.
8. Thou shalt not kill.
9. You will execute the orders and only the orders of the Spirit.
10. Thou shalt not carry any walking stick in the battle field.
11. Thou shalt not take cover on the ground, in the grass, behind trees, ant-hill or any other obstacle there found.
12. Thou shalt not pick from the battle field any article not recommended by the Spirit.
13. Thou shalt not kill prisoners of war.
14. Thou shalt follow the right words of command, and never argue with the commander.
15. You shalt love one another as you love yourselves.
16. Thou shalt not kill snakes of any kind.
17. Thou shalt not eat food with anybody who has not been sworn in by the Holy Spirit.
18. Thou shalt not branch off to any home or shake hands with anybody while on route to the battlefield.
19. Thou shalt not eat pork or mutton or oil of the same.
20. Thou shall have two testicles, neither more nor less.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Behrend, *Alice Lakwena & Holy Spirits*, 186.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 47.

D. ORGANIZATIONS AND UNITS CO-OPTED TO FORM THE LRA

By the time the LRA was finally founded in 1992, it had co-opted a number of other insurgent organizations into its ranks. Kony and some of the insurgent leaders from the Acholi region had agreed to consolidate their forces and confront the NRA with a single organization. The following are the organizations that comprised the LRA:

1. UPDA unit under Odong Latek
2. UPDA unit under Okello Okeno
3. UPDA unit under Benjamin Opia
4. UPDA unit under Mark Lapyem
5. Splinter groups of HSM of Severino Lukoya
6. Splinter groups of HSMF of Alice Auma
7. The Holy Spirit movement of Philip Ojuk
8. The Lord's Army of Joseph Kony
9. The United Uganda Godly Movement (UUGM) of Otunu Lukonyomoi
10. UPDCA of Joseph Kony⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Ibid, 179–190.

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