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RECESS IN AFRICA, AK'S AND HAND GRENADES:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOUR AFRICAN NATION-STATES  
AND THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF CHILD SOLDIERING

by

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To the Graduate Faculty:

The members of the committee appointed to examine the dissertation of Adam L. Clapp find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

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OF CHILD SOLDIERING

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT-Idaho State University (2015)

Child soldiering is an issue that plagues many nation-states around the world, but the unrest and unstable governments in Africa have led to high rates of child soldiering in Africa. The toll that child soldiering takes on the economic, social, and political fields in Africa are far reaching, the lasting effects on children coerced, either physically or environmentally, into soldiering leads to developmental problems for the nation-state. By using the comparative method to analyze four nation-states, Sudan, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Uganda, attributes can be identified that may lead to an environment that creates a failed state. By applying the four development traps outlined by Collier (2007) to the above mentioned nation-states it can be determined the impact each development trap has on whether a failed state uses child soldiers.

Using a comparative approach it was possible to determine the level of impact each development trap plays in child soldiering. Conflict trap was most important, followed by natural resource trap, bad governance trap, and landlocked with bad neighbors trap. Once the underlying causes are established the international community can develop a case by case program to address the issues. The importance of identifying the underlying issues that contribute to child soldiers is seen by the recent events that have unfolded in the developing world. With the Lord's Resistance Army still operating and groups like Boko Haram and ISIS abducting and using children in their quests, the issue of child soldiering will continue to plague the developing world.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction of Child Soldiering**

### **Background information on Child Soldiering:**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has called child soldiering one of the worst forms of child labor in the world today, and advocates its eradication with international support. When children are caught in the cross fire of a war zone the effects of that distressing event can impact the mental state of the child for years. When children directly experience these conflicts the psychological effects may be even more severe than the physical trauma. The psychological effects in children directly involved in conflicts with armed fighting groups stem from the fact that children as young as six not only experience war, but in some cases participate, or more often are forced to participate in the conflict filling roles such as soldiers, porters, spies, mine sweepers, and sex slaves, each of which has a lasting impact.

Although the issue of child soldiering has long been a prevalent concern of the global community, the International Labour Organization suggests that any form of direct child engagement in conflict, such as satisfying any of the aforementioned roles, is something that must be stopped. The need to stop child soldiering is clear; what is less clear are the reasons that child soldiers are used in such high numbers in recent conflicts such as the civil wars in Sierra Leone, Uganda, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and the continued fighting in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In an attempt to understand the potential reasons for the continued use of child soldiers, particularly in a global community that expresses the desire to eradicate the practice, this study examines possible explanatory issues among the countries that use

child soldiers. This study will attempt to identify what characteristics create an environment that allows governments or other fighting groups to have a so-called “need” to use child soldiers. Nation-states that use child soldiers have many internal and external issues, but I suggest it is specific characteristics of countries, namely “failing state” characteristics, that lead to the use of child soldiers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is two-fold: to identify characteristics of nation-states that use child soldiers and to identify whether the nation-states that use child soldiers can be classified as failed states, as defined and assessed by looking at Collier and Chauvets (2006), Collier (2007), and the Fragile State Index, formerly the Failed State Index, from the Fund for Peace. Specific attention will be given to the four developmental traps which often plague failed states as discussed by Paul Collier (2007) in *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What can be Done About it*. The four traps created by Collier, which are discussed in chapter two, consist of the conflict trap, natural resource trap, landlocked with bad neighbors trap, and bad governance in a small country trap. I suggest it is possible to understand which of these traps create an environment conducive to the use of child soldiers. By comparing nation-states that use child soldiers, I intend to draw conclusions about potential causes for the use of child soldiers, and ultimately potential solutions to the child soldier problem.

In order to achieve these goals, this work attempts to address two research questions:

1. What nation-states use child soldiers and what characteristics do these countries share, i.e., is it possible to identify characteristics within these nation-states that lead to the use of child soldiers?

2a. Can the nation-states that share these characteristics be classified as a failed state (as defined by Collier and Chauvets (2006), Collier (2007) and the Fragile States Index from the Fund for Peace)? And, 2b. Using Colliers (2007) work focused on four development traps that often plague failed states, is it possible to assess which development trap(s) most commonly lead(s) a failed state to use child soldiers?

### **Literature Review, Child Soldiers:**

#### Defining a Child Soldier

Child soldiers have played a role in conflict since the invention of warfare. However, to stop child soldiering, the international community took an active role in the discussion of how to define a child soldier; without intervention, children are likely to continue to play an important role in the future. In order to understand the problem of child soldiers, it is first necessary to understand what constitutes a child soldier. Since the definition of child varies among different cultures, the definition of a child soldier also varies. However, the internationally accepted definition of a child soldier is any child under the age of 18, who is compulsorily, forcibly, or voluntarily recruited or used in hostilities in any role, whether it is a combat role, porter, cook or bush wife, by armed forces or armed groups (Machel, 2001).

On the international level there have been many attempts to limit or stop the use of children as soldiers. Among the most notable was the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, drafted by the United Nations and principally by John Peters Humphrey, the Director of the Division of Human Rights. This declaration included children in the human rights debate, acknowledging that children should be treated different than adults. The reason for the distinction that children should be treated differently is because they

are a vulnerable population that needs added protection. By specifically singling out children in this declaration Humphrey assigned them a special status in the human rights debate. Support of the Declaration was widespread and the resolution was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly with a 48-0 vote<sup>1</sup>. A second international attempt to limit the use of child soldiers came with the Geneva Conventions, held in 1949. These conventions dealt with human rights abuses during war and set up guidelines for the treatment of all people, including children, with additional protocols added in 1977 regarding the treatment of women and children as well as addressing the age of soldiers.

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1989, the United Nations passed the Convention on the Rights of the Child; this document contained two articles of particular importance to the issue of child soldiering. Article 37 outlines that children under the age of 18 should not receive capital punishment or life in prison without parole for any acts they committed during a conflict. Also, that child soldiers involved in conflicts and charged with crimes should be given prompt access to legal counsel and a speedy trial if they are detained for crimes. Article 38, essentially banned the participation of children, under the age of 15, in armed conflict, although did allow for the use of individuals over the age of 15, noting that preference should be given to those that are oldest. Article 38 also treats child soldiers as the victims of war and suggests that children do not have an option other than taking up arms. This assumption is true in some instances but certainly not in all situations.

Finally, the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations General Assembly, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, and the International Labor

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<sup>1</sup> In 1948, there were only 58 members of the United Nations, of those 58 members eight nations abstained from voting on the declaration and two others neither abstained nor participated. Those abstaining were the Soviet Union, Ukrainian SSR, Byelorussian SSR, People's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, People's Republic of Poland, Union of South Africa, Czechoslovakia, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The two that took no action were the two newest members Honduras and Yemen.

Organization have condemned the use of child soldiers in official statements and resolutions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Singer, 2005; United Nations)<sup>2</sup>. These condemnations are meant to support children, and as such many of these international organizations use the standard “18 years of age is an adult” argument considering any individual under 18 to be a child. Although this assumption is meant to be protective, it is not as straight forward as it seems. This supposition shows a western, developed world bias and is not in line with what many developing nation-states’ local cultures and norms consider a child. For example, in rural Africa many of the local cultures view people as young as 14 as adults, they are expected to contribute to the household income, and work alongside their elders (Wessells, 2006). Thus, although the international community generally uses the definition of “under 18” to define a child, this is and has always been a somewhat shifting point of contention. Thus, recognizing the complexity of defining any type of “child,” for the purposes of this study I use under 15 as the definition of a child soldier and focus on the use of young children as child soldiers.

### History of the Child as a Soldier

The use of child soldiers in times of war has been around since conflict arose. During the Middle Ages in Europe, young boys were recruited as squires for knights, and at age 13 they were apprenticed to a knight and were expected to follow the knights into battle. The Italians called these child warriors “infant,” which translates as child, and as a group they were called the *infanteria* or infantry (Honwana, 2006). In 1212 CE France, a movement of child soldiers known as the children’s crusade set off to retake the holy lands from the Arab occupiers. These children felt they would be able to succeed in part

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<sup>2</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be found at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

due to their piousness and innocence in contrast to their older more sinful counterparts (Zacour, 1969). While the children's crusade was ultimately a failure with many of the children perishing on the march across the Alps and many others being sold into slavery in Marseilles, it showed the power of children as a military unit and their willingness to fight. While these young individuals were not coerced into joining fighting units, like many of today's instances, it does show that children have been used in and have been willing to volunteer for participation in military campaigns for centuries. The following examples may also help to explain some of the reasons that children would willingly join a fighting unit: first, to better their standing in life, as with the case of the squire to the knight, and second, religious fervor as with the children's crusade. These two reasons are still seen in today's explanation of why some children become child soldiers.

The United States and the Confederate States of America both conscripted children for armed combat during the American Civil War from 1861 to 1865 as they saw their own fighting populations being reduced. At the battle of Antietam, one of the bloodiest days of the civil war, the actions of 15 year old John Cook, a member of the U.S. Army, garnered him the Medal of Honor (Slinger, 2005). Another notable recipient of the Medal of Honor was Willie Johnston. At age 13 he became the youngest recipient of the Medal of Honor for his bravery during the seven days retreat (Lewis, 2009). Toward the end of World War II, a desperate Nazi Germany used children to comprise much of their fighting force as their ranks were decimated. In 1943 the 12<sup>th</sup> SS Panzer Division Hitler Jugend was formed, a tank division that was manned by 17 year old boys from the Hitler youth groups (Meyer, 2005). Also during World War II in Germany, 16,000 children were recruited and completed basic training and deemed fit for duty,



many of these young recruits were given rations of sweets instead of the standard alcohol and tobacco ration for German troops (Meyer, 2001). During the Khmer Rouge led Cambodian genocide in the 1970s and 1980's, children were used as military tools. The Khmer Rouge would take children, place them in communes in order to indoctrinate them to serve the Khmer Rouge's needs, and then use them as soldiers and to plant landmines, one of the most devastating military weapons still in use (Leitsinger, 2009).

In examining the history of child soldiers, it is important to recognize that at times children choose to be involved in conflicts. There are many reasons that children take up arms. Many of the reasons why children take up arms relate to the conditions to which they are exposed: high levels of poverty, high orphan rates, internally displaced populations, lack of education, and civil unrest, although the advancement of better and lighter firearms also appears to play a role in the ability of children to fight (Achvarina & Reich, 2006; Honwana, 2006; Machel, 2001; Singer, 2005). Many of these characteristics exist in Africa, where approximately 40% of the global number of children that are soldiers are fighting, and Asia, which boasts roughly 25% of the child soldier population. However, child soldiers are not exclusive to those areas (Achvarina & Reich, 2006), child soldiers are also found in Ireland, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and in the historical records of the United States and Western Europe.

### Why Use Child Soldiers

There are several reasons why groups within nation-states, especially failing nation-states would utilize child soldiers. Children are typically viewed as docile, inexpensive, trusting, and expendable by rebel commanders. Children are more docile as they often feel helpless to change their situation, especially when faced with violence in

the form of beatings or punishment, and are easier to control through intimidation.

Children are easier to disorient and indoctrinate than are adults making them less likely to escape. Children are also less expensive than adults to supply and quarter; children will require less food than adults and are less likely to expect some sort of payment for their service. Many children are enticed with promises of money or looted goods but rarely receive these spoils, but are less likely as an adult to complain about not receiving their share (Blattman & Annan, 2008). Children are often eager to please and thus are willing to do what is asked of them while seeking approval from adults (MacFarlane et. Al 2005). This willingness to please adults makes children an attractive option for rebel groups. As a result of the ease of commanding child soldiers rebel groups will actively recruit or abduct children to add to their forces.

Rebel groups utilize children as soldiers for many practical reasons. One such reason is the ease of acquiring these children; often the rebel groups will abduct the children from their villages, schools, or Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps. Not only are they able to continuously resupply their ranks with abducted children the rebel groups often entice the children into joining the groups by presenting it as the best and often only option for survival. Rebel leaders like to use children due to their low cost and high production value, children do not use resources at the same level as adults and therefore their contributions are greater.

Furthermore, children are seen as expendable by rebel leaders; in some cases they are sent into battle without a weapon simply to distract their opponents and to use enemy resources, such as ammunition. At the same time children do not have the cognitive ability to understand death and the danger they are about to face, giving them a feeling of

invincibility. Children are often sent ahead of the main force to sweep roads for land mines; these children are given a broom or branch and told to sweep it back and forth looking for land mines (Machel, 2001). It is likely that these children are not told of the dangers of this activity before they are sent out on this mission. Rebel commanders have alluded to the fact that children are difficult for opposition forces to hit as they are smaller and better able to hide, and they often have more endurance than their adult counterparts. Thus, while not as strong as adults, children have other attributes that make up for their lack of physical capabilities and makes child soldiers an attractive option to rebel forces.

Children are also used by rebel forces for their versatility; children can be soldiers, porters, cooks, bodyguards, sex slaves, foragers, messengers, spies, and domestic workers. Although children may not have the fighting experience or skills that some of the older fighters possess, or are not yet able to fight, they can still perform useful tasks. Furthermore, as children gain experience or are no longer useful in their current roles, they are often placed in more dangerous roles.

While both boys and girls are abducted or recruited by rebel groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda or the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone, there are different roles for these unfortunate souls to perform. The boys are typically utilized in roles that will extract a more physical toll: they are usually being trained to fight or are used as porters. The girls serve different roles which are in some ways more damaging to the abducted child. Girls as young as 13 have been abducted or recruited and serve as cooks, porters, and "bush wives" to rebel commanders and respected fighters. Bush wives fill the sexual need of the men while they are fighting in

the bush or are used as a reward for first-rate soldiers, but once the campaign has ended the men often abandon their bush wives (Machel, 2001; Honwana, 2006; Singer, 2006). The lasting effects of this treatment on the girls is both physical and psychological, many of the girls bare scars that may never heal and are often seen as pariahs when they return to their villages (Bennett et. al 2000).

### Necessary Causes for Child Soldiers

In order for children to be exploited as soldiers there needs to be an environment that allows for their use. The environment that would allow for the use of child soldiers needs an available population of children, some sort of conflict, poverty, and an unstable government incapable of enforcing regulation of the use of children as soldiers. Some of the contributing factors to this environment are lack of security, educational opportunities, basic necessities such as housing and food, and high rates of poverty. These factors together allow rebel groups to recruit young people into their ranks and exploit them for their own selfish causes. One logical step to stopping the use of child soldiers would be to deal with the basic problems that allow this environment to exist. If the basic societal issues are improved, the use of child soldiers will likely decrease. A discussion of the individual issues that contribute to child soldiering follows.

#### *1. Security:*

Security issues are important to consider as a factor since approximately 1 billion people live in countries that are either currently engaged in civil war or are at high risk of falling into civil war (Singer, 2005). Civil war also creates political instability, affecting the social and economic lives of citizens. Civil war creates a war zone that effects entire populations within a region. Many civil wars involve civilians as well as soldiers,

through ethnic cleansing, abductions of children, and destruction of resources. However a civil war is not the only form of conflict that creates insecurity for the citizens of a nation-state. Ethnic cleansing and genocide are tools used by the ruling group to maintain their own power and weaken their enemies. Omar al-Bashir has used his military against the people in the Darfur region of Sudan intermittently since 2003 to weaken people that have challenged him. In 1994 the Hutu led government in Rwanda carried out a devastating genocide on the Tutsi population to ensure that the Tutsi's would not regain power in Rwanda and reinstate a Tutsi monarchy.

Civil unrest within a nation-state is not the only threat that contributes to the issue of security. Nation-states such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Palestine, Pakistan, and India have experienced aggression from other nation-states. In the case of Iraq and Afghanistan the U.S. intervened due to issues of national interest and stationed troops or an occupying force since 2003. The other nation-states mentioned and Palestine have experienced violence from aggression aimed at each other. Israel and Palestine have been fighting for years with little chance of peace, Pakistan and India have been in border disputes since 1947 and have had skirmishes as recent as 2013 (Pandit and Joseph, 2013). While civil war is a major concern for many developing nations, other threats such as genocide, rebel forces, occupying forces, and invasion led to security issues for both the governments and citizens within these nation-states. Even when people are not involved directly with the fighting, they still feel the effects of it economically; as a result many people are less secure in their daily lives due to the loss of income and fear of violence. Another element of the security issue deals with the educational system and opportunities that are in place;

not only is the ability of youths to acquire an education vital but so is the safety of the children while at school.

Education is a factor in whether young people will join fighting groups. Since many areas that are plagued with civil wars have few schools or vocational training programs, young people have few opportunities for jobs or a means of advancing their economic standing. Roughly 900 million people worldwide are illiterate, with approximately 150 million of those being children. For illiterate children there are few opportunities except for becoming street children, joining gangs, or joining rebel or state forces (Honwana, 2006; Singer, 2005). Another problem facing the educational system in these areas is that the schools themselves become targets of the rebel groups as areas to recruit or abduct potential child soldiers. Since schools are typically poorly protected and hold a large number of children, it is logical for rebel groups to replenish their forces with children from schools. A former child soldier in the Democratic Republic of the Congo recounts how school was not a safe haven for children:

“I was enrolled when I was 16 and was attending school. One day, during class hours, a vehicle carrying armed rebels drew up and took away all the pupils. All those between 15 and 25 years of age were arrested and driven to Dogo. On the way there the soldiers taught us how to manipulate weapons. Two weeks later we were sent to the front.”  
(ILO, 2003; 27)

As another abducted child later related “I was attending primary school. The rebels came and attacked us. They killed my mother and father in front of my eyes. I was ten years old. They took me with them” (“Child Soldiers,” Radio Netherlands, 2000)<sup>3</sup>. This type of experience is not uncommon for the youth in war torn areas where rebel

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<sup>3</sup> Quoted from Radio Netherlands <http://www.rnw.nl/humanrights/html/general.html>

groups and even government forces are in need of new soldiers. Another child soldier in the Democratic Republic of the Congo explained his experience:

“I was coming home from school at about 5 p.m. I went to school in the afternoon. I was heading home when soldiers in a vehicle stopped me and made me get in. They were Rwandans. There were lots of other young boys in the vehicle. We went to the airport in Goma and from there to Kalemie by plane. We were all ten, twelve, thirteen years old and older. Then we were sent to Camp Vert in Moba and trained there. Lots were killed in the training. Lots died of sickness.” (HRW 2001; 10)

These stories of abduction have prompted parents to keep their children at home in an attempt to better protect them. Unfortunately, this will have a negative impact on the education of the child, possibly delaying their education or any sort of job training or opportunities to better themselves. Many of the schools in these areas have been closed due to the fighting, further disadvantaging the children that most need an education (Machel, 2001).

## 2. *Orphans:*

In many war torn regions there are large numbers of orphans as a result of genocide, famine, disease, and civil war. Children that do not have a strong association with their community or have no family ties are especially vulnerable to recruitment by both state forces and rebel groups (Unicef). Therefore, orphans are prime targets for recruiters as they have few other options for taking care of themselves. Frequently orphans are lured into these rebel groups with the promise of protection, money, food, glory or recruiters will attempt to show the orphaned children that the rebel groups can provide the family like atmosphere that these children desire (Goodwin-Gill & Cohn, 1994).

### 3. *Disease:*

One significant cause of children becoming orphaned is disease, in particular HIV/AIDS. Approximately forty three million children in Africa have lost either one or both parents to HIV/AIDS creating what are known as the “orphan generation” (Honwana, 2006; Singer, 2006; Wessells, 2006). In Africa many of the national military forces have rates of HIV infection that are higher than the general population. For example, in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo the military forces have HIV infection rates of 50%, in Uganda the rate is 66%, and 80% in Zimbabwe (Singer, 2006; 42). The high rate of HIV infection in these militaries weakens their effectiveness and allows rebel groups thrive and civil unrest to occur (Singer, 2006).

In several of the nations that are most afflicted with the spread of HIV/AIDS the orphanages are woefully understaffed and underfunded. This allows the armed rebel groups to appear as a better option for many of the children who are unable to receive the proper and necessary attention that is needed for healthy development. However, even children even in orphanages have a better chance of avoiding the fate of becoming a child soldier than do the unaccompanied children. Unaccompanied children are those that have lost their parents or primary guardians, and have no other adult presence in their lives. These children have no adult supervision and are often living on the street. They either see joining a rebel group as their only real option or they are forced to join (Honwana, 2006; Rosen, 2007; Singer, 2006; Wessells, 2006).

### 4. *Technology:*

Another contributing factor for the growing use of child soldiers in warfare is the technological advances that promote child soldiers. Firearms have become more



powerful and easier to use, while at the same time smaller and easier for children to handle. Of the approximately 500 million small firearms and assault rifles worldwide, some being traded for as little as a goat or chicken or costing as low as \$12 in Africa, have helped encouraged the use of children in combat (Singer, 2006; Achvarina & Reich, 2006; Wessells, 2006; Machel, 2001). The weapon of choice is the AK-47 (Kalashnikov) assault rifle, which weighs just over 10 pounds, and is even prominently displayed on the Mozambican flag. Not only is the AK-47 an inexpensive weapon to purchase, but it is also easy for a child as young as 10 to become proficient with in as little as 30 minutes (Honwana, 2006; Singer, 2006; Wessells, 2006; Machel, 2001).

#### 5. *Poverty:*

Poverty is a contributing factor for child soldiering in many nations, and is often associated with many of the aforementioned issues, especially disease. Nations such as Uganda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Burundi, and Myanmar have high rates of poverty where the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is between \$300 and \$1,300 (CIA World Factbook). The poverty in these nations limits the opportunities of young people to better their lives; nations that have low GDP per capital also have lower rate of educational opportunities for their populations. When families who are living in poverty lose a parent, it is devastating to the remaining family members, often pushing them to extreme measures.

In the Acholi region in northern Uganda, poverty is a driving force for young children to join rebel groups and take up arms. One of the main ways that wealth is obtained in northern Uganda is through the accumulation of cattle. However, cattle rustlers from the Karamojong tribe have decimated the cattle population, dropping the

number of cattle in the region from approximately 156,000 in 1986 to roughly 3,000 in 1998, an economic loss of around US \$24 million. Much of the cattle was then sold or traded to people in Sudan for money and weapons (Gersony, 1997; de Berry, 2001). The cattle are not only a means of revenue for families, but are also used by young men as dowry for marriage, leaving some men with no dowry for a potential marriage. This situation spurs them toward other means of accumulating wealth for marriage, including the act of joining rebel groups based on the promise of shared booty (de Berry, 2001; Van Acker, 2004).

The lack of housing and food also allows rebels groups to recruit individuals by simply providing adequate meals and some form of shelter. Roughly 1 billion people do not own land, about 800 million have inadequate amounts of food, and nearly 500 million are malnourished worldwide (Honwana, 2006; Wessells, 2006; Singer, 2005). Part of the reason that there is a lack of food and safe drinking water in many of the nations that experience civil war or have rebel groups present is because the rebel group itself or the state military will use these resources for their own soldiers. These resources are not only used by the fighting parties but are also destroyed to prevent the other side from benefiting from their use, a military tactic utilized for centuries. When there are food shortages in communities many people either starve or suffer from malnutrition or are forced to relocate into refugee camps, where they often face conditions that are as bad as the conditions from which they are fleeing. Refugee camps are often underfunded and understaffed, resulting in poor sanitation and lack of resources for the inhabitants.

#### *6. Refugee Camps:*

Refugee camps and internally displaced population (IDP) camps are also sources for child soldier recruitment. In nations that experience high rates of civil war or interstate conflicts there are hundreds of thousands of displaced people that seek safety in refugee camps or IDP camps. IDP's spend an average of 6-7 years in a camp and as many as 5,000 children become refugees each day (UNFPA, 2003; 8)<sup>4</sup>. The warfare in northern Uganda has displaced an estimated 1.5 million people; these IDP's ultimately find themselves living in overcrowded camps that lack the basic necessities of life, such as adequate education, health care, food, or sanitation (Wessells, 2006). Refugee and IDP camps are supposed to be a safe haven for people trying to escape the atrocities of war and protect themselves and families. Unfortunately, many of the refugee camps and IDP camps themselves may be targets of attack.

Camps not adequately protected by either national or international forces are prime targets for fighting forces to recruit or abduct child soldiers. As Achvarina and Reich (2006) have shown, the more access rebel or military militia groups have to refugee or IDP camps, the higher the percent of child soldiers in that area. In camps where there is little protection for the inhabitants, recruiters often slip in unnoticed to distribute propaganda to entice people to join their cause. By the same token poorly protected camps may also face attack by forces seeking to abduct children to become soldiers. These camps are appealing targets for these groups because there is a high population of children readily available for these organizations to abduct or recruit from (Achvarina & Reich, 2006). Therefore it is important to provide sufficient protections of refugee and IDP camps to combat the growing number of child soldiers.

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<sup>4</sup> This report may be located at [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/swp03\\_eng.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/swp03_eng.pdf)

The aforementioned causes that lead to child soldiering is by no means exhaustive, but does highlight many of the major issues that confront children in war torn areas. These causes lead to an environment that will allow, and in many instances promote, the use of children as soldiers. These causes are present in many of the nations that are notorious for both using children as soldiers, and human rights abuses.

If the situation in which children live could be improved, then the possibility of their chances of being involved in conflict could be lessened. The issues mentioned above are all areas that need improvement to improve the lives of many children, particularly those in Africa. If children feel safe and can attain an education that is a step in the right direction, with an education the other issues can be easier to deal with. While some of the issues such as orphan rates or refugee camps are difficult to eliminate, many of the others can be alleviated with safety measures and education. With a better education for all children, poverty rates can be lowered, disease spread can be controlled, and conflict and technology can be better understood.

Once youths gain an education, they can become productive members of the economy. By having a workforce that is trained and competent it will allow the government services to be more efficient and better provide for the population at large. If young people have a better understanding of the perils of conflict and how some technological advancements, such as the AK-47, can make conflict a zero sum game for them, they can better see that joining a conflict is not always the best decision. Along with becoming an integral part of the economy and understanding the conflict around them, they will be able to help prevent the spread of disease. The understanding of how deadly viruses spread, such as HIV/AIDS, is important in stopping the spread of disease.

Once the behavior that spreads disease is understood steps can then be taken to alter the behavior creating a situation that is safer for the population. The first steps of providing security and education can help to ease the strains of the other issues that contribute to why children become tools in conflict.

## **Chapter 2: Methodology**

### **Research Framework and Methods**

This study utilizes the definition of child soldiers as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 38 of this resolution, adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on September 2, 1989, defines a child soldier as someone under the age of 15 that is recruited for participating in armed conflict. The precedent for this age is found in the protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and applies to both governmental and non-governmental organizations, both international and internal armed conflict<sup>5</sup>.

As such, focus of this study is on individuals that are coerced either by physical force or environmental situations into hostilities. The term hostilities is not limited to physical fighting but may also include individuals used as cooks, porters, messengers, spies, or for sexual purposes. Using this definition, this study looks at nation-states that use child soldiers and analyzes the characteristics of those nation-states to help explain the use of child soldiers. Thus, the use of the comparative method is necessary.

#### **Comparative Method**

The comparative method will be used to address research question one: What nation-states use child soldiers and what characteristics do these countries share, i.e., is it possible to identify characteristics within these nation-states that leads to the use of child soldiers?

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<sup>5</sup> There have been other resolutions and agreements passed since the Convention on the Rights of the Child, such as the Paris Commitments and Principles of 2007, which have established a child soldier to be anyone under the age of 18, it also adds the caveat that those under the age of 18 needed to be unlawfully recruited or used by the armed force or armed group in question in violation of the international treaties or national law (Paris Principles, 2007).

The comparative method comprises both the method of agreement and the method of difference. The method of agreement compares and contrasts cases that have different factors or attributes but share an outcome. This allows for the common attribute to be identified as a possible attribute that causes the similar outcome. For example, if nation-states all shared one attribute, such as having mountainous terrain, that attribute could be the cause of their use of child soldiers. Clearly, extensive research would then be needed in order to explain how terrain could be a possible cause for the use of child soldiers.

The second method is the method of difference. This method compares and contrasts cases with similar attributes or factors but different outcomes. This method can show causality by showing that an attribute is present when the outcome occurs but it is not present in similar cases when that outcome does not occur. To use the same example of mountainous terrain, if three of the nation-states have relatively flat terrain and do not use child soldiers and the fourth nation-state has a mountainous terrain and does use child soldiers, the attribute of mountainous terrain could be the cause of the use of child soldiers. Once the attribute has been singled out research can then be conducted to determine why that attribute stands out.

John Stuart Mill in his 1843 book *A System of Logic* describes a research method he calls direct method of agreement. This method described a situation where “If two or more instances of the phenomenon under investigation have only one circumstance in common, the circumstance in which alone all the instances agree, is the cause (or effect) of the given phenomenon.” (Mill, 1843; 454). What Mill is saying is that for some issue to be a necessary condition<sup>6</sup> it will need to always be present if the effect or outcome is

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<sup>6</sup> A necessary condition for some state of affairs, *S*, is a condition that must be satisfied in order for *S* to obtain a situation.

present. For example, using the issue of mountainous terrain again, Mill would require that every time child soldiers are utilized, mountainous terrain would also need to be present. Mill's work is often considered to be the first systematic formulation of the comparative method, and we see the use of comparative method in many academic works dealing with international relations, comparative politics, political economy, and world politics (Anckar, 2008).

Mill also describes what he calls the method of difference, this method suggests that "If an instance in which the phenomenon under investigation occurs, and an instance in which it does not occur, have every circumstance save one in common, that one occurring only in the former; the circumstance in which alone the two instances differ, is the effect, or cause, or an necessary part of the cause, of the phenomenon." (Mill, 1843; 455). In this approach Mill is saying that if two or more items are compared that have different outcomes, but have three attributes that are the same and one that only occurs in the item without the outcome being studied then that attribute that is different is the cause or at least a contributing factor. So if the nation-states of Saudi Arabia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are compared, the former not using child soldiers and the latter using them, if the major difference was that Saudi Arabia was mostly flat and the DRC was mountainous it can be concluded that mountainous terrain, or more likely something impacted by the existence of mountainous terrain, plays a role in the use of child soldiers.

Mill's ideas have been changed slightly over the years but have held fairly firm in their use in comparative politics research. Mill's method of similarity is now coupled with the most different systems design, the main goal of both is to compare an entity



which has similar or the same dependent variable or outcome but may have different independent variables or attributes to determine what independent variables matter. This study uses the method of similarity by comparing four nation-states that have the same dependent variable, child soldiers, but may have different independent variables, such as education level, poverty level, security issues, disease, refugees, and the four development traps, to determine if some independent variables can be eliminated as a potential cause of child soldier use. The four nation-states to be compared in this study are Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and Sierra Leone.

#### Methods for Determining Failed States

The second research questions asks, Can the nation-states that share these characteristics be classified as a failed state (as defined by Collier and Chauvets (2006), Collier (2007) and the Fragile State Index from the Fund for Peace)? And, Using Colliers (2007) work focused on the four development traps (conflict, resource, bad governance, and landlocked with bad neighbors) that often plague failed states, is it possible to assess which development trap(s) most commonly lead(s) a failed state to use child soldiers? To answer these research questions, I use the Fragile State Index from the Fund for Peace<sup>7</sup>; Collier and Chauvets (2006) work, *Helping Hand? Aid to Failing States*; and Collier's (2007) book *The Bottom Billion*.

Fund for Peace utilizes twelve criteria in their Fragile State Index to determine nation-states that are “fragile” or on the verge of failing, these criteria include: demographic pressures, refugee's and internally displaced people (IDP), group grievance, human flight, uneven economic development, economic decline, state legitimacy, public services, human rights and rule of law, security apparatus, factionalized elites, and

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<sup>7</sup> Fund for Peace fragile state index can be found at <http://ffp.statesindex.org/>

external intervention (Fund for Peace)<sup>8</sup>. By combining elements from these three sources it allows for a well-rounded definition of failed state and provides balance to avoid bias as much as possible.

Collier and Chauvet's (2006) work describes failing states as those "low income states in which policy and governance is persistently very bad." Collier and Chauvet look specifically at the per capita income for a nation-state and whether there is a sustained climate of bad governance or corruption in the governing apparatus. These attributes contribute to the creation of a failed state and led to the acceptance of foreign aid for those nation-states, potentially leading to dependence of that nation-state on aid. Along with Collier and Chauvet's (2006) work and Collier's (2007) book the Fund for Peace has developed criteria for a fragile state as well.

Finally, in Collier's 2007 work, *The Bottom Billion*, he attempts to explain why some nation-states have not been able to develop their economies fully even when there are resources that may help in development. According to Collier this lack of economic development often leads to an unstable government that creates relative deprivation among the citizenry. As Ted Gurr noted in his 1970 book, *Why Men Rebel* relative deprivation occurs when a people perceive an inequality in their social condition – they receive less than they feel they are entitled to, compared to others in their society.

This perceived inequality often leads to rebellion or fighting stemming from those lowest in the economic system. When people reason that the benefits outweigh the costs of fighting the decision to fight is an easy choice. The willingness to fight to better their economic standing is directly related to rebellion and relative deprivation, because the

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<sup>8</sup> For a detailed explanation of the methodology of the fragile state index visit <http://ffp.statesindex.org/methodology>

perceived inequality creates conflict. By using Colliers work, it is possible to explain the poverty or relative deprivation that occurs in the developing nation-states that leads to what we call “failed states.” Relative deprivation creates conflict between classes and also between people and their government, this conflict leads to governmental instability and a worsening economy, this simply exacerbates the problem that already exists and leads to failed states.

#### Collier’s Bottom Billion and Four Developmental Traps

In Collier’s (2007) book, *The Bottom Billion*, the bottom billion he refers to are the billion people that are living in poverty around the world and how the nation-states they inhabit are affected by development traps—specifically the four development traps (conflict, resource, bad governance, and landlocked with bad neighbors). These four development traps help to explain why these nation-states have failed to develop to the level that other economically developed nations-states have reached and can explain why there are conflicts and child soldiers used within their borders. These development traps explain why some nation-states have failed to develop, but also can explain other factors such as rates of education, disease, the presence of refugees, and IDPs, also why there is ongoing conflict in some areas of the world. With the application of Collier’s traps to different nation-states we are able to see the different factors that contribute to the economic difficulties that have hampered the development of a nation-state. This lack of development can lead to an environment that allows the use of child soldiers to flourish.

Focusing specifically on Collier’s 2007 work identifying development traps and applying these to specific case studies allows for a more detailed, qualitative assessment of how these traps impact the use of child soldiers. By using the comparative method to

look at the existence of Collier's four traps within nation-states that use child soldiers, it may be possible to see if the four traps are contributing factors for the use of child soldiers. By understanding the impact the four traps have on the economy and stability of a government, solutions on how to alleviate the issues the traps present and better the political environment of the affected nation-states.

The four traps that Collier explains are conflict trap, natural resource trap, landlocked with bad neighbors, and bad governance in a small country.

*1. Conflict Trap:*

Conflict trap does not simply mean that there is internal conflict in the nation-state's past or current environment. Many nation-states have experienced one isolated instance of conflict in the past but have since maintained a stable government. For example from 1861 to 1865 the United States experienced a civil war, but has had a stable government since that time. France also experienced a civil war from 1789-1799 along with several conflicts within their borders over the 215 years since that civil war, but the French government was able to remain stable for much of that time and with help from their allies have since rebuilt and maintained a stable and strong government. The ability of these nation-states to rebound and stabilize from these devastating wars sets them apart from many of the nation-states that use child soldiers today.

One major aspect of the conflict trap that Collier notes is civil war; he emphasizes that 73% of societies in the bottom billion have recently experienced or are still experiencing a civil war (Collier, 2007; 17). The presence of civil war in these nation-states has created an environment where stable governments are nearly nonexistent. The constant threat of a coup d'état forces government leaders to become paranoid and

dictatorial in their methods of rule. Many of the leaders that seize power via a coup d'état are themselves overthrown in the same manner. The nation-state of Sudan is an example where this has occurred. Within two years of Sudan gaining its independence from Great Britain in 1956, Prime Minister Ismail al-Azhari was removed from power in a coup d'état lead by General Ibrahim Abboud who then declared himself the first president of Sudan. Abboud would only last until 1964 when he would relinquish power back to al-Azhari. This would last until another coup d'état in 1969 and yet another in 1985 and then again in 1989. This history of instability in the government led to civil war and poverty for the citizens of Sudan, the new governments often did not have the ability to rebuild the nation after the conflict and were forced to spend heavily on the protection of its leaders from threats.

Coup d'états and civil war are not the only the only types of aggression that contribute to conflict trap. Occupation of a defeated nation-state or territory can also lead to resentment and violence. Several examples exist today throughout the world, in the Middle East, Palestine (Gaza Strip and West Bank) has been occupied by Israel since 1967 resulting in near constant violence between Palestinians and Israelis in that region. Since 1975, Morocco has claimed and occupied Western Sahara, this territory was a Spanish colony for nearly 100 years before Morocco claimed it. Western Sahara, also known as Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) has been formally recognized by 37 nations-states and receives support from 40 other entities including the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), and the African Union (AU) for the right of self determination of the Sahrawi people. While there has been a cease fire in place since

1991 the Polisario Front, the group fighting for independence in Western Sahara has threatened to resume fighting.

The United States has occupied foreign lands in recent years as well, for example when U.S. led forces occupied parts of Iraq and Afghanistan in military campaigns. These occupations led to resistance and resentment from the native inhabitants of those nation-states, eventually leading to the withdrawal of U.S. forces. The former Soviet Union occupied several nations in the Eastern Bloc after World War II until its collapse in 1991. The continued violence and resistance from the various groups within the occupied land has often led to the removal of troops, however in some of the developing nation-states in Africa this has yet to occur as the fighting forces are often poorly trained and equipped, and unable to fully remove the occupying force. The presence of an occupying force, whether it is foreign or domestic has created an environment of instability and violence affecting non-combatants as well as combatants. When people are controlled or occupied by another force the resentment will often lead to violence. We have seen many examples of this in the past, if we look at just the British Empire we can see several examples of how occupation led to violence which contributed to the issue of conflict trap. A few examples with the British Empire include the American Revolution (1776), the independence of Egypt (1922), the independence of India (1947), and the Falklands War (1982).

## *2. Natural Resource Trap:*

The natural resource trap has several elements that contribute to the struggles and violence in a nation-state. The resource curse is not a new phenomenon-in 1982 economists Max Corden and Peter Neary coined the term “Dutch Disease” in describing

an economic model in which there are two sectors, one being the booming sector and the other the lagging sector. The booming sector usually consists of oil production, but may also be a number of other natural resource developments such as mining. The lagging sector consists of the manufacturing or in some cases the agricultural sector; this sector is lagging because in the rush to exploit the profitable natural resource, the nation-state will often neglect the manufacturing and or the agricultural sector (Corden and Neary, 1982; Corden, 1984).

With the neglect an economic sector such as manufacturing or agriculture the overall economy will suffer, while the short term returns are great with the exploitation of a natural resource, the sustainability is often not present. Furthermore, oil, gold, or diamonds are not going to provide basic goods to the individuals that need them most. It may produce jobs and improve the GDP per capita but it does not help provide the basic needs for survival. The increase of GDP per capita does not take into account the increase cost of living due to the lack of production of daily goods such as food or clothing which then has to be imported at a higher price to the consumer.

The resource curse is also detrimental to the economy because the economy is based on the global resource prices. For example, the crude oil price as of February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 was \$100.30 per barrel; while in February 2015 it was \$50.81, showing instability. From 2001 to 2015 crude oil prices have fluctuated from an average yearly low of \$23.12 in 2001 to a high of \$109.45 in 2012, and a high of \$140.73 on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (OPEC). Today oil prices have dropped one again to the current price per barrel on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 of \$46.55 (OPEC)<sup>9</sup>. With oil prices fluctuating as much as \$120 in the last 13 years and over \$50 in the past year it is difficult for nation-states to plan effectively and the

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<sup>9</sup> Oil prices can be located at [www.opec.org](http://www.opec.org).

shifting prices create flux in their economies. This can also hurt other sectors within their economy. As natural resource prices rise many developing nations see the potential profits that can be made and over invest in that sector as opposed to creating a diversified economy to help protect against market collapse.

Natural resources can also play a role in electoral politics; as resource prices go up, the government officials in charge want to maximize profit and invest in that industry. However when the prices drop and the economy is performing poorly, the voters may take it out on the politicians and elect a new party with differing ideas for the economy and government that may undo the changes or reforms already in place. As Collier notes, some evidence suggests that an autocracy would be the best form of government for resource rich countries, but he points out the one major issue with this reasoning for the bottom billion nation-states would be ethnic diversity (Collier, 2007; 49).

When a resource rich nation sees budget surpluses from the exploitation of that resource they will often lower taxes on the citizenry. While this does not seem like a problem it does cause the citizenry to be less concerned with oversight of tax dollars. This lack of oversight allows for corruption to work into government and allows government waste to become the norm rather than the exception. As a result, much of that surplus money gets put into pet projects and personal bank accounts as opposed to being spent on the nation at large.

Democracy gives at least some voice to all the people, but when looking at the best way to spend the money from natural resources those voices will divide in a thousand different directions. As a result wise spending of resources may be difficult as all elected officials try to bring as much money to their constituents, essentially pork



barrel politics. These issues lend themselves to the defense of an autocratic government being the solution. It is easy to point to a few examples of economies that are doing well under an autocratic government, such as China, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Qatar which have growing economies or high gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. However, these nation-states have little ethnic diversity within them. Nation-states such as Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, or Rwanda have an ethnically diverse population and the groups that are not in power are often excluded from the profitable industries or are targeted by the government. As a result of this exclusion some of the economies of these nation-states will continue to falter in an autocratic system.

Another element of the resource curse is environmental degradation. As natural resources are extracted the environmental effects are evident. In many of the developing nation-states strip mining and artisanal mines are common practices<sup>10</sup>. These two methods of mining create numerous problems for the environment as erosion occurs and fertile farm land is pocked with open mine pits and is no longer arable. The loss of fertile farmland to mining causes a decrease in food production leading to higher prices and forcing more poverty stricken people into mining in hopes of supporting their families.

The natural resource trap has as many facets as a brilliant cut diamond, all of which can be harmful to the economies of nation-states that rely too heavily on one sector over the others. As Corden and Neary noted in their 1982 work *Booming Sector and De-Industrialisation in a Small Open Economy*, Dutch Disease and “de-industrialization” can lead to an economy that is too focused on the booming sector of the economy, such as oil, diamonds, or gold, and a de-emphasis on the traditional manufacturing or agricultural

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<sup>10</sup> According to the World Diamond Council artisanal mines are small scale mines and are usually operated by an individual or small groups digging open mine pits in diamond rich ground

sector, leading to a trade imbalance between the sectors and potentially an economic collapse.

### 3. *Landlocked with Bad Neighbors Trap:*

There are 43 nation-states that are landlocked throughout the world, about 22% of the 193 United Nations' recognized sovereign nation-states in the world. Furthermore, of the 54 low income economies world-wide, 20 of them are landlocked with several being located in sub-Sahara Africa (Arvis, Marteau, and Raballand, 2010). Is it simply the geographical location that will automatically dictate whether a nation-state will be poor? The answer is of course no. Nation-states such as Switzerland and Austria are both landlocked but both are in the world's top 20 GDP per capita nation-states, while the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Niger, and Central African Republic are in the bottom 15 GDP per capita nation-states (International Monetary Fund). The key factor for why some nation-states have healthy economies even though they are landlocked would seem to depend on their neighbors.

Switzerland and Austria have neighboring nation-states such as France, Germany, and Italy, while Uganda borders South Sudan, Kenya, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As a result Switzerland and Austria benefit from neighbors that have modern infrastructure for shipping, but more importantly have developed economies and can serve as a ready nearby market for Swiss and Austrian goods. Uganda's neighbors, on the other hand, have some of the poorest economies in the world, due to this, Uganda's neighboring nation-states have poor infrastructure, and in many rural areas no modern infrastructure, and therefore cannot provide an adequate market for any goods Uganda produces. The ability of some nation-states to limit the cost of shipping their

goods by utilizing modern infrastructure and a close market allow for their economies to flourish. Another example of the high cost of shipping a product through another nation-state can be seen with the example of South Sudan. South Sudan has large oil reserves but no port access; as a result they are forced to ship oil through the existing oil pipelines in Sudan. Sudan, having lost much of their oil revenue when South Sudan gained independence in 2011, charges high rates per barrel for South Sudan to ship oil through their existing pipeline to try to recoup some of those lost funds. In 2012, Sudan charged \$34 per barrel to ship oil through their pipelines which cost South Sudan over a million dollars a day to ship oil through Sudan (Wynne-Jones, 2012). Another drawback to bad neighbors relates to the conflict trap, if the neighboring nation-states experience civil war, many of the people in those areas flee to safety in neighboring states. Refugees can put both an economic and environmental strain on the neighboring state into which they move. Many of the surrounding governments of war torn regions are struggling to support their own citizens and an influx of a million new people can be devastating.

Therefore, the lack of infrastructure in the bordering regions of landlocked nation-states forces higher shipping costs, and in extreme instances the complete inability to ship products. Also, having poor neighbors does not allow for nearby markets to help reduce the cost for exporting products, whereas developed nation-states with wealthy neighbors can focus on close markets as opposed to intercontinental markets. So, while being landlocked does not spell disaster for a nation-state, being landlocked with bad neighbors can result in poor economic performances for the landlocked nation-state.

#### 4. *Bad Governance in a Small Country Trap:*

Bad governance in a nation-state does not automatically result in that nation-state's failure or force that nation-state to have a poor economy. As Collier and Chauvet (2006) note in their work *Helping Hand? Aid to Failing States* and in Collier's (2007) book *The Bottom Billion*, Bangladesh functions with an extremely corrupt government, but this has not led them to be included in the failing nation-state category. This is in part because Bangladesh has been able to benefit from the developed world's use of the developing world for manufacturing and labor intensive services. Since Bangladesh has sea access and a ready low cost workforce, they have been able to attract manufacturing jobs in spite of the corruption. Collier and Chauvet (2006) indicate that Bangladesh is seeing some success because the government has not done anything to hurt the economic success even though it does not help to promote it. However, an example that shows how bad governance will cause trouble for a nation-states economy is Sudan.

In Sudan, Omar al-Bashir assumed power through a coup d'état in 1989, since this time it has been reported that Bashir has pilfered approximately \$9 billion dollars of state funds, much of that coming from oil revenue, into his own private accounts (Hirsch, 2010; Sherwell, 2010). Bashir has also been accused of war crimes and is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for his role in the near genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan from 2003 to 2006 (AP, 2013). The result of Bashir's actions has kept Sudan in the low income category and has added to Sudan's label of a failing state by Collier and Chauvet. Unlike Bangladesh, where they have had some success in spite of bad governance, Sudan is failing, in part because of bad governance. Nation-states such as

Sudan need to have high caliber leadership to succeed economically, not simply a pattern of leaders that do not inhibit growth.

### **Case Studies**

In an attempt to more fully address the second research question, this work focuses on four case studies: Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and Sierra Leone (noted in research question 2b). It is important to understand why child soldiers are used and not only know where and how child soldiers are used. If the reason for their use can be understood it will help to understand a possible solution to the eradication of the use of child soldiers. By looking at the four nation-states listed, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and Sierra Leone, we can see possible similarities and potentially discover some solutions. In order to achieve this, this study will utilize secondary research methods such as the comparative method as well as the most different systems design. These two methods will be utilized due to their ability to compare entities that are similar and uncover potential trends that may explain the use of child soldiers.

The four nation-states chosen as case studies all have or recently had a high rate of child soldiering and they have a relatively close geographic location in Africa, with the possible exception of Sierra Leone which is on the west coast of Africa as opposed to Central or Eastern Africa. These nation-states share many characteristics; however, not all characteristics are shared. These four nation-states also have similar recent histories as they were all controlled by Great Britain after the scramble for Africa by European nations to divide Africa into colonial territories. All of these nation-states have had similar experiences after gaining their independence from Great Britain in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These four nation-states have experienced civil wars, coup d'états, and high

rates of poverty since independence, with the exception of South Sudan which has not witnessed a coup d'état in its short existence but did experience them while still part of Sudan. Since these nation-states have similar, and in some instances shared pasts after colonization, and have had difficulty creating a stable and effective government since independence they make ideal candidates to be compared for this study.

This study will contain individual case study chapters on Sierra Leone, Uganda, and a combined chapter on Sudan and South Sudan. The reason for the combined chapter is that South Sudan has only been a nation-state since 2011 and as such much of its history is interwoven with that of Sudan. Each of these chapters will outline histories of the nation-states, primarily since they became colonial possessions and since their independence from their colonial power.

Using Paul Collier's book *The Bottom Billion*, these chapters examine the four development traps and how they have led the listed nation-states to be classified as failed states or failing states. Collier's four development traps will be applied to each of these nation-states to see how much each of the traps has been a factor in the sluggish development of each nation-states economy. These four traps will help to explain the characteristics that contribute to nation-states becoming failed states and an argument will be made that these failed states are more likely to utilize child soldiers because they have created an environment where the use of child soldiers is necessary for government and non-governmental groups.

These chapters utilize secondary research as conducting field research is not a possibility at this time, as the lack of adequate resources and the unstable governments in the region make conducting field research a difficult endeavor. There are researchers

conducting field research in the region, although most are accompanying United Nations peace keeping forces or international non-governmental organizations that have networks already in place in the region. The research and accounts from these researchers are available in secondary research. For this research, the secondary research used focuses on the issues of child soldiering, characteristics of a failed state, and the four development traps that Colliers discusses. There is a wide range of sources to draw upon for this research on the development traps, although the application here, to the issue of child soldiers is new. By using the comparative method of most different systems design, or as Mill labeled it, the method of agreement, and secondary research, this study will look for the potential underlying causes for the use of child soldiers.

After these case study chapters, there will be a comparison looking at the four development trap for each country. When the effect of the traps become visible on these four individual examples a comparison of the similarities can be made to determine if each of the traps play a role in the use of child soldiers. If there are similarities that all four nation-states share and those similarities can be traced as a direct result of one or more of the development traps it will show that these development traps are factors for the use of child soldiers.

## **Chapter 3: Where Child Soldiering is an Issue**

### **Nation-States that Use Child Soldiers**

This chapter will discuss research question one: what nation-states use child soldiers and what characteristics do these countries share, i.e., is it possible to identify characteristics within these nation-states that lead to the use of child soldiers? It will examine the issues that can contribute to a nation-state being considered a failed state, as outlined by the works of Collier and Chuavets (2006), Collier (2007), and the Fragile State Index, as well as the use of child soldiers in that nation-state. By understanding what factors lead to a nation-state being classified as failed it is possible to advance measures that can lead to the improvement of the nation-state and allow that entity, with the assistance of the international community, to improve its standing in the world order and rise above the failed state status that has been attached to it. Understanding the underlying issues behind why child soldiers are used, such as conflict, lack of opportunity, disease, and poverty, the potential to understand solutions to the abolition of child soldiers is possible. This chapter will outline the nation-states that currently use child soldiers, where they are located, if they contain the necessary factors to be considered failed, and if the development traps that are outlined by Collier (2007) are present in those nation-states.

#### **The Use of Child Soldiers Among Nation-States Today:**

The non-governmental organization Child Soldiers International reports 21 nation-states have used child soldiers since January of 2011 (see Table 3.1). As previously discussed, child soldiers are defined as being less than 15 years of age. Child Soldiers International adheres to a definition focusing on those individuals under 15 that



may have been unlawfully recruited into service, are directly involved in combat, and are not simply members of the military.

**Table 3.1: Nation-states using Child Soldiers and Continent Located**

<b>Nation-State</b>	<b>Continent</b>
Afghanistan	Asia
Central African Republic (CAR)	Africa
Columbia	South America
Cote d’Ivoire	Africa
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Africa
India	Asia
Iraq	Asia
Israel	Asia
Libya	Africa
Mali	Africa
Myanmar	Asia
Pakistan	Asia
Philippines	Asia
Thailand	Asia
Sierra Leone	Africa
Somalia	Africa
Sudan	Africa
South Sudan	Africa
Syria	Asia
Uganda	Africa
Yemen	Asia

As demonstrated in Table 3.1, nearly half of the nation-states using child soldiers are located in Africa, and nearly all nation-states are in either Africa or Asia. The concentration of child soldiers in these regions of the world illustrates the importance of moving nation-states toward developed economies and an improvement of their standings on the Fragile State Index.

### **Child Soldier-Using Nation-States, Failed States?**

A failed state is described as a state that is perceived to have failed at some of the basic conditions and responsibilities of a sovereign government. The Fund for Peace has assigned the following attributes to the definition of a failed state in an attempt to make it more precise:

- loss of physical control of its territory, or of the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force therein
  - erosion of legitimate authority to make collective decisions
  - an inability to provide reasonable public services
  - an inability to interact with other states as a full member of the international community
- (Fund for Peace, 2014)

Often a failed nation-state is characterized by social, political, and economic failure.

However, for a nation-state to be failing or failed; a failure in social, political, and economics is not required; two of the three or even failure in one area may be enough. In Table 3.2, five categories that affect the rates of child soldiering are applied to the previous nation-states that have been identified as using child soldiers. The categories include the literacy rate, the percent of the population below the poverty line, whether there are internal or external conflicts, the number of refugees and internally displaced people (IDP), and the risk of disease.

**Table 3.2 Factors that Contribute to Becoming a Failed State**

Nation-State	Literacy Rate	Poverty Level	Security Issues	Refugees/IDP's	Disease
Afghanistan	28.1%	36%	External conflict	16,147, 630,000	Intermediate
Central African Republic (CAR)	56.6%	N/A	Internal and external conflict	10,662, 698,500	Very High
Columbia	93.6%	32.7%	Internal conflict	(IDPs) 4.9-5.7 million	High
Nation-State	Literacy Rate	Poverty Level	Security Issues	Refugees/IDP's	Disease
Cote d'ivoire	56.9%	42%	External disputes	9,126 and 40,000-80,000	Very High
Democratic Republic of the Congo	66.8%	71%	Internal conflict	116,104 and 2,669,069	Very High
India	62.8%	29.8%	External conflict	184,472 and 540,000	Very High
Iraq	78.5%	25%	External conflict	259,580 and 1.3 million	Intermediate
Israel	97.1%	21%	External conflict	(refugees) 48,090	Low
Libya	89.5%	30%	Internal conflict	(IDPs) 74,000	N/A
Mali	33.4%	36.1%	Internal conflict	12,904 and 218,000	Very High
Myanmar	92.7%	32.7%	Internal conflict	(IDPs) 649,000	Very High
Pakistan	54.9%	22.3%	External conflict	2.9 million and over 1 million	High
Philippines	94.5%	26.5%	External disputes	(IDPs) 4.5 million	High
Thailand	93.5%	7.8%	N/A	N/A	Very High
Sierra Leone	43.3%	70.2%	Internal conflict	N/A	Very High

Somalia	37.8%	N/A	External conflict	(IDPs) 1.1 million	Very High
Sudan	71.9%	46.5%	External and internal conflict	175,663 and 2.9 million	Very High
South Sudan	27%	50.6%	External and internal conflict	231,631 and 710,600	Very High
Nation-State	Literacy Rate	Poverty Level	Security Issues	Refugees/IDP's	Disease
Syria	84.1%	11.9%	External and internal conflict	N/A	N/A
Uganda	73.2%	24.5%	Internal and external conflict	269,191 and 30,000	Very High
Yemen	65.3%	45.2%	External disputes	234,668 and 306,614	High

These categories are important indicators of failing nation-states. When education levels are relatively low and there is a high level of poverty it is difficult to have a skilled workforce to help advance the economy. The addition of refugees and IDPs in new areas also have a negative impact on the region they now inhabit and put additional strain on the government's ability to provide services resulting in possible relative deprivation. Rates of disease play a critical role as well; high levels of infection in the population hamper the viable workforce helping to stagnate the economy and use

valuable government resources on health related issues as opposed to diversifying the economy.

The other major factor that can contribute to a failing nation-state is that of security issues. Security issues can involve a range of things including external conflict and civil war. These conflicts lead to government instability and lead to other concerns such as refugees and IDPs. The refugee camps and IDP camps are poorly constructed with inadequate sanitation and create an environment for disease to spread quickly and are ready made recruiting centers for armed groups to recruit child soldiers from. The promise of better conditions, a share of the spoils, and regular meals are often enough to recruit young people out of these camps.

Table 3.2 illustrates that many of the nation-states that use child soldiers are failed states, or at the minimum are near failed states. Low rates of literacy and education levels lead to a under skilled workforce that will struggle to adapt to the changing technology and demands for many future careers. The high rates of poverty indicate the lack of viable work options for much of the population. Without opportunities to succeed in the workforce much of the population relies on low wage employment if available or subsistence farming. Along with low literacy rates and high poverty the presence of violence is prevalent. All of the nation-states that use child soldiers experience internal or external conflict or at minimum external disputes, typically over borders, that also contribute to the use of child soldiers. The presence of conflict is of course necessary for the use of child soldiers but it also creates other factors that lead to a nation-state being labeled as failed or failing. Conflict whether internal or external creates refugees and internally displaced people (IDP).

In the case of refugees from another nation, the added population burdens the already fragile economy in a failing state, potentially allowing it to become a failed state. In the case of IDPs, the added strain on the resources where they are relocated to creates greater poverty and expense for the local and national government. IDPs also affect the economy because they are no longer a contributing member of the workforce when they are relocated, and for the children that are relocated they lose years of education, continuing the low rates of literacy. Not only do the refugee and IDP camps impair government effectiveness and the economy, they also contribute to high levels of disease. The lack of funding, poor sanitary conditions, and close quarters of the inhabitants allow disease to run rampant through these camps. The communicable diseases in these camps are often treatable, but due to the lack of resources many are not treated, this creates a fear of the camps and many people would rather take a chance in the bush or join a fighting force if they feel there is the possibility of a better life. These factors individually, create problems for nation-states, but when they are all combined they create a near perfect storm allowing the use of child soldiers to mushroom.

Most of the nation-states listed in table 3.2 see the associated issues also listed in table 3.2 within their borders, many of the nation-states are considered failed by Collier and Chauvet (2006), and they rank high on the Fragile State Index. The next step in evaluating these nation-states is to look at the development traps that Collier (2007) outlined and apply them to see to what extent they contribute to the use of child soldiers.

#### **How Colliers four traps apply to nation-states using child soldiers**

Another way of examining failed states, as mentioned earlier, is via Collier's (2007) work. Table 3.3 shows which of the nation-states that are using child soldiers are

affected by the four traps that Collier outlines in his book. For the category of “Bad Governance in a Small Country”, Collier and Chauvet’s work *Helping Hands? Aid to Failing States* and the Fragile State Index produced by the non-profit and non-governmental organization Fund for Peace are used to determine if the nation-states qualify for inclusion in the bad governance category.

**Table 3.3 Development Traps in Nation-states using Child Soldiers**

Nation-State	Conflict Trap	Natural Resource Trap	Landlocked with bad Neighbors	Bad Governance in a Small Country
Afghanistan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Central African Republic (CAR)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Columbia	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Cote d’Ivoire	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
India	Yes*	No	No	No
Iraq	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Israel	Yes	No	No	No
Libya	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Mali	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Myanmar	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Pakistan	Yes*	Yes	No	Yes
Philippines	Yes	No	No	Yes
Thailand	Yes	No	No	Yes
Sierra Leone	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Somalia	Yes	Yes**	No	Yes
Sudan	Yes	Yes***	No	Yes
South Sudan	Yes	Yes	Yes	No****
Syria	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Uganda	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yemen	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

\* Indicates the continued border disputes between India and Pakistan that has not elevated into conflict, but carries potential for conflict.

\*\* Somalia has natural resources in iron ore, metals, and natural gas and due to its proximity to the oil producing nation-states of the Middle East is believed to have undiscovered oil reserves.

\*\*\* Sudan began to exploit oil reserves in 1978 but lost the majority of their oil fields in 2011 with the succession of South Sudan. Sudan’s inclusion in the natural resource trap is due to their past exploitation of oil and the conflict that has ensued with South Sudan over oil revenues.

\*\*\*\* At this point, it is difficult to ascertain if South Sudan has bad governance, Salva Kiir has only been in office a little over three years.

Table 3.3 shows that many of the nation-states that use child soldiers do have characteristics of many, if not all, of the development traps. The conflict trap and natural resource trap are present in nearly every country that uses child soldiers. Bad governance is present in most cases as well, but this category is not as critical because there are many nation-states that have bad governance but have not used child soldiers in large part because they do not fall into the conflict or natural resource traps. Of the four development traps, being landlocked is the one most likely to be missing for nation-states that use child soldiers. This is the case because 70% of the world is covered by water, and when the majority of nations were formed access to a port, whether ocean, lake, or river was vital. Furthermore, the majority of landlocked nation-states do not use child soldiers and while many are developing nation-states they are not failed states.<sup>11</sup>

As shown by the above tables, there are common traits in failing nation-states and they, in part, contribute to the ongoing conflict and use of child soldiers. Many of these traits can be linked to the four development traps that Colliers (2007) discusses in *The Bottom Billion*; the development traps create an environment of unstable governments leading to poverty and conflict. As a result of that governmental instability the ruling body is unable to provide basic needs to their people and the population becomes desperate. By understanding which nation-states use child soldiers and what characteristics these countries share, it becomes possible to identify characteristics within these nation-states that lead to the use of child soldiers. By understanding all of the

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<sup>11</sup> Examples of landlocked nation-states that do not use child soldiers or and are not failed states include Switzerland, Austria, Luxembourg, Lichtenstein, Paraguay, Bolivia, Macedonia, Hungary, Lesotho, Laos, and Mongolia.



factors that may contribute to child soldiers, potential solutions to the problem of child soldiers may be formulated. Once the factors that lead to an environment that allows for the use of child soldiers are isolated, and possible solutions are put forth, the international community can work towards the noble goal of eliminating the use of child soldiers. This issue truly is an international issue, not simply a problem to be resolved by the nation-state that has child soldiers within their borders. The abolition of the exploitation of vulnerable populations has been addressed by the international community on many occasions, but the causes that allow an environment of exploitation to flourish often go unexplained in these condemnations. By identifying these underlying issues of the exploitation of children as child soldiers the root issues are being addressed and can be resolved.

The following discussion in this work will look at four nation-states (Sudan, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Uganda) that will help to provide insight into the use of child soldiers and what factors make the use of children as soldiers an attractive option in many conflicts. Case studies focusing on Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and Sierra Leone will show where they fall on the Fragile State Index, their place in Collier and Chauvets (2006) work on failed states, and how Collier's (2007) work on development traps influence the use of child soldiers.

These four nation-states were chosen for this study due to their similar backgrounds, geographic locations, use of child soldiers, and presence of conflict. All four of these nation-states were former colonies of Great Britain and as such they have similar colonial experiences with governing and have seen an independence movement from within. All four nation-states are located in Northern Africa with three in the east

and only Sierra Leone in the west. The geographic location of the four nation-states allows them to have a similar topography and experience many of the same issues that their neighbors are experiencing. Conflict in neighboring nation-states often flows across borders creating issues in all nation-states in the region.

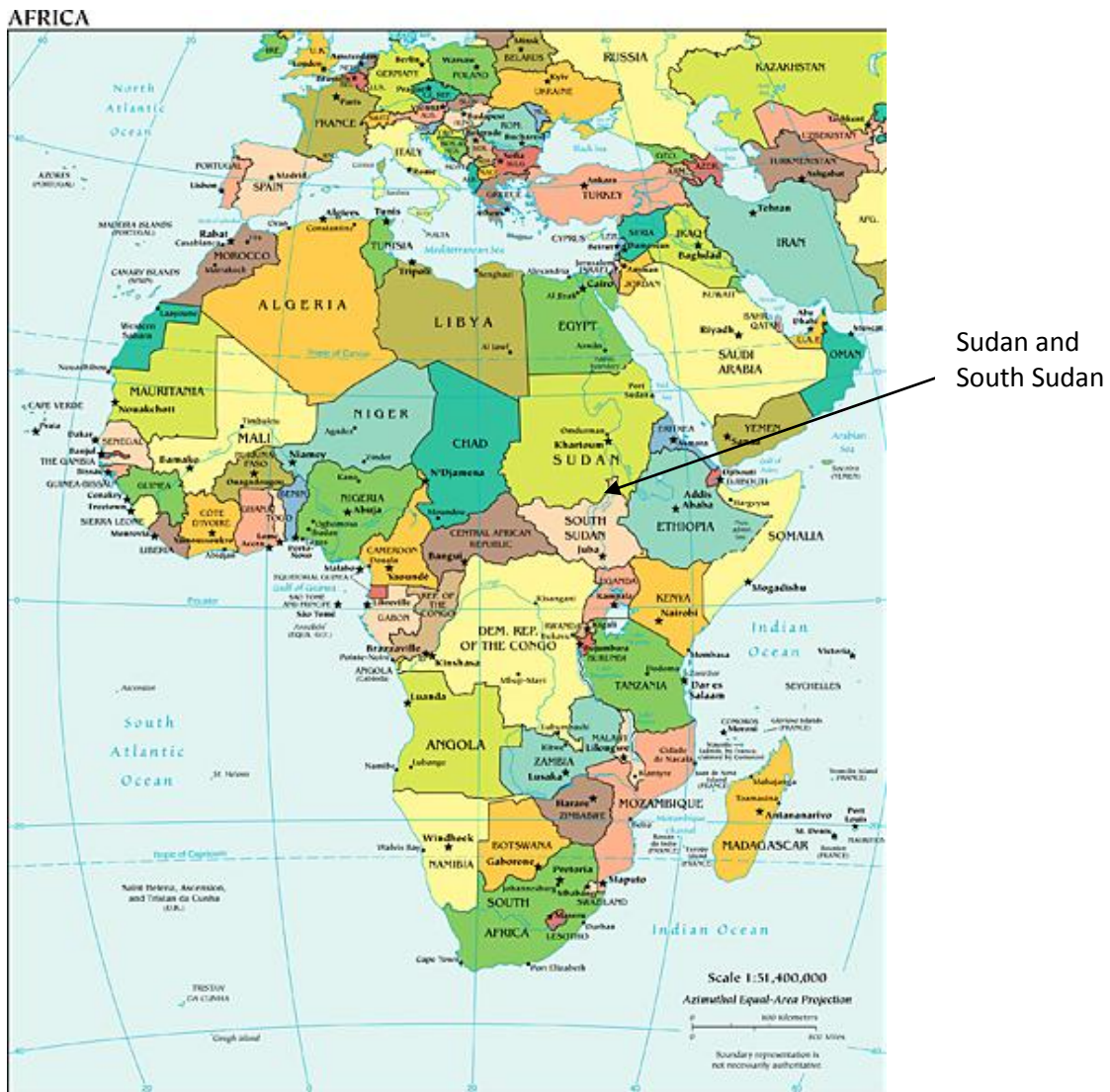
Along with these aspects of the nation-states is that all four nation-states have experienced conflict recently and have utilized child soldiers in this conflict. While Sierra Leone has not had civil war within their borders since 2002, they were still accused of using child soldiers in 2011. Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda are experiencing conflict within their borders today; as evidenced with the ongoing struggle between Sudan and South Sudan, as well as the use of force in Sudan against the people in the Darfur region. Uganda is not fairing any better with an ongoing civil war with the Lord's Resistance Army. While international forces have been more involved in Uganda over the past five years, Joseph Kony has eluded capture and continued his campaign against the government. Nearly every conflict that has taken place in Africa has seen the use of child soldiers in some capacity, as a result of that aspect of African conflict I chose to use Sudan, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Uganda to better illustrate the dependent variable, child soldiers, while looking at differing independent variables.

## Chapter 4: Case Study of Sudan

### Introduction to the Sudan Region

The region of Sudan (now two nation-states, Sudan and South Sudan) is located in the northeast region of Africa, just below Egypt along the Red Sea as illustrated in map 4.1.

MAP 4.1



*Source: CIA World Factbook*<sup>12</sup>

The nations of Sudan and South Sudan have a combined population of 46 million; 46 million who unfortunately live in one of the most war torn and poor regions in the world. Sudan ranks 182<sup>nd</sup> in GDP per capita with 46.5% of the population living below the poverty line. South Sudan is in even worse shape, ranking 207<sup>th</sup> in GDP per capita with 50.6% of the population living below the poverty line (CIA World Factbook). High poverty rates are associated with lack of education, malnutrition, child soldiers, and conflict. Thus, with nearly half of Sudan's population and over half of South Sudan's population living below the poverty line, the economy is unable to improve in a meaningful way.

Poverty is clearly linked to development issues for a nation-state; but having a diverse population is not always clearly linked to those same issues, but in the case of the Sudans, the ethnic and religious diversity has led to many conflicts. By far the largest ethnic group in the Sudan is Arabs constituting 70% of the population; most of these individuals follow Islam (CIA World Factbook). Other smaller ethnic groups within Sudan are Nubians, Beja, and Furs, these groups are also adherents to Islam now but prior to the spread of Islam they practiced traditional religions or Christianity. In South Sudan, the largest ethnic group is the Dinka, followed by the Nuer, and Shiluk. These groups largely practice Christianity or Animism. These ethnic and religious distinctions between the south (South Sudan) and north (Sudan) fueled violence in the region and created resentment from the people of the south that were historically treated as second class. Along with poverty, ethnic, and religious divisions the Sudans have a poor ranking on the

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<sup>12</sup> Map 4.1 from CIA World Factbook located at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/refmaps.html>

Fragile State Index and Corruption Perceptions Index. On the Fragile States Index, both Sudan and South Sudan fall into the “very high alert” category with Sudan scoring 110.8 out of 120 and South Sudan receiving 114.5 of 120. These scores are indications of the fragile nature of the diplomatic relations between the two nation-states. With the 114.5 score South Sudan ranks as the number one nation-state to be of the precipice of failing. While Sudan’s score of 110.8 ranks it number four (Fund for Peace)<sup>13</sup>. When looking at the Corruption Perceptions Index the outlook is just as bleak. Sudan scored 11 out of 100 ranking it 173 out of 175 nation-states that were rated. South Sudan received a 15 out of 100 ranking it 171 out of 175 (Transparency International)<sup>14</sup>. This indicates the perceived high levels of corruption within the governments indicating that the populace does not have much faith in their government officials. To understand how the Sudans got to this point a look at their combined history is needed.

During Great Britain’s colonial rule of Sudan, the British treated the people of the south as second-class citizens in part because they had a heritage of agriculture and pastoral practices as opposed to manufacturing and production. The more rural south was not regarded as an advanced, or developed region, a stereotype the north was happy to encourage among the British. In part due to this stereotype, the British supported the majority of government administration to be conducted in and by the northern groups in Sudan. Thus once the nation gained independence from Great Britain in 1956, control of the governing apparatus was dominated by the north. The northern dominance of government, and the oppression that non-Muslims in the south faced, led to disunity throughout the region. The differences posited between the northern and southern

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<sup>13</sup> Fragile State Index located at <http://fsi.fundforpeace.org/>

<sup>14</sup> Corruption Perceptions Index located at <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results>

regions perpetuated violence and the eventual division of the northern and southern regions into two separate nation-states in 2011.

Today Sudan and South Sudan are facing many serious concerns such as conflict, Dutch disease, poverty, lack of education, disease, and lack of international investment, to list a few. Given the history and conflict in Sudan and South Sudan, it is not surprising that these countries are classified as failed or failing states. By assessing Sudan and South Sudan through an examination of Collier's (2007) development traps (conflict, resource, bad governance, and landlocked with bad neighbors), it is possible to explore reasons why poverty levels are high, how this has led to other problems for the people of the Sudans, and how this impacts the use of child soldiers.

### **History of the Region of Sudan**

In 2011, Sudan was divided into two separate nation-states, Sudan and South Sudan, by the popular vote of the southern region. The southern region was granted limited autonomy in 2006, with a promise of a vote on self-determination five years later. The reasons behind the divide are many and have persisted for years. Additionally, they arose due to clear distinctions between the two regions: Sudan and South Sudan.

Sudan's population is made up of about 70% Sudanese Arabs, 8% Nubian, 6% Beja, 2% Fur, and 1% Zaghawa, along with various other smaller tribes that are spread throughout Sudan. While South Sudan's population consists of 35.8% of the Dinka, 15.6% Nuer, 8.9% Shiluk, 8.4% Azande, 8.3% Bari, 4.8% Lotuko, and 3.1% Arab (Gulf 2000 project)<sup>15</sup>. Most of the ethnic groups in Sudan now practice Islam; however, the Nubians practiced Christianity until the spread of Islam throughout northern Africa. The ethnic groups in South Sudan largely practice either Christianity or Animism. The

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<sup>15</sup> The Gulf 2000 map project can be found at <http://gulf2000.columbia.edu/maps.shtml>

division of Sudan into two nation-states was the culmination of a long series of bloody civil wars; however the division of Sudan has not quelled the violence.

The nation-states of Sudan and South Sudan have been in conflict since Sudan gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1956. This is, in part, due to the fact that the British exploited the regional differences as a means of controlling the population. The United Kingdom had strategic reasons for controlling Sudan. Sudan's proximity to the Red Sea created a port for shipping to the east, and the Nile River made agriculture productive as the Nile could be used for irrigation purposes. The British controlled Sudan from 1899 to 1956, essentially governing the country as two separate territories, the Muslim north and the Christian south (Wallechinsky, 2006; Holt and Daly, 2000). Nationalistic feelings within the northern and southern regions of Sudan have always existed but were put on hold when collective-Sudanese nationalism intensified in the 1950s, during this time the independence movement was gaining in popularity. This independence movement did not mean that north and south were united in the ideas on how the country should be run once independent of the United Kingdom. The north wanted to continue to dominate the administration, political, and economic facets of the state while keeping many from the south out of government and dependent on the north. At the same time, the south wanted more autonomy and a voice in the government. Great Britain began decolonizing its African empire in 1922, by granting limited independence to Egypt, and granted independence to many of its other African colonies after World War II. This decolonization process was in large part an economic decision for Great Britain. As a part of this movement, Britain allowed a vote of independence in

1953 in Sudan, resulting in Sudan's independence taking effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956 (Levy, 1997).

Stability essentially left Sudan with the British, after Sudan's successful vote for independence. On August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1955, even before Sudan was officially an independent nation-state, an armed uprising occurred in Torit, in southern Sudan (Dak, 2008). This revolt was in part due to the north's unwillingness to allow the southern territories in Sudan to have a form of home rule. Not only was the south not allowed to serve in the government, but also, northern administrators were sent to the south to oversee the region. Despite unrest and unhappiness with northern control of the government, the mutinies in the south were unorganized and lacked vision or goals. The soldiers in the southeast state of Eastern Equatoria, especially in the town of Torit, killed not only northern army officers but also northern administrators, northern merchants and their families (Johnson, 2003; 28). These events led to the beginning of the first Sudanese civil war, a war that would last from 1955 to 1972, and claim the lives of over a half million people (O'Ballance, 1977; 62). Between 1963 and 1969 the south's separatist movement began to spread from Eastern Equatoria into other southern states, but faced difficulties of unification because of ethnic differences. However, due to the Sudanese governments own infighting and ethnic differences, primarily between non-Arab Muslims in the west and Arab Muslims in the east, the north did not capitalize on the separatist's forces weaknesses.

The southern insurrection in the 1960's was not the only reason for instability in the now independent nation-state. Only two years after gaining independence Sudan saw the first of many coup d'états that changed the head of the government. In 1958 there



was a military coup d'état that installed Lieutenant General Ibrahim Abboud as the new leader of a coalition of conservative forces from the north. This military coup encouraged resentment among the southern population; Abboud was a member of the Sunni sect of Islam, while much of the southern region is Christian or non-Muslim. In response to the new military government, there were popular protests led by Islamic leaders, but these leaders were largely young students and were unable to affectively administer the movement (Wallechinsky, 2006). Abboud stated when he led the military coup that he wanted to bring an end to "the state of degeneration, chaos, and instability of the country" (Collins, 2008). Unfortunately for Sudan, Abboud was not able to produce the results he promised, and in 1964 he dissolved his government and fled to the United Kingdom.

In 1965, after Abboud left Sudan, Ismail al-Azhari became the third President of Sudan, but after nearly five years of failed civilian government led by al-Azhari he was overthrown in a military coup in May of 1969, led by Gaafar Nimeiry. Nimeiry came to power as a member of the Sudanese Socialist Union and began to nationalize industry. He opposed the communist party in Sudan and was unhappy with goods purchased from the Soviet Union, believing them inferior to western goods. As a result, Nimeiry banned the Communist Party in Sudan and began to crack down on communist elements (Korn, 1993 p. 88). Due to the actions of Nimeiry against the Communist Party, several Communist officers invaded his palace and held him prisoner. His captivity lasted only three days before his forces freed him and then captured and executed the communist coup leaders. In 1971, Nimeiry was elected the first president of Sudan with 98% of the vote (Gaafar al-Nimeiry, 2009). The combination of the election of Nimeiry in 1971, and

the signing of the Addis Ababa Accord in 1972, which created the Southern Sudan Autonomous Region granting limited autonomy in the south and incorporated the change into Sudan's constitution, finally put an end to the bloody seventeen year civil war (Collins, 2008; Holt & Daly, 2000). The end of the civil war in 1972 only lasted eleven years, and in 1983 the second Sudanese civil war began. These two wars are often thought of as one war with an eleven-year ceasefire. The second civil war, from 1983 to 2005, started when the Addis Ababa Accord was violated. The Addis Ababa Accords guaranteed a Southern Sudan Autonomous Region and a certain amount of sovereign rule for the south (Collins, 2008). The first violations were economic in nature; President Nimeiry attempted to overtake Sudan's recently discovered oil fields in the south, violating the Addis Ababa Accords by negating the autonomous rule in that region. Nimeiry wanted control of the oil fields, as they would provide substantial economic benefits to the controlling party (Raftopoulos & Alexander, 2006).

The Addis Ababa Accord also caused some religious discontent. The Islamic fundamentalists in the north were displeased that the non-Islamic south was a relatively Christian autonomous region, as a result the Islamic fundamentalists increased their pressure on President Nimeiry to declare all Sudan an Islamic state, thereby nullifying the Southern Sudan Autonomous Region agreed to in the Addis Ababa Accord (DeRouen & Heo, 2007; 745). When he took this action, Nimeiry not only violated the autonomous agreement to allow the south to govern their own affairs, but also disregarded the entire accord when he eliminated the Southern Sudan Autonomous region. This move was not only religious in nature but was also an attempt to regain power over the newly discovered oil wealth, and highlights the long held notion of superiority of the Islamic

government of the north over the non-Muslim south. The conservative Islamic groups in the north have long felt they should control the southern region of Sudan, in large part due to the colonial system installed by Great Britain.

As a result of the south losing their autonomy and religious freedom, rebel groups pushing for independence from the north formed, and in 1983 created the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). One faction of the SPLA was Battalion 105, consisting of 500 Sudanese troops; these troops were primarily from the south and were comprised mostly of former rebels that were reintegrated into the Sudanese army at the end of the first Sudanese civil war. Battalion 105 was dissatisfied with being rotated from the south to stations in the north, thus the initial leader of the SPLA, John Garang, a former rebel and current Sudanese officer, was sent to pacify the protesting troops. However, Garang was part of a conspiracy to defect battalion 105 into anti-government rebel forces. The plot to have Battalion 105 defect allowed the SPLA to not only increase numerically, but more importantly allowed them to seize government weapons and supplies. By August of 1983, Garang had over 3,000 rebels soldier at his command and opposed military rule and Islamic dominance over the country. Garang encouraged other garrisons to mutiny against military rule and Islamic law imposed by the government (Johnson, 2003; 61-62). Although, as of this point in time, no records show the use of child soldiers, these actions set the stage for the introduction of child soldiers in the future.

The goal of the SPLA was to reestablish autonomous control in the south by fighting the central government. While this was a movement to improve conditions in the south, the organization billed itself as a force that represented all oppressed people in Sudan (Raftopoulos & Alexander, 2006; Holt & Daly, 2000). The SPLA declared they

wanted a united Sudan for all people of the nation-state; while Garang was a Christian he did not initially focus on the religious aspects of the war. By 1986 Garang wanted a united Sudan led by a coalition of the minority groups which together constituted a majority of the population, he felt that these groups united could remove Omar al-Bashier from power and lead Sudan (Cockett, 2010). Garang ran the SPLA in typical military fashion, with himself and a few advisors at the top of the military hierarchy, creating friction within the organization. By 1991, several commanders in the SPLA wanted to see Garang ousted and a change in leadership in charge of the SPLA. This was in part because Garang and his advisors did not listen to input from lower ranking members of the SPLA and because of the ethnic divisions of the soldiers in the SPLA. In 1991, Riek Machar and Lam Akol both senior SPLA commanders attempted a coup against Garang which ultimately failed, but did show the ethnic issues facing the SPLA (Collins, 2008; 205). However, the attempted removal of Garang only solidified his power, and a faction of the SPLA called the SPLA-Nasir attacked the city of Dinka killing thousands of civilians, resulting in stronger support for Garang. As soon as Garang once again had near full support of the SPLA he was able to lead the rebels to several victories in the south retaking many of the cities in the region that were controlled by the central government (Collins, 2008; Holt & Daly, 2000). Intermittent fighting continued between the central government and the SPLA until a comprehensive peace agreement was signed on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005 (Collins, 2008; 268).

An important part of this peace agreement allowed the south to govern with autonomy and control the oil fields located in their territory, but would share the oil revenue on a 50% basis with the north. The home rule that the south gained would last

for five years, at which point the south would be allowed to vote for independence. After that five year period concluded a referendum was held in the southern region on southern independence. The official results were announced on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011, with a final vote of 98.83% in favor of independence (Bixler, 2011; BBC News, 2011). As a result of the overwhelming popular support for independence the nation-state of South Sudan was officially created on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

While South Sudan is now independent, the violence has not stopped. There have been several incidents fueled by religious intolerance and disputes over control of oil revenues. 2012 saw several incidents of Christian populations and churches being hit by mob violence or bombs. In one example, a mob consisting of hundreds of Muslims burned a Catholic Church in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan; the burning of the church was an attempt to drive the Christians out of the Muslim dominated territory (CBN News, 2012). On the same day, Sudan dropped three bombs over six miles into South Sudan, the bombing in South Sudan killed at least one and injuring several others. Sudan has denied responsibility for the attacks saying instead that they repelled a major attack perpetrated by rebels from South Sudan (Dziadosz and Holland, 2012).

In February of 2012, an evangelical bible school in South Kordofan was destroyed in an aerial assault. On the first day of classes a minimum of eight bombs were dropped into the school destroying two buildings and starting grass fires throughout the area. While there was substantial damage to the buildings and grounds, there were no injuries (CNN, 2012). Sudan has claimed that its bombing is to stop the resistance of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLA-N) whose goal is to push farther north to gain lands for South Sudan.

With the succession of South Sudan, al-Bashir, President of Sudan, indicated that he wanted to see a “100 percent” Islamic constitution (Laessing, 2013). Al-Bashir has in fact acted on this, he ordered several Christian churches to be bulldozed during the Christmas holiday in 2012, and shows no sign of halting that trend. While al-Bashir assures the Christians in Sudan that they will have religious freedom under the new constitution, the government’s track record of protecting religious freedoms is weak. Since the succession of South Sudan the al-Bashir government has closed several of the Christian affiliated organizations such as schools and orphanages and deported foreign workers. The Sudanese government has also confiscated church libraries as archives to review the content of the material (WCC, 2013).

The anti-Christian movement has not been limited to churches or church funded organizations. In the fall of 2012, angry crowds attacked the embassies of the United States, United Kingdom, and Germany over a film released that ridiculed the Prophet Mohammad. Jehanne Henry a researcher with Human Rights Watch stated, “we have seen clear signs of rising intolerance for religious and ethnic diversity since the separation of South Sudan” (Laessing, 2013). Henry also stated to the Institute for War and Peace Reporting that “What we’ve seen in Sudan is the use of lashings to punish very minor crimes like the brewing of alcohol or ‘indecent dress’, or other so-called public morality crimes. These public order laws are very vague and over-broad” (IWPR, 2011)<sup>16</sup>. Furthermore, the interpretation and punishment for the laws were an issue because “The way this public order regime works in Sudan is deeply problematic. It discriminates against women and girls in particular, but also against southerners who are

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<sup>16</sup> This may be located at the Institute for War and Peace Reporting at <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/rights-disregarded-under-sudans-weak-constitution>

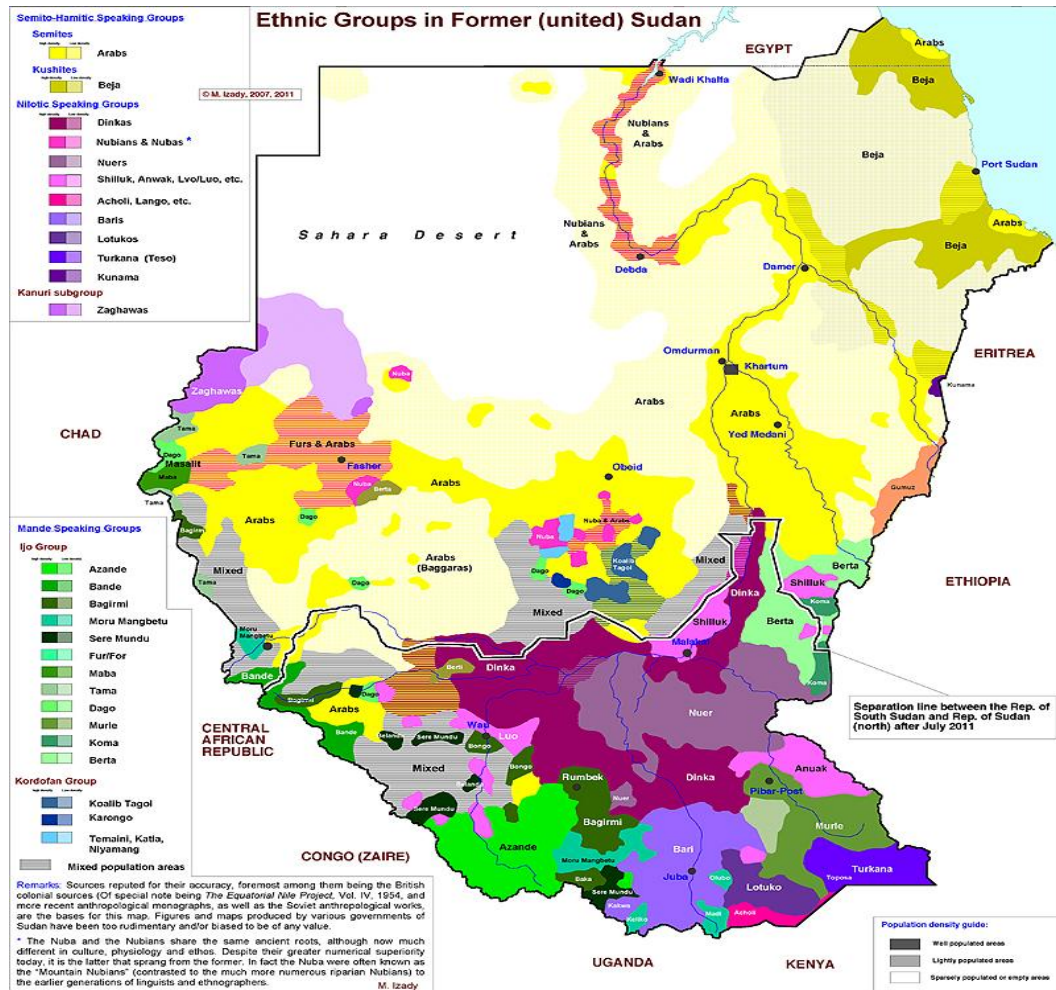
not Muslim, and it imposes Sharia punishments that contravene basic human rights standards” (IWPR, 2011). These violations of human rights and violence committed against southerners and Christians have resulted in resentment and desire for retaliation.

## **Conflict in Sudan and the Creation of Two Nation-States**

### Ethnic Conflict in Sudan

The region of Sudan and South Sudan has faced ethnic conflict throughout its history. Many of the tribes, such as the Nuer tribe and Murle tribe in South Sudan and the Nubian tribe and Beja tribe in Sudan have been fighting for centuries. These ethnic conflicts have contributed to the civil wars that plagued the region and much of the resentment between today’s Sudan and South Sudan. Many of the Arab tribes in central Sudan have long fought with the non-Arab tribes in the northern regions of Sudan. Cattle rustling is a large part of the ethnic conflict in Sudan, many of the tribes view their wealth by the number of cattle they own. The Lou Nuer and the Murle tribes in the Jonglei state have been fighting over cattle in the closing months of 2012, as a result of this fighting more than 1,000 people were killed and several villages were destroyed (Paterno, 2012). These ethnic conflicts have led to violence and poverty, due to the loss of cattle, which is a source of income and prestige in these regions. Additionally, today these tribes find it easier to cause damage to one another due to the advancement of weaponry. Map 4.2 and 4.3 outline the regions where different ethnic groups, tribes, and religious groups primarily reside in both Sudan and South Sudan.

**Map 4.2: Ethnic Groups in the Formerly United Sudan**

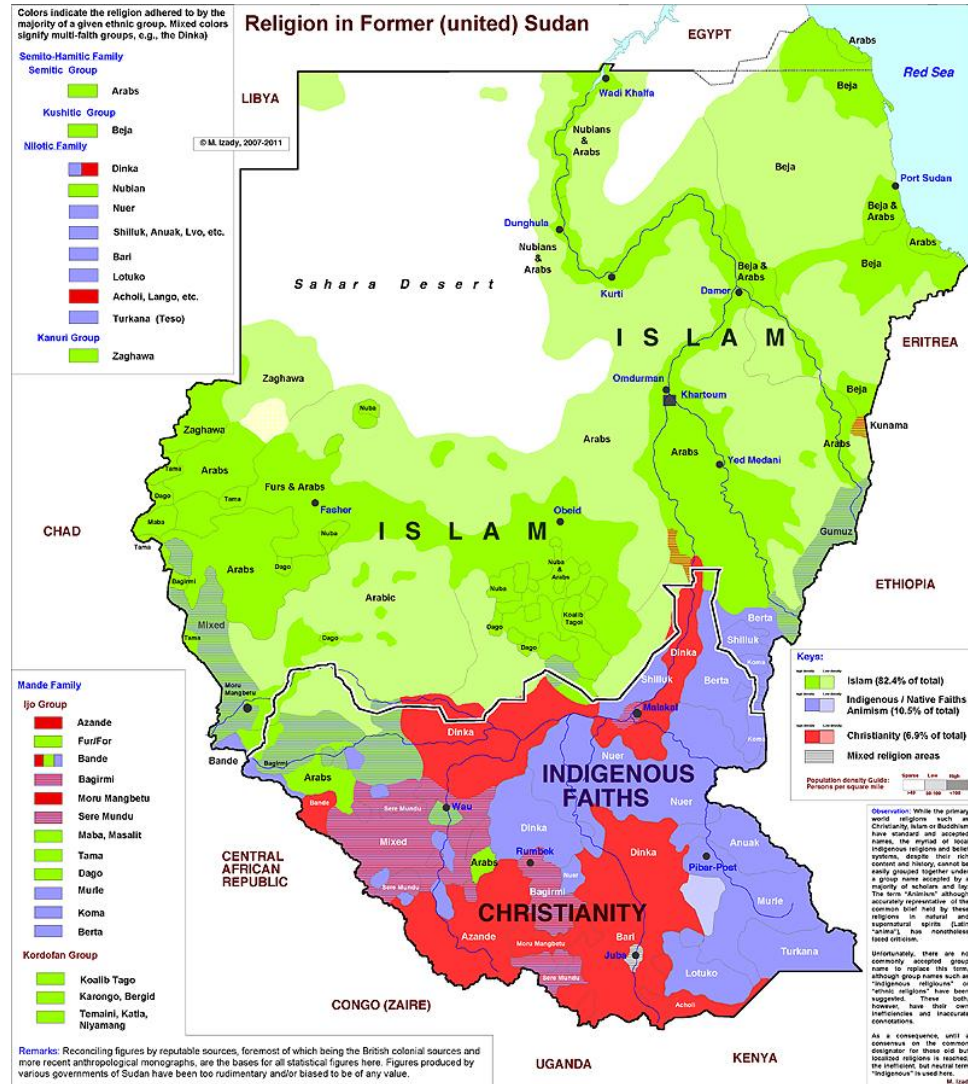


Source: Gulf 2000 Project<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Map 4.2 located at Gulf 2000 Project at [http://gulf2000.columbia.edu/images/maps/Sudan\\_Ethnic\\_Linguistic\\_sm.jpg](http://gulf2000.columbia.edu/images/maps/Sudan_Ethnic_Linguistic_sm.jpg)



**Map 4.3: Religious Groups in the Formerly United Sudan**



Source: Gulf 2000 Project<sup>18</sup>

As map 4.2 illustrates, the diversity of the Sudan has created internal strife between the various ethnic groups. The close proximity of many of the ethnic groups and the struggle over expansion into new lands has led to hostilities. The best examples of these interwoven communities are along the border of Sudan and South Sudan and in the western region of Sudan, which consists of three administrative zones (Northern Darfur,

<sup>18</sup> Map 4.3 located at Gulf 2000 Project at [http://gulf2000.columbia.edu/images/maps/Sudan\\_Religion\\_sm.jpg](http://gulf2000.columbia.edu/images/maps/Sudan_Religion_sm.jpg)



people have disappeared because they are anti-government Nubian tribesman or belonged to the SPLA (Flint, 2011). These anti-government ethnic minority groups largely based in the Darfur region on western Sudan faced violence and persecution by the government. Add to that an increase of government troops to nearly 60,000 and there are levels of organization and military size on both sides of the battle that have previously not been seen in Sudan (Flint, 2011)<sup>20</sup>.

Child soldiers in the Sudans have been in part a result of the conflict in neighboring nation-states. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda has been supported by the Sudanese government of Omar al-Bashir, and Sudan has allowed the LRA to set up base camps within their borders allowing for refuge from the battle against the Ugandan government. As a result of the presence of the LRA in Sudan the recruitment of Sudanese youth routinely occurred (Dickinson, 2010). After the separation of Sudan and South Sudan in 2011, the LRA was still operating in South Sudan and receiving funding from the Bashir government in Sudan to carry out attacks on strategic sites in South Sudan, including attacks on a Catholic church and other religious sites (Greaves, 2011; Wooldridge, 2011).

Along with the activities of the LRA in Sudan, government forces and rebel groups fighting against either the Sudanese government or the South Sudanese government have been active in the recruitment of children for use as soldiers. The United Nations estimates that there are still 11,000 serving in both rebel and government forces, with about 3,000 of those children being used by the South Sudanese army (Burridge, 2014 (Unicef and UN))<sup>21</sup>. The South Sudanese army had reduced the number

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jun/18/sudan-khartoum-displaced-nuba>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29762263>

of child soldiers within their ranks but as violence has continued, either against rebel groups looking to topple the young government or against forces from Sudan, the number of youth being recruited into their ranks has again increased.

The government is not the only force using child soldiers; the most notorious group in South Sudan recently is the Nuer tribes “White Army,” so named for the white ash they wear to protect themselves against bugs (Young, 2007). The white army has a reputation for the use of child soldiers as expendable entities that can be sent in to use the resources of their enemy before sending in the better trained adults. The dispute that led to the creation of the white army was the tensions between the Nuer and Murle tribes. Cattle are the common explanation for the violence between these two tribes but that is often seen as a thinly veiled attempt to hide the ethnic tensions of the groups. The two tribes do contend with one another over cattle, but the rift runs much deeper. The White Army is not only responsible for violence against the Murle tribe but have been accused of forming an alliance with the Sudan People’s Liberation Army Nasir (SPLA-Nasir) led by Riek Machar and taking part in the atrocity of the Bor Massacre against the Dinka tribe in 1991. Amnesty International estimated the death toll during the massacre to be 2,000 civilians, and the estimates in the ensuing years suggest that as many as 25,000 people have died from famine due to the loss of cattle and farmland as they were displaced during the fighting (Copnall, 2013; Amnesty International)<sup>22</sup>

The White Army’s use of large numbers of child soldiers is well known throughout the region, however perhaps more unsettling is the fact that Riek Machar, the

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<sup>22</sup> Amnesty International Sudan: a Continuing Human Right Crisis. AI index AFR 54/03/92 (London: Amnesty International April 15, 1992) p. 17

former leader of the SPLA-Nasir, which utilized the White Army and child soldiers, became the first Vice-President of South Sudan in 2011. A position he held until 2013 when he was accused of an attempted coup by President Kiir and was removed from office. Since his removal from office he has formed a new rebel group, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO), to resume his fight against the government (Tanza, 2015). In his capacity as rebel leader it is not unreasonable to suspect he will fall back on the old tactic he used so efficiently in the early 1990s and resume the use of child soldiers. The civil war in South Sudan has led to the displacement of thousands of people and has the potential to create an environment in which the youth of South Sudan have little choice but to join a fighting force.

### **The bottom 46 million: Development Traps applied to Sudan**

Paul Collier's (2007) book *The Bottom Billion* explains four development traps that contribute to a nation being underdeveloped. The four traps are conflict trap, natural resources trap, landlocked with bad neighbors trap, and the bad governance in a small country trap. These four traps are quite plausible for explaining (or helping to explain) the tribulations that a newly created nation in one of the poorest regions of the world will face. While these theories cannot be universally applied, they are useful when looking at the nation-states of Sudan and South Sudan.

#### *1. The Conflict Trap in the Sudans*

Collier suggests that political conflict is one factor for a nation being trapped in poverty. The conflict trap theorizes that civil wars and coup d'états are costly and repetitive (Collier, 2007 p. 17). This is certainly the case in Sudan, in the fifty years from 1955 to 2005, civil war raged for 39 of those years, and in that same time span, there

were four successful military coups and several unsuccessful coup attempts. These years turmoil have created an unstable government and allowed for scarce resources to be squandered on fighting.

Omar al-Bashir the president of Sudan took power via a coup d'état in 1989 and began to institute Sharia law and banned political parties soon after, then in 1993 he declared himself president (Kepel, 2002 p. 182). Many bombings carried out by al-Bashir's Islamic government targeted not just combatants, but also civilian areas, especially Christian dominated regions in Sudan and South Sudan (CBN News, 2012).

Other conflict includes the region of Darfur. The Darfur region of western Sudan saw renewed violence beginning in 2012, which continues to present day; the fighting is not new for the region as violence has been common in its recent history. Darfur has seen heavy conflict since 2003, when some of the tribes, including the Zaghawa, Fur, and Nubians, revolted against the government because of neglect both politically and economically. While the violence in Darfur has declined from its peak in 2003-2004, when it was estimated by the U.N. that 300,000 people were killed by pro government forces, the issues that led to conflict have not been resolved (Totten and Markusen, 2006; Reuters, 2013)<sup>23</sup>. In 2006, the Sudanese government signed a peace agreement with one faction of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), however this agreement was not approved of by the other faction of the SLA, resulting in continued problems and fighting. Since the peace agreement was not agreed to by all parties, the U.N. has expressed concern that funding, training, spare parts, and other materials supplied to Sudan could be used for air strikes in the Darfur region. Military equipment supplied by Belarus and Russia to government forces have been used to carry out air strikes in Darfur against rebel forces

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.trust.org/spotlight/Darfur-conflict>

and civilians alike. Even though there has been an arms embargo in effect against Sudan since 2006, the U.N. has concluded that Sudan has been able to purchase \$17.2 million worth of weapons from China, Iran, Russia, Egypt, and others (Amnesty International, 2008).

The conflict between Sudan and South Sudan is not only due to the oil revenues, it is also due to ethnic conflict between Arabs and non-Arabs, between tribes, and over religion. The Muslim dominated north controlled the Christian and Animist dominated south since gaining independence from Great Britain in 1956, northern control of the south led to resentment in the south and two civil wars culminating in the independence of the southern region in 2011, thus creating South Sudan.

Coupled with the religious conflict that has occurred between Sudan and South Sudan, conflict over oil revenues since South Sudan's succession in 2011, the two nation-states have experienced conflict over control over the oil producing regions. Most of Sudan's oil fields were located in the south and when the split occurred most of the oil fields became part of South Sudan. The loss of these oil fields have led to border skirmishes and allegations of Sudan stealing oil being shipped through the existing oil pipeline. Oil seems to be at least part of the underlying cause of the violence perpetrated by rebel groups along the border of Sudan and South Sudan, with each nation-state accusing the other of funding hostilities through proxy groups. These hostilities are likely to continue as long as the developed world remains addicted to oil, resulting in the high price of crude oil making the exploitation of this natural resource attractive.

## *2. The Natural Resource Trap in the Sudans*

The next development trap that is working against the Sudanese is the natural resource trap. Many countries that find a valuable natural resource in their borders such as oil, gold, or diamonds think that many of their nation-state's problems will be solved. However, in many cases the exploitation of the new resource is at the detriment of more traditional economic activities. As Corden and Neary (1982) have shown, Dutch disease can cripple the economy. When one sector of the economy is neglected the overall economy will decline. As one resource becomes depended upon to fuel the nation-states wealth, other sectors lag behind; however, when that one resource can no longer prop up the economy the people at the bottom of the economic scale are hit the hardest.

One issue that arises with a new resource export is that it increases the value of the exporting nation's currency. While that seems like an economic benefit it actually makes the other economic products produced uncompetitive in the world market. This creates a trade dependency on the resource that is still competitive in the world market, fostering overexploitation of that resource to the detriment of the more traditional exports that in the long run may better serve their economic development (Corden and Neary, 1982). In many cases the economic sector that suffers most is the agricultural sector, as the cost of the agricultural products goes up, demand goes down since the same products can be purchased elsewhere at a lower cost. When prices on agricultural goods drop it becomes difficult for farmers to make a living and leads to less arable land being planted.

The main natural resource that South Sudan possesses is oil. When South Sudan gained independence from Sudan, Sudan lost revenue because the majority of oil fields are in the south and now belong to newly created South Sudan. This caused contention between Sudan and South Sudan due to lost oil revenue for Sudan and transportation



problems for South Sudan. South Sudan must deal with other issues related to having oil. They have engaged in border skirmishes beginning almost as soon as the nation seceded from Sudan. These conflicts as a result of the lost oil fields intensified at the end of 2012, and early 2013. Much of the fighting between the two nation-states is along the border area and is due to the location of oil fields in that region (Abdelaziz and Holland, 2013; Maasho and Holland, 2013). Fighting has caused casualties for both sides and it has forced a shutdown of many of the oil fields due to instability in the region and insufficient security measures. An economically negative consequence of the succession of South Sudan was they now have to pay Sudan to pump oil through the Greater Nile Oil Pipeline opened in 1999, a pipeline that connected the oil fields in South Sudan to the refineries in Port Sudan on the Red Sea. If the shutdown of oil fields from nearby conflict were not detrimental enough to the economy, in January of 2012, South Sudan stopped pumping oil through the Greater Nile Oil Pipeline after accusing Sudan of stealing oil from the pipeline before it reached export facilities (Onyiego, 2013). While South Sudan, and at one time Sudan, relied on oil to produce much of the government's revenue, conflict over the oil fields and apparent theft of crude oil from the pipeline has forced South Sudan to shutdown oil production losing billions of dollars per year in oil exportation. This has resulted in a loss of government revenue, which trickles down into other aspects of the budget forcing cuts in other areas, typically in government services.

The natural resource trap also allows for instability in government and corruption to occur. As nation-states do not need to heavily tax their citizens if they have large amounts of natural resources, there is less public scrutiny of the government. Without public accountability, corruption can run rampant in government. Even in nation-states

where there is public accountability corruption is a part of government. While corruption is not currently apparent in South Sudan, when all oil fields belonged to Sudan there was corruption from the al-Bashir government. The natural resource trap is an important concept for the resource rich nation-states to consider, with the volatile commodities markets, export/import dependency, and the lack of diversification in their economies, the natural resources that have helped improve their economies in the short term may damage the economy in the long term (Collier, 2007).

### *3. Being Landlocked with Bad Neighbors Trap in South Sudan*

Both Sudan and South Sudan are situated in one of the poorest regions in the world. However, Sudan does have port access to the Red Sea, while South Sudan is landlocked, creating difficulties for trade opportunities. South Sudan shares a border with Sudan, Kenya, Central African Republic, Uganda, Ethiopia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Only two of those border nations, Sudan and Kenya, have port cities. Thus, South Sudan is forced to work with these countries if they want to export oil beyond their immediate neighbors. Furthermore, these border nations have many of the same issues that South Sudan faces. All of these nations have experienced civil war within the past twenty years with the exception of Kenya. Kenya, however, was not free of violence, as they dealt with the Turbi massacre in 2005 leaving 60 dead and the Kenyan Crisis of 2007-2008 where ethnic violence lead to the death of as many as 3,000 people and displaced as many as 250,000 people in the span of two months (BBC News, 2008).

Civil wars are not the only problem that plagues these border nations. Many of the countries have experienced coups d'états in recent years. As noted above Sudan has

had four successful coups in the past fifty years. Add this to the other five bordering counties, and there have been a combined twenty-eight successful coups in the last sixty years (Marshall, 2005 p. 12). The most recent successful coup in this region occurred in March of 2013 in the Central African Republic. With this immense number of coup attempts and a successful coup occurring nearly every two years on average in this region, it is not surprising that there is limited stability in the surrounding governments. Furthermore, in this region there were also sixty unsuccessful coups attempts in this region over the past sixty years (Marshall, 2005 p. 13). This creates problems for South Sudan because neighbors with unstable governments also have poor infrastructure, and thus lack the ability to develop strong trade routes in the region. Also, previous treaties or agreements are disregarded with each new government, as they rarely recognize the previous government's work.

All of these elements hurt South Sudan's growth; in nations that have good neighbors with growing economies, the landlocked nation will ride their coattails. As Collier notes, if a nation's neighbors have one percent growth the landlocked nation will experience a .4 percent growth (Collier, 2007 p. 56). For South Sudan this is part of the problem, since their neighbors are in constant turmoil, they cannot experience coattail growth. Since the neighboring nation-states do not have growing economies South Sudan loses out on them as a potential market. South Sudan does not have a ready market next door in which to sell their natural resources. This is important as it makes selling their resources more difficult, the only real choice they have is to either pipe oil through the existing pipeline in Sudan or attempt to transport oil by trucks through Kenya. The route through Kenya is less cost effective and Kenya does not have safe and

reliable infrastructure throughout their borders to transport goods, thus it is not a good option.

Another issue related to “bad neighbors” that impacts South Sudan’s growth and development is that the instability of its neighboring countries, which sees refugees flow from their borders into South Sudan. The arriving refugees then use resources that South Sudan needs for its own people.

South Sudan is in a poor war torn region of the world, its neighboring countries’ economies are stagnant and as such do not have a spillover market to help improve South Sudan’s economy. South Sudan also faces the problem of being neighbors with Sudan, the nation-state from which it recently seceded. Since their succession there have been border disputes with some of the rebel forces in South Sudan fighting against the new government; with some of these groups receiving funding and supplies from the Sudanese government (Small Arms Survey, 2013). As noted earlier, even though there is an arms embargo on Sudan, their government has found governments willing to sell them military equipment. These arms have been used against the rebel forces in Sudan and for the anti-government forces in South Sudan.

Omar al-Bashir has denied funding any rebel forces saying “It is not true that the Sudan government is supporting the rebellion of Yau Yau or any other rebellions against South Sudan in the border” (Doki, 2013). He also noted that he would like to see normal relations with South Sudan (Doki, 2013). Even with these assurances South Sudan has been in talks with Ethiopia and Kenya to build an oil pipeline through those nation-states to ship oil to the coast for export into the world market. However, the cost of building a pipeline is high and could take years to finish. This new pipeline is the potential reason

that al-Bashir has been funding the rebel forces to disrupt any pipeline project, to force South Sudan to continue to use the existing pipeline that runs through Sudan. Often when looking at the rebel forces that fight in a county, the funding will come by way of a neighboring government to create instability in that nation to benefit themselves in some manner. In the situation in South Sudan, we see Sudan doing just this in order to maintain control of oil transportation in the region a process that adds to the Sudanese economy (Ochieng, 2013; Future Directions International, 2014)<sup>24</sup>.

#### *4. Bad Governance in a Small Country*

The final trap that Collier outlines is bad governance in a small country. This trap deals not only with bad governance in terms of international policies or social programs but also looks at the economic policies that the government puts into effect. As Collier (2007) notes even exceptional governance coupled with superb economic policies will have limits on the amount of growth a county will see, that level is about 10 percent growth. On the other end of the spectrum bad governance and poor economic policies will quickly destroy even a healthy economy (Collier, 2007). When looking at the situation in Sudan and South Sudan, the economic policies are rarely diversified and often rely heavily on oil exports and agricultural imports. This trade imbalance may work when crude oil is at \$150 per barrel but as oil prices drop to less than \$50 per barrel there will be economic problems.

Bad governance also comes from the corruption of leaders, in Sudan Omar al-Bashir has been accused of embezzling \$9 billion of oil revenue (Hirsh, 2010). This is important for two reasons, the first and most obvious reason is that the nine billion dollars

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<sup>24</sup>For further discussion on the pipeline visit <http://www.futuredirections.org.au/publications/indian-ocean/29-indian-ocean-swa/1580-oil-pipeline-project-may-be-next-casualty-of-south-sudan-civil-war.html>

of lost revenue could have been used to improve the infrastructure and quality of life for the average Sudanese person. The second reason is that the theft of this oil revenue shows that bad governance is not bad for everyone. Al-Bashir has financially benefitted from his position as President of Sudan to the tune of \$9 billion. As Al-Bashir proves, and Collier notes, many of the leaders of poor nations are themselves quite wealthy (Collier, 2007; 66). Since the current system of bad governance is reaping huge benefits for those in charge there is little reason or incentive for them to change their style of governance.

### **Discussion: Child Soldiers and Development Traps**

Sudan's nearly 40 years of civil war, from 1955 to 2005; saw the use of thousands of child soldiers and the death of almost 2.5 million people (Kostelny and Garbarino, 2001). Children were used as soldiers on both sides of the battle; the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and central government forces swelled their ranks with child soldiers. The Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) claimed to not recruit children into their forces, but this claim has been disputed, and in 2006 they admitted that child soldiers were transferred into their units when the peace agreement was signed in 2005 (Young, 2006). The SPLA admitted that they used child soldiers during the civil war, but after 2005 they made an effort to demobilize the child soldiers that were in their ranks; however by 2010, they still had child soldiers in their units (Young, 2006; Uma, 2010).

The peace agreement signed in 2005 required all involved in the fighting to eliminate the use of child soldiers in their ranks. Since this agreement has been in effect there has been a reduction of child soldiers used in Sudan and South Sudan, with the SPLA pledging to demobilize all child soldiers by the end of 2010, an outcome which has

been disputed (Uma, 2010). However, with renewed hostilities the international community feels that war is all but certain between the two nation-states (CNN, 2012). If hostilities are renewed with large scale fighting, the likelihood that former child soldiers will be re-recruited into the ranks of the militaries of Sudan, South Sudan, and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-North (SPLA-N) are high. The likelihood is high because there will be a need for soldiers with training and because there will be available former child soldiers that need a way to support themselves or want to return to the battlefield. The use of child soldiers remains high in underdeveloped nation-states that are unable to pay wages to professional soldiers. Child soldiers are cheap to maintain and in many cases expendable to the leadership, at the same time many of the former child soldiers may have few options but to return to fighting forces as they have little education, few job opportunities, are stigmatized by their experience, and have no family to return to (Child Soldiers, 2008).

Along with the children recruited in Sudan, there are reports that hundreds of children were recruited from refugee and internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps in eastern Chad. The recruitment in some cases was done forcibly, with reports of torture as a practice to persuade people to join their forces. As many as 1,000 children were reportedly recruited into the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) from refugee camps in eastern Chad between March and April of 2006 (United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007). These numbers did decrease in subsequent years but the practice of recruiting from refugee camps has continued. For example, in 2006, children were recruited from the refugee camps in Djabal and Goz Amir in eastern Chad. Among the tactics used was recruitment by teachers. This tactic has been successful because it

allows children to become more trusting of adults, in this case the teacher, and the children can be convinced to join the fighting force (United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2006). Additionally, in 2007, 39 children were recruited into Sudanese armed groups from the Breidjing refugee camp, while this number is relatively small when compared to previous years in other camps it is still high when looking at child combatants (United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007). However, recently the number of children abducted has increased again. In a statement from UNICEF in February 2015, they reported that 89 children, some as young as 13, were abducted in South Sudan. Reports indicate that armed men surrounded the community and searched each house taking children over the age of 12. The United Nations has also reported that 12,000 children were used in fighting forces and groups in South Sudan in 2014 (BBC NEWS, 2015; UNICEF, 2015)<sup>25</sup>

The development traps outlined by Paul Collier (2007) in *The Bottom Billion* are a useful tool when applied to the nations of Sudan and South Sudan. All four of the traps can clearly be seen as contributing factors for the problems in these two nations. The long history of fighting in the Sudan region, going back to when it was a colony of Great Britain up through independence and the secession of South Sudan from Sudan, and the near constant border skirmishes have contributed to keeping these nations poor and unstable. The longer the fighting continues, the less the government can invest in infrastructure and humanitarian relief for its citizens.

The natural resource trap for these nations can be identified by oil, which has fueled much of the fighting in the border regions. Since the discovery of oil in Sudan in 1978, there has been a struggle over control of that valuable commodity. While the oil

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<sup>25</sup> The UNICEF report can be found at [http://www.unicef.org/policyanalysis/media\\_80205.html](http://www.unicef.org/policyanalysis/media_80205.html)



fields are mainly located in South Sudan, before the succession of the south, Sudan did not want to spend any of the oil revenues on projects in the south. After the agreement was made in 2006, that the southern region would have a level of autonomy, oil revenues were to be divided 50/50 between Sudan and South Sudan. However, after South Sudan's succession in 2011 they received all oil revenues, this caused conflict between the two governments and created a reliance on oil to the detriment of other income sources in South Sudan.

South Sudan is clearly in a bad neighborhood, the nations around them are some of the poorest nations in the world and all of them have had civil wars and coup d'états in the last 30 years, with the most recent coup occurring in the Central African Republic in March of 2013. The instability of the neighboring nations has had a negative effect on South Sudan as they lose out on trade partners and potential export partners. The civil wars that occurred in the surrounding area has impacted the nation-state by an influx of refugees and displaced peoples moving into South Sudan and using natural resources, causing environmental degradation. Being in a bad neighborhood has had negative consequences for South Sudan, they lack nearby markets for their goods and they feel the pressure from population migration.

The only trap that does not fully fit in with the problems of South Sudan is the bad governance trap. This is largely due to the fact that the nation-state has existed for a little over four years and the effects of the nation's government cannot yet be fully determined. As time goes by and the policies of South Sudan can be more fully explored, it is possible that they will be found to suffer from bad governance. However, in December of 2013, South Sudan's Vice-President, Riek Machar, was removed from

power by President Salva Kiir, for his alleged role in a plot to seize power from Kiir.

While Machar has denied this claim he now heads a rebel groups fighting against the Kiir government (Howden, 2013).

While South Sudan does suffer from these development traps it does not mean that the nation-state has no hope for improvement. South Sudan needs to exploit their oil reserves to bring money into the nation-state but must be sure not to become a rentier state exclusively dependent on the oil revenue; the nation will need to diversify their exports so if one export were to fail or the price of oil plummets they will not be thrown into an economic depression. It will also be important for South Sudan to stay out of any conflicts that may face them in the near future, if they can save the resources needed for war they will be able to invest that money into infrastructure and quality of life ventures for their citizens. South Sudan does suffer from the development traps, but if they invest within their borders and in their citizens they can emerge as a nation-state with strong regional influence, it will be a long road filled with perils, but it is a road that can be traveled.

### **Conclusions**

The nation-states of Sudan and South Sudan have a difficult history, while they have been one unified territory for the majority of their existence; they have had little in common for much of that time. The sharp contrast between the two regions in ethnic makeup, religious beliefs, and economic systems have contributed to the divisive feelings of the two regions and led to their eventual split in 2011. The past struggles of a united Sudan has allowed a culture of conflict to emerge, this culture is not only due to the stark differences between the north and south but also because of the presence of the

development traps that Collier (2007) outlined as well as the overall economic standing of the two nation-states on the Fragile State Index and Collier and Chauvets (2006) work on failed states.

Can the nation-states that share these characteristics be classified as a failed state (as defined by Collier and Chauvets (2006), Collier (2007) and the Fragile State Index from the Fund for Peace)? And, 2b. Using Colliers (2007) work focused on four development traps that often plague failed states, is it possible to assess which development trap(s) most commonly lead(s) a failed state to use child soldiers?

Sudan and South Sudan appear to have the required characteristics of a failing and near failed state as described by the combined definitions of the fragile state index, Collier and Chauvets (2006) and Collier (2007). The corruption found in government, low GDP per capita, high rates of poverty, and conflict have led to a situation in both nation-states that puts them on the precipice of the failed state label where the government is no longer in full control of their borders. Sudan and South Sudan certainly have the characteristics present to be classified as, at best, a fragile state and at worst, a failed state.

When shifting focus to the development traps that contribute to the use of child soldiers, the presence of conflict is of course imperative to the use of child soldiers. Without the conflict trap being at hand there would not be a need for soldiers of any type especially child soldiers. However, the conflict trap is not the only trap that will contribute to the use of child soldiers. The presence of the other traps contribute to conflict, bad governance will lead to a dissatisfied populace that will demand change, often through violent means. Being landlocked with bad neighbors creates an

environment in which the economy cannot flourish leading, to high rates of poverty and a lack of education, two underlying factors that lead a desire for change through conflict. When the realization that relative deprivation exists in a populace, the spark of revolutionary fire is not far behind, the understanding that you have nothing to lose through revolutionary tactics becomes more appealing when the lavish lifestyles of some are made public.

The natural resource trap contributes to the use of child soldiers in a several ways. Having a natural resource, such as oil, creates a dependence on the natural resource to the detriment of the other sectors of the economy especially agriculture. While the resource will sell for a nice profit and makes the nation-states GDP increase, it does little to help the average person that is barely able to subsist on the meager food they have. This creates a situation in which relative deprivation may lurk around the corner of the next economic downturn. Once the relative deprivation monster rears its head, conflict is usually not long after. Aside from the economic issues that are created by having a resource, in the case of Sudan, the loss of the natural resource will lead to conflict as well. When South Sudan succeeded in 2011, they gained the majority of the oil fields, as a result of the lost revenue, there have been border skirmishes and ventures by rebel groups on both sides of the border, these rebel groups have been accused of being funded by the governments of both Sudan and South Sudan.

This is clear evidence that the control of a natural resource will lead to conflict. While conflict is the necessary trap for the use of child soldiers, the other three traps all contribute to an environment ripe for conflict. Sudan and South Sudan have experienced all of these traps, the bad governance of Omar Al-Bashir has led to the succession of the

south, the poor economies in the region (or bad neighbors) and conflict in surrounding nation-states have contributed to additional difficulties within their borders, the violence from the exploration of natural resources (oil) and in the case of Sudan the loss of a natural resource, and the resulting conflict from the presence of these traps contribute to the use of child soldiers in Sudan and South Sudan.

## Chapter Five: A Case Study of Uganda

### Introduction to Uganda

Uganda is situated in one of the poorest regions of Africa and is surrounded by nation-states experiencing conflict. Uganda is landlocked by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda; with landlocked Lake Vitoria as its only coastline as shown in map 5.1.

**Map 5.1**



Source: CIA World Factbook<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Map 5.1 from CIA World Factbook located at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/refmaps.html>

### **History of Uganda:**

Uganda was a colony of Great Britain, and as most colonizing powers did, the British exploited the cultural and ethnic differences in Uganda for their own gain. The ethnic differences that the British used to exploit Uganda included the large number of ethnic tribes in Uganda. The population of Uganda is quite diverse; the largest group is the Baganda at 16.9%. There are many other tribal groups including Banyankole at 9.5%, Basoga at 8.4%, Bakiga at 6.9%, Iteso at 6.4%, Langi at 6.1%, Acholi at 4.7%, with the remaining population made up of smaller ethnic tribes (CIA World Factbook). This rich diversity has led to conflict throughout Uganda's history; there has been cattle rustling between tribes, smuggling of goods, poaching, and conflict perpetrated by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The conflict in Uganda is not unique to the area, and like many conflicts, has generated problems for the surrounding nation-states as well. Specifically, the LRA's movements into these other nation-states has created conflict, as well as additional stress on the governments and populations of the effected nation-states, as they have received a large number of refugees from Uganda.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Uganda was trading ivory on the global market in order to purchase goods from America and Europe. The vast supply and the mass desire for ivory made Uganda a tempting area for exploitation by American and European powers. The Buganda people in the southern region along Lake Victoria traded ivory for weapons and textiles, but as the elephant numbers dropped precipitously in their territory, the Buganda people were forced to move into other regions to attain ivory. This created conflict with the Bunyoro tribe to the north. The Bunyoro, not wanting to fall behind in the arms race, began attracting foreign trade as well; unfortunately for the Bunyoro people the foreign

traders also wanted to expand their empire. The Khedive of Egypt wanted to create a Nile River empire and moved to take Uganda; to achieve this conquest Khedive Ismail Pasha sent British explorer Samuel Baker into the Bunyoro region to claim it as a colony of his empire. When Baker met resistance to this conquest he condemned the Bunyoro people creating a predisposed negative opinion of the Bunyoro people in Great Britain (Wisnicki, 2010). This would be to the detriment of the Bunyoro tribe when the British Empire builders arrived, costing the Bunyoro tribe half of its kingdom.

When the British arrived, they had already determined what tribes they were not willing to have relations with, the next step was to look for an ally in the region; that ally was the Buganda tribe. Sir Henry Morton Stanley as well as John Speke described the Buganda tribe as highly organized and willing to adapt to British standards. Stanley attempted to convert King Kabaka Mutesa I to Christianity (Jeal, 2011). This simple discussion with the king would lead to a religious civil war for the Buganda people between Protestantism and Catholicism. 1877 the British set up a mission in the Buganda Kingdom with the French following suit, as did Muslim traders from Zanzibar. This set the stage for a three way war for the souls of the Buganda people that would finally come to a close in 1891 with a Christian victory, the Protestants (British) and Catholics (French) then divided the kingdom and ruled through puppet regimes. The respite in violence was short lived however when hostilities between the British and French converts broke out leading to the British claiming victory and Uganda as a protectorate in 1892 (Jeal, 2011). After Britain claimed victory they began to expand their claims in the region and started to conquer other tribes. The ferocity with which the Buganda people fought earned the respect of the British who negotiated a separate treaty with the



Buganda awarding them a degree of autonomy and half of the Bunyoro kingdom, lands they would control with British support until Ugandan independence in 1962.

Uganda was not fortunate after they gained their independence from Great Britain; there was internal strife among factions of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), resulting in a weak coalition with Milton Obote as the Prime Minister. The lack of harmony within the party led to internal power plays which eventually led to Obote declaring himself President of Uganda in 1966. Obote held this position until 1971 when his government was overthrown by Idi Amin while Obote was on a state visit to Singapore (Mutibwa, 1992). In 1980, after nine years of violent rule, Amin was overthrown by a combined force of exiled Uganda nationals and Tanzanian forces. The elections that followed the removal of Amin saw the UPC and Obote regain power, Obote would hold the office of president until 1985 when he was disposed in a coup d'état led by two of his military commanders, Brigadier Bazilio Olara-Okello and General Tito Okello. The two men attempted to jointly rule Uganda but after a few months of chaotic rule they were removed when Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Army seized the opportunity to snatch power (Mutibwa, 1992). This change of power did not, however, bring stability to Uganda. Instead, as a result of Museveni taking control, the LRA formed in resistance to his rule and continued the violent opposition of the government.

Due to the conflicts resulting from dissension in the government and the anti-government forces, Uganda has struggled in terms of maintaining a stable economy. The GDP per capita of Uganda is about \$1,500, ranking it 204<sup>th</sup> in the world. Coupled with this low GDP per capita, approximately 25% of the population is living below the

poverty line (CIA World Factbook). This economic situation is, in part, a result of the corruption of the Ugandan government. On the Corruption Perceptions Index, Uganda received a score of 26/100 ranking them 142 out of 175 nation-states measured (Transparency International, 2014)<sup>27</sup>. The perceived corruption in Uganda is a result of Yoweri Museveni's rule since 1986 and the apparent graft that has taken place throughout his tenure. Corruption and a weak economy have contributed to Uganda's poor ranking on the Fragile State Index as well, Uganda received a score of 96/120 ranking it 22<sup>nd</sup> out of 178 nation-states measured, for the Fragile State Index the higher the score (out of a possible 120), the closer the state is to becoming a failed state (Foreign Policy, 2014)<sup>28</sup>. Many of the issues that have led to Uganda's poor rankings on the Corruptions Perceptions Index and the Fragile State Index are not unique to Uganda, but not every nation-state that has the elements found on these indexes uses child soldiers; this case study of Uganda can shed valuable insight into the possible causes that allow for the use of child soldiers.

### **Conflict in Uganda**

In the war torn nation-state of Uganda, child soldiers have been used in armed conflict for years, both by rebel groups and government forces. However, recently child soldiers have mainly been a tool for the rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The LRA originated in the late 1980's. At this time, Joseph Kony started the rebel group the United Holy Salvation Army later called the Uganda Christian Army/Movement. This group was created to continue the fight started by Alice Auma Lakwena and the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) against the Museveni Government, whom they distrusted,

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<sup>27</sup> Corruption Perceptions Index may be located at <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results>

<sup>28</sup> Fragile State Index located at <http://foreignpolicy.com/fragile-states-2014/#rankings>

wanting remove Museveni from power. The HSM opposed Museveni because of his connections to former President Obote and his government. Many of the Acholi in the north did not trust individuals connected to the government because of the harsh treatment the Acholi people received from the government especially during the Amin administration. By 1993 Kony's rebel group was renamed the Lord's Resistance Army and continues to operate in Uganda and neighboring countries to this day. (Al Jazeera, 2010, Ward 2001).

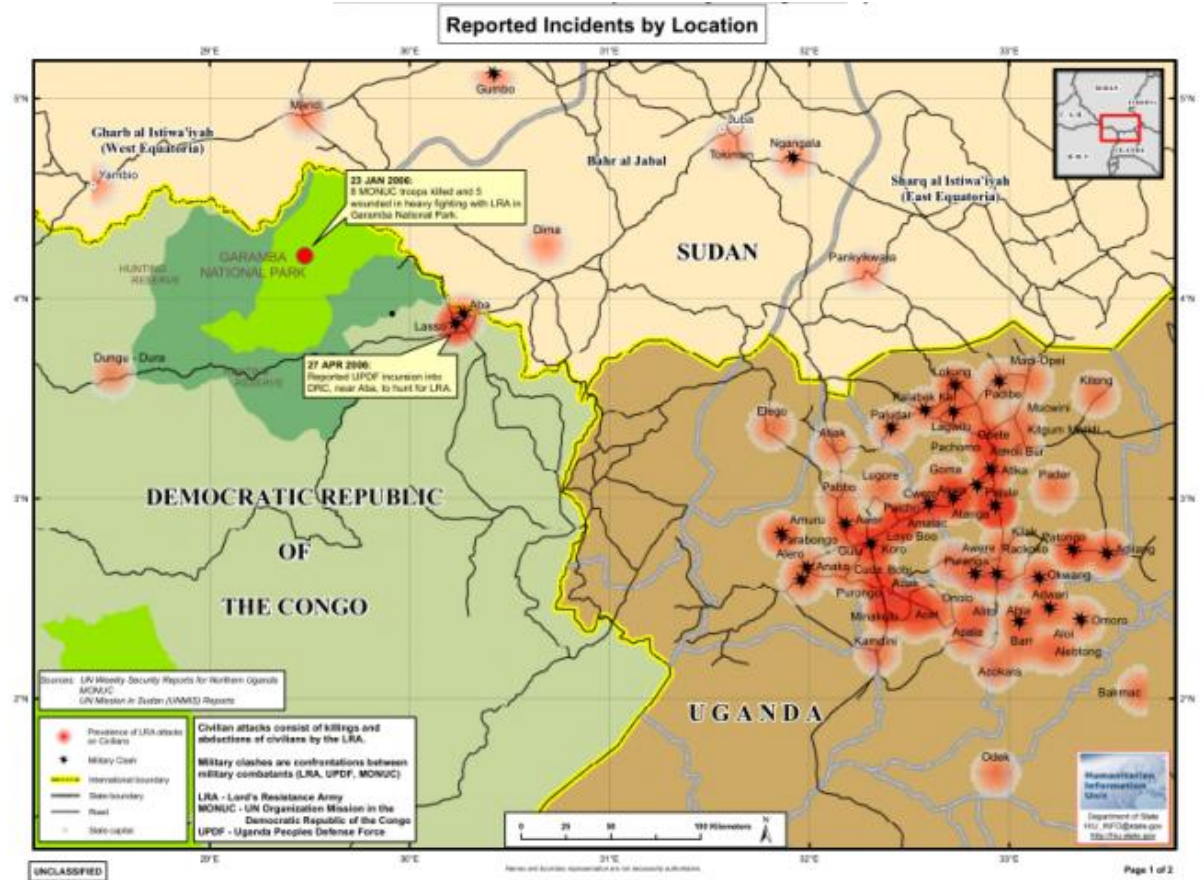
The Lord's Resistance Army was originally made up of former Ugandan National Liberation Army (UNLA) soldiers that were ousted when President Milton Obote was driven from power, the second time, in 1986. The former UNLA soldiers were largely unskilled and uneducated men who were either unable or unwilling to adapt to civilian life, and created a key recruiting pool for the LRA. The LRA is largely made up of combatants from the Acholi ethnic group centered in the northern Ugandan region. The Acholi people are distrustful of the Museveni government and have been told stories of the slaughter of Acholi soldiers at the hands of the Idi Amin administration in 1972, furthering their distrust of the government. The LRA received support from the Sudanese government in the form of information, training, and weapons (Van Acker, 2004). In return, the LRA at times aids the Sudanese military by fighting against the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) a group supported by Ugandan President Museveni (Van Acker, 2004). Another aspect of why the LRA has been able to survive in the Acholi region of Uganda are the high levels of poverty in the region.

The Acholi region has experienced poverty, a driving force for young children to join rebel groups and take up arms. One way that wealth is obtained in northern Uganda

is through the accumulation of cattle. However, cattle rustlers from the Karamojong tribe have decimated the Acholi cattle population, dropping the number of cattle in the region from approximately 156,000 in 1986 to roughly 3,000 in 1998, a loss of around \$24 million U.S., much of the cattle was then sold or traded to people in Sudan for money and weapons (Gersony, 1997; de Berry, 2001). Cattle are not only a means of revenue for families, cattle are also used by young men as dowry for marriage, leaving some men with no dowry for a potential marriage arrangements spurring them toward other means of accumulating wealth for marriage (de Berry, 2001; Van Acker, 2004). Without a dowry or any hope of accumulating wealth, many of the young men in northern Uganda are left with little hope to improve their lives and see membership in a rebel group as their only viable option.

Starting in the late 1990s and continuing to present day, the Lord's Resistance Army shifted their recruitment tactics from ex-soldiers to children. Due to poor economic conditions in northern Uganda and the lack of an adequate educational system, the LRA is able to recruit young men and boys into their ranks, simply by offering a better life for the individual. Many children will join fighting forces for a sense of family, protection, revenge, fear, food, or for money. The LRA attacks against government entities that represent southern political dominance have been largely centered in Uganda's northern region where they enjoyed greater support from the Acholi people, a support that has waned in recent years due to ongoing violence and a shift toward attacks against Acholi villages and people to replenish their ranks. As illustrated in map 5.2 the LRA attacks in northern Uganda are spreading outside of the Ugandan borders into neighboring Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Map 5.2 LRA incidents from January to May 2006**



*Source: U.S. Department of State<sup>29</sup>*

In 1994, after peace talks between the LRA and the State Minister for Northern Uganda, Betty Bigombe, failed to put an end to fighting, the LRA turned to mass abductions of children in order to grow their ranks. About one-third of all males involved with the LRA at this time were kidnapped and forced into service, and one-sixth of the females were forced into the LRA's ranks (Honwana, 2006). While both boys and girls are abducted by the LRA they serve different roles for the organization. Kony tends to

<sup>29</sup> Map 5.2 located at US Department of State  
<https://hiu.state.gov/HighlightReports/Highlights%2013%20-%20ESC.pdf>

enslave young girls to marry them off as bush wives to his loyal fighters, both as an incentive for his fighters to stay loyal, but also to ensure a new generation of children being born into conflict and into the LRA's ranks (Wessells, 2006; Honwana, 2006). Many of the girls that are abducted or recruited in the LRA will be married off as young as 13 to the LRA commanders; essentially making these girls sex slaves for the LRA commanders. Several girls that have escaped from the LRA have either had children or are pregnant leading to social stigmas when they return to their villages (Machel, 2001; Honwana, 2006; Singer, 2006).

One girl abducted by the LRA retold her experience while with the LRA: "After returning from Sudan, I was a wife to one rebel commander, then another junior commander and then two older rebel soldiers. I had one child who died when he was a few days old. I was a slave to the rebels for 19 months. I do not think I will marry again" (Bennett et. Al, 2000)<sup>30</sup>. This is not an uncommon experience for the young girls taken by rebel groups, and results in lifelong physiological trauma for these young girls.

When children are abducted they are often forced to commit acts of violence as an initiation or in an attempt to shame them from returning to their villages. Often these acts of violence are against relatives such as children being forced to kill a brother or sister (Honwana, 2006). In one instance a boy the age of 16 was told to kill his aunt. He was told if he did not kill her he would be shot; the boy shot and killed his aunt (Wessells, 2006). This is an effective strategy for abducting children into armed forces because the stigma attached to the offending party will follow the individual throughout their lives. This takes away the incentive to escape because the child is often not welcomed back into

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<sup>30</sup> Article from the Institute of Securities Studies found at <http://www.issafrica.org/publications/books/01-feb-2000-act-against-child-soldiers-in-africa.-a-reader-e-bennett-v-gamba-d-van-der-merwe-eds>

their community and as a result will not have anywhere they can go if they managed to successfully escape. Another method that is utilized by the LRA is cannibalism.

Hundreds of children, as young as six, have been forced to kill and eat other children as a warning not to escape. When a child tries to escape and is captured they are in some instances killed and eaten, this is another method that is utilized to stigmatize the children so that they will not be accepted back into their village if they manage to escape (Raffaele, 2008).

Another way the LRA prevents abducted children from returning to their villages is by forcing them to commit atrocities against that village. One boy the age of 16 said that he “did not want to go back to his village because I burnt all the houses there. I don’t know what the people would do, but they’d harm me. I don’t think I will ever be accepted in my village” (Singer, 2005, 74). This is done to force these youths to stay with the LRA, if they have nowhere to go the youths will be less defiant and will be less likely to try to escape. Other deterrents used by the LRA to stop escapes is to tie attempted escapees to a tree and burn them alive in front of the other children, or force the children to carry the rotting corpse of one of the killed escapees as a reminder of what will happen if they attempt to escape (Singer, 2005).

The LRA is the most extreme example of a rebel group abducting children in Africa, with an estimated 30,000 children abducted since 1988 (Wessells, 2006). While the LRA is able to recruit thousands of children into their ranks by offering a “better” life for the children, their recruits do not make up a force large enough to sustain its fight with government forces. One of the reasons that the LRA abducts children is because they lack public support and thus do not receive volunteers for their ranks.

Uganda has experienced near constant fighting and ethnic cleansing since gaining independence in 1962. Kony's forces have committed violence against the Acholi people in the North even though he claims to fight for their self determination (Chatlani, 2007). In the late 1990's the number of reported abductions by the LRA was declining, but with the beginning of the military campaign operation Iron Fist in 2002, the number of abductions jumped dramatically (Wessells, 2006).

Rebel groups, such as the LRA, attack schools in war-torn regions in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo for a variety of reasons. Schools and teachers are seen as symbols of the government and are therefore viewed as representative of the oppressive state. Schools are also seen as soft targets that are not well protected, unlike other government entities (Chatlani, 2007). Many of the schools are not well protected due, in part, to the lack of government funds and lack infrastructure in many rural areas where several of the schools that are attacked are located. Schools are not deemed a vital element of maintaining the government and therefore receive a second tier security concern. The LRA, while on an abduction campaign in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, would attack villages in the hope of obtaining information on where local schools were located. This suggests that the LRA was interested in abducting children from the region to fight for their cause (HRW, 2010). Teachers are also targeted by rebel groups because they are seen as supportive of the government and therefore opposed to the rebel groups goal of installing a new government with themselves in the executive role.

Schools are not however, the only vulnerable targets of rebel groups. Refugee and IDP camps are also prime targets for recruitment or abduction of children. These camps house large numbers of children, up to 57% of the inhabitants are children, often



orphaned or separated from their families (Achvarina & Reich, 2006, 138). As a result they are easier to manipulate and more susceptible to the rebel propaganda. Rebel groups will often use good looking younger members to recruit children into their ranks. These recruiters hype the glamorous atmosphere of the rebel lifestyle and their ideology (Singer, 2006).

The LRA has wreaked havoc on both the social structure and the political structure in northern Uganda through the recruitment and abduction of children to use as soldiers. The LRA has affected the social structure of Uganda by constant attacks on villages and towns and continued fighting against government forces. These attacks have disrupted the lives of all who are involved whether that involvement is direct or indirect. The LRA has disrupted the political structure by the civil war they have brought to Uganda since the 1980s.

This civil war has resulted in poor government services, a weak economy, and disabled citizens who are unable to contribute to the workforce. With estimates between 30,000 and 66,000 children abducted by the LRA, it is clear that many families' lives will never be the same (MacGarty and Nott, 2013, 361). However, the reason that the LRA is able to operate is correlated to the economic issues that exist in Uganda. The high rates of poverty, illiteracy, disease, and displaced populations in Uganda allow rebel groups without mass support to still operate with success. While the Ugandan government has made strides to alleviate some of these social and economic issues affecting Uganda, they have not been entirely successful and Joseph Kony is able to continue his quest. Uganda does fall victim to the development traps that Collier outlines (conflict, resource, bad governance, and landlocked with bad neighbors) in *The Bottom Billion*, all four of the

traps exist in Uganda to varying degrees and may be applied to Uganda to explain the use of child soldiers.

### **Development Traps Applied to Uganda:**

The nation-state of Uganda falls into all of the development traps that are outlined by Collier. There is a long history of violence, they have natural resources consisting of gold, oil, and agricultural products, it is a landlocked nation-state, and they are considered a very corrupt government, ranking 140/177 in 2013 on the Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International. These four traps will be evaluated to see the possible impact they play on Uganda and the use of child soldiers.

### *Conflict Trap in Uganda:*

The conflict within Uganda consists of civil war, coup d'états, interstate wars, and ethnic violence. Ethnic tensions have always been present in Uganda, but were perpetuated by the colonization of Uganda by the Great Britain. Uganda became a British protectorate in 1894 and did not lose this standing until Ugandan independence in 1962. Under British rule the Buganda, commonly known as the Ganda people, became the colonial administrators for the British. The Kingdom of Buganda is the largest of the sub-national kingdoms in Uganda and is the home of the capital city of Kampala. The Buganda administrators were charged with collecting taxes and organizing labor forces to work in the fields and industry, but the sub-imperialist rule and arrogant nature of the Buganda created resentment from other tribes in Uganda (Golooba-Mutebi, 2011). The British used this ethnic division to their advantage by essentially keeping the different tribes fighting amongst themselves and not with the British. This strategy, while

effective for the British, had negative consequences for Uganda, since after gaining independence, ethnic clashes intensified in a post-colonial Uganda.

In 1962, Uganda gained independence without bloodshed and agreed to retain their commonwealth membership with Great Britain. The first elected Prime Minister was Milton Obote, a member of the Lango tribe in northern Uganda; this marks the first time that an executive leadership position was held by someone from a northern tribe. This demonstrated an important shift in governance in Uganda, because under British Colonial rule the executive position was filled with Baganda from the south. Even though not common for members from northern tribes, Obote created an alliance with the Buganda royalist party Kabaka Yekka, creating a coalition that allowed control of the majority of Parliament and allowed Obote to become Prime Minister. During his term as Prime Minister Obote was accused as being part of a gold smuggling plot and Parliament demanded an investigation into his alleged criminal activity. In response to the investigation Obote suspended the constitution and declared himself President in March of 1966. In 1967 Obote further divided the various groups within Uganda when he abolished the traditional kingdoms: “Obote was creating artificial divisions among the people... He thus actually served imperialism by emphasizing internal differences” (Museveni, 1997). Shortly thereafter Parliament passed a new constitution removing the federal structure and installing an executive Presidency. Then, after an assassination attempt on Obote in 1969, political parties were banned and Obote ordered a state of emergency, allowing him to jail political opponents without trial. One of the tools at Obote’s disposal which became the General Service Unit led by Obote’s cousin, Dr. Naphline Akena Adoko, was responsible for torture and other cruelties against Obote’s

enemies (Mutibwa, 1992). Many of the protests and riots during the Obote administration were from the Buganda people who were upset about the concentration of power in Obote's office.

While Obote relied on the military for his continued rule, the military was not truly loyal to him. Major General Idi Amin, the top military advisor to Obote, began to heavily recruit members from his home district, Kakwa, into the Ugandan Army along with people from other areas such as Lugbara, and the Southern Sudanese regions of the West Nile District bordering South Sudan. This allowed Amin to establish a large base of support within the military. As a result, Obote expanded a Special Forces Unit of paramilitary police comprised primarily of Acholi and Langi troops and quickly promoted many of these troops to counter the troops loyal to Amin. Obote grew leery of Amin, reduced Amin's military role and planned to arrest Amin for the misappropriations of military funds. However before this could occur, Amin seized power on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1971 while Obote was in Singapore at a summit meeting of the commonwealth (Fairhall, 1971).

During the Amin years from 1971 to 1979, he carried out a reign of terror in which he systematically murdered and tortured his enemies (Wright, 1996). Amin targeted supporters of Obote, especially the people of the Acholi and Langi tribes, large numbers of which were in the military. By early 1972, an estimated 5,000 Acholi and Langi soldiers and at least twice as many citizens had disappeared as a result of the Amin ethnic purge (Moore, 2003)<sup>31</sup>. This was not the end of Amin's eliminating his "enemies" from the military, rather it was just the beginning. It is estimated that between 300,000

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<sup>31</sup> Article at Daily Telegraph, [/web/20071012134036rn\\_1/www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml)

and 500,000 people were killed during the time Amin administration ruled Uganda (Amnesty International, 1997)<sup>32</sup>. In place of the Acholi and Langi soldiers, Amin recruited new soldiers from his home tribe, the Kakwas, and in southern Sudan. These groups were also well established in Amin's administration, 78.2% of Amin's cabinet consisted of Kakwas and 60% of his twenty-two top army generals were Kakwas or Sudanese (Lindemann, 2011, 20). By surrounding himself with an ethnically homogenous group, Amin was able to survive eight different coups attempts. However, in 1979 he was ousted by the combined forces of the Uganda National Liberation Front and the Tanzanian government which installed Yusuf Lule as President for two months. There was then a succession of short presidencies until Milton Obote returned to power in 1980.

Once again in office, Obote remained in power until he was removed through a coup d'état in 1985, at which point a military council ruled. In January of 1986, when Yoweri Museveni took over as President, a position, as of 2015, he still holds. Even though there has been stability in the executive office since 1986, there has not been stability within Uganda's borders. Shortly after Museveni took office, the LRA formed with the goal to overthrow the new government and create a Ugandan state based on Kony's interpretation of the biblical Ten Commandments (HRW, 2012). Along with trying to create a nation-state based on the Ten Commandments, Kony promotes Acholi nationalism. The Acholi are a tribe located in the north of Uganda in the region commonly called Acholiland. Museveni, on the other hand, is a Christian and a member of the Banyankole tribe of the Ankole Kingdom in southwest Uganda. This north-south tribal friction is in part due to the British's use of the Buganda people of the south as

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<sup>32</sup> Amnesty International, <http://www.amnestyusa.org/node/58403?page=show>

administrators over the entire nation-state. The tribal differences have led to several successful coups and many more unsuccessful coups in Uganda, along with civil wars and ethnically motivated violence; leading to instability and a lack of government services.

*Natural Resource Trap:*

Uganda has natural resources that have been a curse for the nation as well as a blessing. There is gold, arable land, and recently discovered oil fields. The main environmental issues that stem from these resources come from gold mining and oil extraction. Gold mining in Uganda is done primarily in artisanal mines consisting of less than fifteen miners. These small mines leave open pits along rivers and in arable land, creating a dangerous environment for both humans and animals. The risk of injury by falling into an open mine pit are high, especially when near a water source.

Another issue that arises from unregulated gold mining is the use of mercury in the mining process. In a process called amalgamation, a miner will take a small amount of mercury and pour it into a bucket of ore; the mercury will bind to the gold and create a small mercury and gold ball (Main, 2013). Aside from the obvious health risks for humans when handling and breathing in the toxic fumes of mercury, there are environmental problems as well. The miners will often burn off the mercury (leaving only the gold in the pan), releasing mercury fumes into the air, and much of the mercury that is not burned off during the cleaning process will wind up in rivers or creeks. In Uganda's Busia District it is estimated that 330 pounds of mercury are released into the

environment each year with nearly 100 pounds finding its way into small creeks and rivers (UNEP, 2012)<sup>33</sup>.

With the discovery of oil in 2006, in the Albertine Graben Region in Western Uganda there grew concerns of how this resource will curse Uganda (Kuteesa, 2014)<sup>34</sup>. This region of Uganda contains lush vegetation and half of Africa's bird species, as well as Murchison Falls, one of the region's five national parks. Murchison Falls is now not only home to elephants, baboons, and birds but also thirteen oil wells (Akumu, 2013). Tourism accounts for 4% of Uganda's gross domestic product (GDP), but as commercial oil production begins, there will likely be a decline in tourism to parks that contain oil extraction operations. Commercial oil production is slated to begin in 2018 and last approximately thirty years; the revenue from oil is expected to take Uganda from an impoverished nation-state to an upper middle income nation-state and bring electricity to 90% of the people currently without power. It will also improve primary education and healthcare, according to Uganda's governmental plan, Vision 2040<sup>35</sup>.

While the oil in Uganda, if properly managed, may indeed improve the economy, there are already allegations of corruption and much of the data regarding production sharing agreements have not been made public (Akumu, 2013). In a nation-state that ranks 140 of 177 on the Corruption Perceptions Index, there are concerns that oil revenue may disappear, leaving the average person no better off than prior to the discovery of oil, mirroring the situation in Sudan, which ranks 174 of 177 on the index. Another concern

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<sup>33</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, [http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/Portals/9/Mercury/Documents/ASGM/Formalization\\_ARM/Case%20Study%20Uganda%20June%202012.pdf](http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/Portals/9/Mercury/Documents/ASGM/Formalization_ARM/Case%20Study%20Uganda%20June%202012.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> Kuteesa 2014 found at Brookings Institute, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/africa-in-focus/posts/2014/02/25-oil-discoveries-uganda-kuteesa>

<sup>35</sup> Uganda Vision 2040 may be found at <http://npa.ug/wp-content/themes/npatheme/documents/vision2040.pdf>

is that as oil revenue begins to flow, the government will start to reduce its focus on other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, which accounts for 23.1%, and industry which accounts for 26.9% of the economy; further perpetuating the trade imbalance in Uganda (CIA World Factbook). The natural resource trap in Uganda has already made itself apparent in gold mining operations by decreasing useable farmland and by the addition of mercury into the environment, leading to concern that oil production will further contribute to the resource trap, especially if initial revenue exceeds expectations.

*Landlocked With Bad Neighbors:*

Uganda is a landlocked nation-state and is surrounded by other poor economies. While Uganda does border one of the African Great Lakes, Lake Victoria, this lake does not provide accesses to the ocean. As a result, Uganda is forced to ship exports through nation-states that have poor infrastructure and unstable governments that cannot provide protection of the goods traveling through their borders. Another issue that Uganda faces is that the surrounding nation-states are some of the poorest in Africa; this means that Ugandan goods do not have a nearby market.

Uganda has suffered from bad its neighbors in more ways than economics. For example, there is evidence that the LRA had base camps in the surrounding nation-states. South Sudan claimed to have removed the LRA from their borders, but now have claimed the LRA is behind recent attacks in which three people were killed. Human rights groups are also claiming that the LRA have a safe haven in Sudan near the border with South Sudan (Stearns, 2013). Along with Sudan allowing the LRA to operate within their borders, the LRA has been able to move much of its operations into neighboring Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The LRA



has been responsible for attacks within these nations to abduct or recruit fighters for the struggle in Uganda. Therefore, since Uganda is landlocked and surrounded by poor economies, unstable governments, and corrupt governments, it has had no help from neighboring nation-states in improving its own economy or stopping rebel groups.

*Bad Governance in a Small Country:*

Uganda has had trouble finding stability in government since its independence in 1962. The repeated coup d'états, military leaders, and ethnic violence have culminated in an unstable and corrupt government and a near failed state. Fund for Peace ranks Uganda 22<sup>nd</sup> of 178 on the Fragile States Index with a score of 96.6 out of 120 (Fund for Peace). This shows that Uganda's government has been unable to provide basic services to their people and create stability. Along with Uganda's rank on the Fragile State Index, Transparency International ranks them at 140 of 177 on the Corruption Perceptions Index with a score of 26 out of 100 (Transparency International). These two indexes show that Uganda ranks poorly in the world in both corruption and government services. While Collier and Chauvet, in their 2006 work, note that Uganda did have a "sustained turnaround" from 1986 to 1992, there have been several years of little economic growth paired with increased poverty (Collier and Chauvet, 2006).

Although there has been stability of leadership in Uganda with Museveni holding power since 1986, there has not been stability of government institutions to provide services or protection. In 2009 Uganda was ranked 13<sup>th</sup> for most aid dependent nation-states, receiving 55.9% of their government expenditures from foreign aid (Action Aid, 2010)<sup>36</sup>. This shows that the Ugandan government is propped up through foreign aid and would likely become a failed state without aid, there have even been charges that

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<sup>36</sup> The report may be found at <http://www.actionaidusa.org/publications/2009-annual-report>

Museveni has not actively tried to capture Joseph Kony and the LRA because it would reduce the amount of aid pouring into Uganda (Kasoma, 2012). The United States has become involved in the search for Kony by sending military advisors to Uganda to “advise and assist” the African troops. The US troops are not to engage the LRA except in self-defense, but U.S. support waned after Uganda passed what has been labeled the “anti-gay bill” that made homosexuality a crime punishable by life in prison in some cases. However, only a month after that bill was signed the US sent an additional 150 advisors into Uganda to aid in the search for Kony (Cooper, 2014).

There has however, been recent success in capturing the LRA’s top commanders: in 2012 for example Caesar Achellam, a top member of the LRA, was captured after a short engagement in the Central African Republic near the border of the Congo. Achellam was captured along with two other fighters as they attempted retreat across the Mbomu River; his capture has been hailed as an intelligence coup in the fight against the LRA (AP Kampala, 2012). Following the capture of Achellam, Ugandan forces captured Charles Okello in the Central African Republic in 2014. During this capture the Ugandan forces were able to free ten people being held captive by the LRA; most of those freed were abducted children (VOA, 2014). Finally, in January of 2015 Dominic Ongwen surrendered to government forces in the Central African Republic. Ongwen was indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2005 along with LRA leader Joseph Kony and three other LRA commanders for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Many of Ongwen’s charges, which include murder, enslavement, abduction, and attacks against civilians stems from a 2004 attack on a displaced persons camp in Uganda (Bryant, 2015). The actions of Ongwen over the past 20 years will likely lead to his

conviction, but it also highlights another issue in the battle against the LRA and child soldiering. Ongwen claims to have been abducted by the LRA in 1988 at age 14, this helps to shed light on the issue of reintegration of child soldiers into society. Ongwen stayed with the LRA for 20 years and committed crimes against humanity, but his actions may have stemmed from the violence he experienced when he was abducted and the acts of violence he was forced to commit while still young. The lack of effective programs designed to reintegrate child soldiers into society has forced some to revert back to a life they understand and continue as members of these rebel groups that abduct children.

Despite some recent success in capturing LRA commanders, Uganda's inability to effectively eradicate a relatively small fighting force that repeatedly commits atrocities against civilians is an indication that the government is not operating effectively. Coupled with the human rights abuses that have been prevalent in Uganda since independence, the low ranking on both the Fragile States and Corruption Perceptions Indexes, dependence on foreign aid, and governmental instability have combined to show that Uganda has had a sustained history of bad governance.

### **Discussion: Child Soldiers and Development Traps**

Uganda faces many issues in becoming an economically developed nation, conflict with the LRA, exploitation of natural resources, government corruption, and poor economic opportunities in the region have led to an environment where child soldiers are utilized in conflict. The use of these children is largely by the LRA in mass abduction campaigns or recruiting campaigns in refugee or IDP camps. The lack of international aid for the camps has created a situation in which the little that the LRA has to offer young people is more enticing than staying in one of the camps. This is not to suggest

that simply giving more international aid will fix the problems in Uganda, one issue with simply increasing aid is ensuring that the money reaches those in need. With high levels of corruption in the Museveni administration there would need to be international oversight in the distribution of funds in Uganda requiring Museveni to give up some national sovereignty, which is unlikely especially since oil has been discovered in Uganda.

The discovery of oil can lead to an economic boom in the nation-state but only if the resource is properly managed and does not become the main focus of Uganda's long-term economic plan. The exploitation of natural resources has helped nation-states modernize and become developed economies, but only when they are managed in conjunction with the rest of the economy. The disregard for the agricultural and manufacturing sectors of the economy lead to higher consumer prices as supply dwindles and forces Uganda's economy to become dependent on the global market, which is unstable at best.

Another problem for the Ugandan economy is the lack of trade partners. Being situated in one of the poorest and most war-torn regions in the world does not allow for Uganda to trade with local neighbors, nor does it allow for international trade. Since Uganda is a landlocked nation-state with poor infrastructure they are unable to sell their manufactured or agricultural goods in a regional economic bloc. This is detrimental to the overall economy because the cost of exporting goods by air is great, and the poor infrastructure and high cost of shipping through the surrounding nation-states makes contributing to the international market on a large scale a difficult and costly prospect.

However complicated the economic and corruption issues make development in Uganda; they pale in comparison to the issue of conflict. The attacks by the LRA and their mass abduction campaign have created a culture of fear which has nearly paralyzed the development of Uganda. The disruption of the education and the lives of now two generations of Ugandan youth have had dire consequences to the development of Uganda. Since schools are often targeted by the LRA and the safety of the students cannot be guaranteed, many parents have opted not to risk sending their children to school. This has led to a large, uneducated and unskilled workforce, which has hampered the development of the economy and the nation. Without a capable workforce to produce goods or to develop better techniques that will increase production the manufacturing sector has decayed to a near irrevocable level. Not only has the conflict disrupted the workforce and economy of Uganda, but it has also created a generation of people born into conflict.

The many children that have been abducted and forced to become a soldier have not been placed into a proper reintegration program, often due to a lack of funding, to reintegrate into society. This leaves the young people with few options but to rejoin the LRA or to become part of the government military. This situation contributes to the lack of a viable workforce because this generation that knows only conflict, is unable to become a productive and contributing member of the economy. Conflict does not only hamper development by interrupting the educational opportunities or by corrupting a generation in to violence, but also by wrecking havoc on the physical landscape. The LRA routinely attacks government installations such as schools, but they also destroy roads, government buildings, and revenue producing entities such as oil production or

gold mines. The constant attacks on these sites slow development, raise costs, and disrupt the economy. Due to the conflict generated by the LRA the government is unable to spend money on economic and physical development because they are forced to spend resources on military operations, refugee and IDP camps, and rebuilding the countryside. Issues such as corruption, poor economic opportunities, and conflict have created circumstances that have not allowed Uganda to develop the potential that is present within their borders, but more importantly have contributed to the widespread use of child soldiers, not only in Uganda, but in the surrounding nation-states that the LRA has infiltrated.

### **Conclusions:**

In the case of Uganda we can see how the development traps that Paul Collier has created affect the nation-state and result in the use of child soldiers. Uganda met all four of the development traps (conflict, resource, bad governance, and landlocked with bad neighbors) and that has led to some devastating effects on the population, economy, and environment of Uganda. Uganda is a landlocked country, there is a continuing history of bad governance, their neighbors are some of the poorest in the world, there are valuable natural resources that are being developed, and Uganda has seen years of conflict.

As a result of these four development traps being present in Uganda, an environment has been created in which the use of child soldiers has flourished. The environment that is created by these development traps being present have allowed for the most vulnerable segment of the population to be exploited in the worst possible way. By Uganda being landlocked with bad neighbors, their economy has suffered due to the lack of a port for global trading and weak markets for trade within Africa. The inability

of Uganda to join the global market has ensured that they stay in the bottom billion with little realistic hope that they can create a trade relationship with developed nation-states.

The other aspect of this development trap being landlocked is having bad neighbors, this is all to true for Uganda. Uganda borders five nation-states, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Kenya, the highest GDP per capita of any of those countries in only \$1,800 (Tanzania). Since all of their neighbors have struggling economies and have faced conflict in the past generation they do not serve as effective trade partners for any of Uganda's marketable goods. This is doubly distressing since Uganda is unable to fully integrate into the global market and must therefore rely on local trade partners.

Uganda has a long history of poor governance that seems unlikely to change in the near future. The culture of corruption that has been prevalent in the government is difficult to change; as government after government has been overthrown and replaced by an equally inefficient administration, the continuation of poor governance and corruption has resulted. The poor governance and corruption in Uganda have created a situation which makes it difficult to effectively work within the system to decrease the use of child soldiers. The individuals in power often fall victim to the temptation of corruption and pilfer the national treasury for their own personal use. Far too often the leaders of poor nation-states are personally wealthy; Omar al-Bashir of Sudan is a great example of this, and if policy is detrimental to their personal gain it is not enforced, regardless of whether it is beneficial to the population as a whole. During Yoweri Museveni's reign he has amassed a personal fortune with estimates placing his personal wealth around \$1.7 billion

(Evans, 2012). This cycle of poor governance in Uganda has created an incredibly poor economy with limited chances to improve, but generated great wealth for its leader.

The resource trap in Uganda has had damaging effects on not only the landscape but also the economy. The human lust for gold has long been an issue for the environment and economy of Uganda, the small scale mines that dot the landscape of Uganda routinely utilize mercury in the mining process, as a result of the use of mercury, pollutants will often reach the water supply and the fumes of burning mercury have negative consequences on the population as well as the environment. Along with the environmental issues this creates the quest for gold has left some arable lands, which are fertile farm lands, unsuitable for agriculture. This has the added affect of creating less food for a hungry population as well as limiting the amount of products grown that can be traded.

Aside from gold, another valuable resource was discovered in the form of oil. With the discovery of oil in the western regions of Uganda, there is the added concern for environmental disasters as well as a government focus on the production of oil to the detriment to other segments of the economy, such as agriculture and manufacturing. This idea of being resource rich does not necessarily translate to a healthy economy, and often works to stagnate the economy. These resources can also lead to violence, in Sierra Leone in the early 1990s there was widespread violence over control of the diamond mines, and on the Sudan-South Sudan boarder conflict is occurring over control of oil fields. The possibility of violence in Uganda for control of resources is a realistic concern.



These three resource traps help to contribute to the forth trap, conflict trap.

Conflict in Uganda has claimed thousands of lives as government forces fought against rebel groups like the Lord's Resistance Army. These conflicts have caused millions of lives to be disrupted and cost millions of dollars that could have gone into development on the nation's infrastructure or economy. These different traps have an even greater impact on the children of Uganda; far too often the children are pressed into service by groups like the Lord's Resistance Army through abduction or coercion. Even when children willingly join rebel groups it is out of necessity; during these conflicts children are often orphaned and have no way to support themselves, the option of joining a group that can provide some resources is an attractive alternative at that point. While the child may have chosen to join the rebel group it was in reality the only choice that child had.

The problem does not dissipate once the child leaves these fighting forces, often that individual has a difficult time reintegrating into society and either returns to the rebel force or joins the military. This continues the violent nature that many of the youth of Uganda are surrounded by. The four development traps that Collier has created are clearly visible in Uganda and have dire consequences on the future generations and development of Uganda. Unless these development traps are addressed and alleviated to some degree, the issue of child soldiering will continue to plague Uganda.

Having looked at the issues that plague Uganda, we can see that Uganda does in fact share the characteristics of a failed state. Uganda ranks low on the fragile state index, it meets the definition put forth by Collier and Chuavets (2006), and it has all four development traps present. Since Uganda does have all four of Collier's development traps present it is a valuable nation-state to evaluate on which of the development traps

are most important for the use of child soldiers. The development trap of landlocked with bad neighbors needs to be evaluated separately in this case, while Uganda is in fact a landlocked nation-state, it is not a necessary condition for child soldiers, Sudan and Sierra Leone are evidence of that. However, having bad neighbors is an important contributing factor, but is really a few steps from creating the conditions ripe for child soldiering.

The bad governance trap is another factor that contributes to the environment necessary for child soldiers but is not a direct cause of the problem. The lack of a stable and effective government in Uganda has led to dissatisfaction with the governing apparatus. The failed governments of Obote, and Amin are evidence that bad governance will lead to a change of power. However, the use of child soldiers is hardly a direct result of the change of power, every democratic nation that has experienced a transition of power from one leader to the next illustrates that. Bad governance does however lend itself to the other development traps that are more important in creating an environment that allows for the use of child soldiers.

The natural resource trap uses the presence of bad governance and the exploitation of a natural resource to contribute to the use of child soldiers. When there is a natural resource is discovered within the borders of a developing state it may seem to be a God send for that nation-state, but far too often that resource is overexploited to the neglect of other elements of the economy. In Uganda, the discovery of gold has led to exploitative mining practices, depletion of arable land, and environmental concerns; now with the discovery of oil, there may be a new resource to exploit. The exploitation of a resource is used to fuel the economy while other sectors of the economy falter, the sectors

that decline are many times agriculture and manufacturing leading to higher prices for the goods that the average person needs in daily life creating a sense of desperation and desire for change. As a result of these feeling among the populace, the fourth development trap arises, conflict trap.

Conflict trap is the most important development trap to contribute to the use of child soldiers, without the presence of conflict there is no need for child soldiers. While the other development traps can help contribute to conflict, they are not sufficient to lead to the use of child soldiers on their own. Being landlocked with bad neighbors will contribute to a poor economy and general frustration with the government but does not create conflict. Bad governance can lead to a coup d'état or government overthrow but often these are not mass movements that employs the use of child soldiers but are led by a small group of senior officials. Natural resources can contribute to a poor economy and can lead to conflict that utilizes child soldiers but does not result in child soldiers without conflict, this shows that in Uganda conflict trap is the most important trap when looking at the use of child soldiers. This is not to suggest that the other development traps play no role in the use of child soldiers but without conflict there is no need for them. As a result, in Uganda, where all four traps are present, the traps that seem to contribute to the child soldiers most are first, conflict trap, second, natural resource trap, third, bad governance trap, and finally, landlocked with bad neighbors.

## **Chapter Six: Case Study of Sierra Leone**

Unfortunately the issue of child soldiering is not an isolated issue for a few nation-states; child soldiering has been a serious problem in a variety of nation-states, including Sierra Leone. Many of the former European colonies in Africa have experienced civil war and interstate conflicts since gaining independence in 1961. As a result of this near continual fighting the need for soldiers and the use of child soldiers has increased. In countries such as Sierra Leone dealing with internal strife and suffering as a result of the use of children as weapons of destruction has had a long-term negative impact.

### **Introduction to Sierra Leone**

Sierra Leone is located on the Atlantic west coast of Africa between the nation-states of Liberia and Guinea as illustrated in map 6.1.

Map 6.1



Source: CIA World Factbook<sup>37</sup>

The population of Sierra Leone is approximately 5.7 million people in 2014; while the population is relatively small, making it the 112<sup>th</sup> most populous nation in the world, there is a richly diverse population within their borders. The largest ethnic groups consist of the Temne people at 35% of the total population, Mende people at 31%, Limba

<sup>37</sup> Map 6.1 at CIA World Factbook located at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/refmaps.html>

people at 8%, and the Kono People at 5% (CIA World Factbook). Along with the ethnic diversity there are religious divisions as well; the predominate religion is Islam at 71%, while those following Christianity make up 26% of the population, and indigenous beliefs, such as Animism or traditional African religions, make up the remainder (Pew Research Center, 2009).

The people of Sierra Leone rank 208<sup>th</sup> in the world for GDP per capita; 70% live below the poverty line. With over two thirds of Sierra Leone's population living below the poverty line, the economy appears unable to improve in a significant manner. High poverty rates in Sierra Leone are associated with a general lack of education, malnutrition, conflict, and child soldiers (CIA World Factbook). Sierra Leone was a colony of Great Britain for 169 years, beginning in 1792 until Sierra Leone achieved independence in 1961 (Fyfe, 1962). The colonial history of Sierra Leone began as a small settlement for freed slaves called Freetown, but quickly grew into a large colony that incorporated the indigenous people including the Temne and Mende people.

Along with ethnic and religious diversity and issues with poverty, Sierra Leone has had difficulty with their ranking on the Fragile States Index and Corruption Perceptions Index. In 2003, the first year Sierra Leone was included in the Corruption Perceptions Index<sup>38</sup> they scored 2.2 out of 10 and ranked 117 out of 133 nation-states that were rated. In 2005, the first year of the Fragile States Index<sup>39</sup> (formerly the Failed States Index), Sierra Leone scored a 102.1 out of 120 and garnered a ranking of 6<sup>th</sup> out of the nations rated that year. These numbers indicate that the situation for Sierra Leone was

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<sup>38</sup> The 2003 results for the Corruption Perceptions Index is located at [http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/cpi\\_2003/0/#results](http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/cpi_2003/0/#results)

<sup>39</sup> The 2005 version of the Fragile States Index is located at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/22/the-failed-states-index-2005/>

grim following their 11 year civil war and could have relapsed into a state of turmoil. However, Sierra Leone has made progress to improve their ratings on both of these indexes. In 2014, Sierra Leone scored 89.9/120 with a rank of 35<sup>th</sup> on the Fragile States Index and scored 31/100 with a rank of 119 of 175 nation-states rated on the Corruption Perceptions Index. The improvement shown by Sierra Leone does indicate that with the absence of conflict nation-states are able to advance their international standing.

### **Sierra Leone: A Colonial History and Turbulent Governance:**

Sierra Leone's colonial history and the internal strife since independence have created an environment conducive to war and conflict. In this environment children are at times the perpetrators of violence but more often the victims of violence. The use of child soldiers is commonplace in Sierra Leone and utilized by all sides involved in conflicts, whether rebel or government forces.

The nation-state of Sierra Leone gained independence in 1961 from Great Britain, of which it had been a colony since 1792 (Pham, 2005). During the Revolutionary War between the colonies in America and British Empire, many American slaves joined forces with the British and after the war they were resettled in Nova Scotia. In 1787, a group of abolitionists led a movement to relocate many of London's poor African population and those settled in Nova Scotia to the "Providence of Freedom" and established a settlement called Granville Town. This town only lasted until 1789, when it was razed by the local inhabitants led by King Jimmy (Shaw, 2002; Devenaux, 1976). In 1792, the British reestablished a colony in Sierra Leone, and called it the Freetown Colony. The Freetown Colony was set up by the Sierra Leone Company, an abolitionist organization, in London and was eventually settled by nearly 1,200 former American

slaves (Braidwood, 1994; Deveneaux, 1976; Brooks, 1974). The Sierra Leone Company existed until 1807, when it disbanded in part due to the abolition of the slave trade in Britain. After the disbanding of the Sierra Leone Company the British established the African Institution to improve the economy of Sierra Leone; after a few years of marginal success the African Institution was disbanded in 1811. Originally, Sierra Leone was a colony of Great Britain; and the Sierra Leone Company and African Institution were the governing bodies, after these organizations were dissolved Sierra Leone became a protectorate of Great Britain and was ruled by colonial governors.

The governor of the Sierra Leonean colony, Zachary Macauley, accepted twelve black families from America and gave them ten acres of free land. There were, of course, some stipulations attached to this, the incoming families were required to have a letter showing their good moral character which had to be signed by Reverend Hopkins (Hopkins, 1854). Hopkins was a theologian and early advocate of abolition of the slaves, he wrote a pamphlet addressed at the Continental Congress calling for the end of what became known as that peculiar institution (Williston, 1911). They also had to become British subjects and abide by the laws of the colony, pay the rent of one shilling a year, as all residents were required to pay, pay their own travel expenses to the colony, and clear at least 3.5 acres of land for agricultural purposes in the first two years or forfeit the land (Brooks, 1974). These black families from America blended in with the locals of Sierra Leone and the colony worked to supply Great Britain with resources most notable diamonds. In 1924 Great Britain restructured the standing of Sierra Leone, creating a colony of Freetown under British control and a protectorate of the inland region to be administered by local chiefs. This did not put an end to the British's desire for diamonds



leading to the diamond industry being monopolized in 1935 by the British organization the Sierra Leone Selection Trust run by the De Beers Company which was granted a 99 year lease essentially ensuring a successful monopoly (Greenhlagh, 1983). However this lease only lasted until 1955 when the trust dissolved and local control, under British watch, began in Sierra Leone. Throughout its history as a colony, the people of Sierra Leone pressed for increased political rights; and this effort succeeded in 1961 with independence.

The majority of African nation's gained their independence in a twenty year span from 1950 to 1970. The independence movements in Africa began after the Atlantic Charter was signed and WWII ended. The Atlantic Charter, an agreement initially between the U.S. and England, stated "they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them" (Churchill and Roosevelt, 1941)<sup>40</sup>. The Atlantic Charter encouraged many of the African nations to seek independence from their European colonizers; the U.S. was also vocal in promoting the European imperial powers to grant independence to their colonies (Sathasivam, 2005). The colonization of African by European nation-states led to the creation of a small elite class that was educated in western universities; as a result many of these new elites formed ideas about self government that contributed to the independence movements. For Sierra Leone, one important individual from this small elite class was Sir Milton Margai. Margai earned a medical degree in England and served as a doctor in Sierra Leone for over twenty years. Margai, one of the initial founders of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) began advocating independence and self determination for

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<sup>40</sup> Full text of the Atlantic Charter may be located at <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp>

Sierra Leone in 1951 and achieved his goal ten years later (Momoh, 2011). In 1961 Sir Milton Margai led the colony to independence, and in 1962, Margai became the first Prime Minister of Sierra Leone (Pham, 2005).

The years of the Margai administration were prosperous and peaceful in large part due to the wealth of mineral resources available. Margai appointed competent and honest individuals to government positions to ensure that the government would continue to run smoothly. However, Margai died in 1964 and his half-brother, Sir Albert Margai, took control (McKenna, 2011). Sir Albert Margai, soon after being appointed prime minister, dismissed several senior government officials appointed by his half-brother and labeled them as traitors and a threat to his own administration. Albert also attempted to create a one-party system and enacted laws to disband the opposition party of the All People's Congress (APC) (Pham, 2005).

Albert, whose popularity waned, opted to call for free elections in 1968, which resulted in the APC's leader Siaka Stevens winning the election. Soon after Stevens assumed control, he was ousted in a bloodless military coup and was placed under house arrest by Brigadier General David Lansana; Lansana suspended the constitution during this time and installed Brigadier Anrew Juxon-Smith, of the National Reformation Council (NRC), as the new head of state (Gberie 2005). Juxon-Smith's reign lasted only a short time before being overthrown by another military coup led by Brigadier General John Amadu Bangura, a modern day Cincinnatus for Sierra Leone, who reinstalled Stevens as the third Prime Minister in Sierra Leone history and reinstated the constitution (Gberie, 2005).

Stevens, having been overthrown once as Prime Minister, became more paranoid about others in the government and evolved into a more authoritative ruler. In 1970, Brigadier General Bangura, the military leader that reinstalled Stevens as Prime Minister, was popular in all sections of Sierra Leone and was seen as one of the few people in the country that could challenge Stevens' rule. Due to his popularity, and the military's loyalty to him, Stevens saw Bangura as a potential threat, and in January of 1970, Stevens had Bangura arrested for conspiracy to overthrow the Stevens government (Truth and Reconciliation 2004). In March of 1971, Bangura was found guilty, and after being severely beaten was hanged for treason, and was buried in an undisclosed location to prevent him from becoming a martyr (Truth and Reconciliation 2004). On March 23, 1971, soldiers who remained loyal to Bangura, attempted a mutiny in the nation's capital of Freetown in opposition to the Stevens government. Several of the soldiers were arrested and incarcerated for their role in the uprising and incarcerated; one of those arrested was a young corporal named Foday Sankoh. Sankoh was convicted of treason and imprisoned for seven years (Brittain, 2003), but would later be an important figure in Sierra Leone's future.

In April of 1971, a republican constitution was introduced and passed by the House of Representatives making Sierra Leone a Republic; Stevens became the first president of his nation a day after ratification of the constitution (Rotberg, 2003). In the 1973 general election, Stevens' opposition party, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), protested citing intimidation and voter obstruction by the APC and the militia, as a result the SLPP boycotted the election which allowed the APC to win eighty-four of the eighty-five elected seats that year (Rotberg, 2003). After several tumultuous years of governing

that saw coup d'état attempts and mass protesting, Stevens consolidated his power even more. In 1978, the APC controlled parliament and approved a new constitution for Sierra Leone, which made the nation a single party government with the APC being the only legal party (Gberie, 1998).

The passage of this new constitution led to mass protests against the government in several areas of the country, however the insurrection was swiftly put down by the military and the Special Security Division (SSD) police force (Gberie, 1998). In 1985, after eighteen years in power, President Stevens retired from politics and installed his handpicked replacement, Major General Joseph Momoh, as the new president (Coppa, 2006). Even though Momoh was handpicked by the outgoing president, and despite the fact he was the only candidate in a one-party system, he did receive support from the public. As a career military man, who rose from an enlisted man to the highest rank in the Sierra Leonean army, Major General, it was thought he could bring order and discipline to the government and root out the corruption; unfortunately he retained many of the corrupt officials from the Stevens' government (Coppa, 2006). Momoh's government can best be characterized by corruption and coup attempts. In 1987, there was an alleged coup attempt in which sixty government officials were arrested and tried for treason. Francis Minah, Momoh's Vice-President, was among the alleged conspirators who were convicted and executed in 1989 (Coppa, 2006; Luke, 1988).

In 1991, the Sierra Leonean civil war began as a result of the unchecked government corruption and economic and governmental collapse. By 1991, the conditions in Sierra Leone had reached the point of no return, the school systems failed, kids were left to their own devices, and much of the professional class of Sierra Leone

had fled looking for better opportunities. Although Momoh created a new constitution that allowed for a multi-party system to be installed; this move came too late to stop the ever-increasing violence by the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone RUF/SL from spreading (Reno, 2008). The RUF/SL created by Foday Sankoh, the young corporal that spent seven years in prison, had the intended goal to remove the current government and replace one that gave equality to the people of Sierra Leone. In their pamphlet *Footpaths to Democracy*, the group stated that they wanted “No More Slaves, No More Masters. Power and Wealth to the People”<sup>41</sup>, this stated goal seemed far from the actual practice of the group however. The RUF/SL will play an integral role in the civil war and commit some of the worst atrocities during the conflict. The RUF/SL will fight against the government regardless of the head of the government with the simple intention of change but no suggestion of what that change should be.

In 1992, Momoh was overthrown in a coup led by twenty-five year old army captain Valentine Strasser, who, at twenty-five became the world’s youngest head of state, a position he held until 1996 when he was overthrown in a military coup d’état (Amnesty International). Strasser’s government consisted of several military colleagues nearly all of which were under the age of twenty-eight, making it the youngest government in West Africa. Strasser, despite his human rights abuses which included the execution of twenty-nine alleged coup plotters without trial, managed to successfully deal with a few of the issues that plagued Sierra Leone. He recommenced collecting taxes, reduced street crime, cut the bureaucratic budget, cleaned up the city’s trash, as well as lowered inflation from 115% a year to 15% (Fritz, 1994).

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<sup>41</sup> *Footpaths to Democracy* located at <http://fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/footpaths.htm>

Regardless of these early successes, and receiving help from the international community, including the US, United Kingdom, Nigeria, Ghana, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Strasser was toppled by his second in command Brigadier General Julius Bio in January of 1996 (Clements, 2005). Bio held power from January of 1996 to March of that same year, before turning power over to the democratically elected Ahmed Kabbah of the SLPP (African Elections Database). Kabbah wanted to end the deadly civil war raging throughout the country since 1991, and in November of 1996, signed a peace agreement with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader Foday Sankoh in Côte d'Ivoire. This peace agreement was short lived as the RUF disregarded it and resumed violence against all members of the Sierra Leonean society.

In late 1996, an alleged coup attempt against Kabbah took place and Major Johnny Paul Koroma was jailed as a conspirator, as a result of his jailing in May of 1997, soldiers loyal to Koroma led a successful coup against Kabbah and drove him into exile in Guinea (Fyle and Foray, 2006). Once Koroma was freed from prison he was asked to lead the new military junta known as the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), a position he accepted. The AFRC ruled jointly with the RUF until February of 1998, when they were removed by the Nigerian led Economic Community Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and the Kabbah government was reinstated (Fyle and Foray, 2006). After being removed by ECOMOG Koroma joined forces with the RUF and fought against the Kabbah government, after the civil war officially ended in 2002, Koroma was made the chairman of the government's Commission for Consolidation and Peace. In 2002, he ran unsuccessfully for president as the candidate for the Peace and

Liberation Party. After being accused of a coup attempt in the later part of that year, Koroma disappeared (Fyle and Foray, 2006).

In the 2007 general elections, Ernest Koroma of the APC was elected President and focused on rebuilding the war torn nation-state. He focused on improving the country's infrastructure, bringing an end to government corruption, and providing better health care to the people of Sierra Leone (BBC News, 2007). These efforts have led to an improvement in the economy of Sierra Leone. Koroma faced reelection in 2012 against former Head of State Julius Bio a nominee of the SLPP. Koroma easily won reelection with 58.7% of the vote to Bio's 37.4% obtaining a second five year term (nec-sierraleone.org).

### **Sierra Leone and the RUF/SL**

Sierra Leone was able to avoid large-scale political issues for the first 30 years after independence in 1961. The only exception came in 1967 when the All People's Congress (APC) led by Siaka Stevens faced a bloodless coup led by Brigadier General David Lansana, who remained loyal to the previous Prime Minister Sir Ablert Margai. However, senior military officials took advantage of the lack of leadership, seized power and suspended the constitution. This new military junta branded themselves as the National Reformation Council (NRC) with Brigadier Andrew Juxon-Smith as its Chairman and Governor-General. His rule was short lived however, when a group of senior military officials calling themselves the Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement (ACRM) overthrew the NRC and reinstalled the democratic constitution and Stevens as the head of the government (U.S. Department of State)<sup>42</sup>. While the early history of

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<sup>42</sup> Department of State document located at <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/bgnotes/af/sierraleone9406.html>

Sierra Leone was relatively stable, like many African nations, Sierra Leone has experienced internal strife over the past few decades. In March of 1991, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL)<sup>43</sup> invaded Sierra Leone from Liberia. Foday Sankoh, a 15 year veteran (1956 – 1971) of the Sierra Leonean Army attaining the rank of corporal, led the RUF/SL from 1991 until the end of the civil war in 2002 (Denov and MacLure, 2006). As is the case with many of the civil wars that plague Africa, rebel groups, in this case the RUF/SL, are in part, supported by the interests of neighboring nations. For Sierra Leone, the RUF/SL was supported by Charles Taylor, a Liberian warlord and 22<sup>nd</sup> President of Liberia (Denov and MacLure, 2006).

At the end of the civil war in 2002, the Sierra Leonean government and the United Nations (UN) established the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) to deal with atrocities that occurred during the Sierra Leonean Civil war. The court is “mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996” (sc-sl.org). Many of the indictments from this court dealt with members of the RUF/SL leadership but also some foreign heads of state as well, including Charles Taylor of Liberia; Foday Sankoh was one leader of the RUF/SL that was indicted by the SCSL.

A brief look at one such RUF/SL leader will allow some insight into the circumstances and opportunities that allow men to lead these rebel groups. Foday Sankoh, the leader of the RUF/SL, attended a primary school in Sierra Leone and was literate, although reportedly not proficient (Economist, 2003). In 1956 Sankoh joined the Sierra Leone Army and rose to the rank of corporal. As an army corporal, Sankoh was

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<sup>43</sup> To read the RUF/SL doctrine and mission visit <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/footpaths.htm>



part of the UN peacekeeping missions in the Congo in the early 1960s—an effort which failed and left Sankoh with a distrust of the UN and its seeming inability to settle African conflicts (Brittian, 2003). Sankoh was expelled from the army in 1971 due to a mutiny implemented to reform the politics of the nation and the leadership of the All People's Congress (APC), the governing party from 1968 to 1992. As a result of his participation in the mutiny, Sankoh spent seven years incarcerated at Pademba Road Prison in Freetown (Bolten, 2012). After his release he worked as an itinerant photographer before eventually being recruited by Muammar al-Qaddafi to the World Revolutionary Center (WRC) and learned the violent tactics of becoming an African warlord. The WRC was an institution supported by Libyan dictator Muammar al-Qaddafi (Farah, 2011) and referred to as the “Harvard and Yale of a whole generation of African revolutionaries,” several of whom became violent dictators (Ellis, 2001; 72).

Sankoh initially garnered some support from the people in eastern Sierra Leone because the schools, health clinics, and other government services were rife with corruption and Sankoh's message of free education, free health care, and shared diamond revenues was appealing to the nation's poor (Economist, 2003). However, once Sankoh gained control of the diamond mines in eastern Sierra Leone he used the diamonds to buy weapons from Charles Taylor in Liberia; and failed to provide any of the promised programs to the nation's poor.

Taylor is also believed to have aided the RUF in the atrocities against the Sierra Leonean people, assisting in the recruitment and abduction of children for child soldiering, and is reported to have personally led some of the RUF/SL forces (Farah and Braun, 2008). Taylor was involved with the RUF due to his connection to RUF/SL

leader Foday Sankoh, who went through the World Revolutionary Center with Taylor, and his desire for profits from the diamond mines in eastern Sierra Leone (Farah, 2011).

The RUF/SL used idealist rhetoric as the reason for their actions, claiming that they were a political movement that wanted to spread democracy and create “a new Sierra Leone of freedom, justice, and equal opportunity for all” (RUF/SL, 1995). The RUF/SL’s message however, was not well received and failed to attract a large following. The RUF/SL contained many veteran fighters from the Liberian civil war that had started in 1989. These soldiers were not enough to sustain the fighting force and the RUF/SL began recruiting and abducting children to use as soldiers. Initially, the RUF/SL was a small force containing sixty guerrillas that attacked villages in eastern Sierra Leone, where there was little resistance to the well-armed guerrillas. As the RUF/SL attacked villages they were able to recruit and abduct new fighters to strengthen their ranks. Furthermore, eastern Sierra Leone is also home to many of the wealth producing diamond mines that helped fuel this civil war. The allure of wealth and the desire to control the diamond producing region was all the tinder needed to fuel the violence and civil wars in Sierra Leone.

This disruption to the government diamond mine production led to a coup in 1992, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) took control of the government and sent the Sierra Leonean Army (SLA) to repel the rebels (Gberie, 2005). The SLA was able to push the RUF/SL rebels back to the Liberian boarder by the end of 1993, but the RUF/SL, with support from Liberian President Charles Taylor, regrouped and continued their assault of Sierra Leonean forces. In 1995, the Sierra Leone government contracted the South African mercenary company Executive Outcomes to fight back the

RUF/SL forces; as a result the RUF/SL signed the Abidjan Peace Accord and agreed to a ceasefire. A result of this looming peace agreement, but before the agreement was fully implemented, the Sierra Leonean government terminated their contract with Executive Outcomes and conflict recommenced almost immediately (Keen, 2005; Abdullah, 2004). When violence resumed in the region it continued to promote instability in the government and discontent among many of the leading figures throughout Sierra Leone.

When the AFRC took power in 1997, via a military coup, they united with the RUF/SL and ruled the nation, subsequently the leader of the AFRC Johnny Paul Kormora declared the Civil war over; this resulted in widespread looting, murder, and rape (Gberie, 2005). Due to these widespread human rights abuses, the international community took action and the ECOMOG intervened and retook Freetown for the government. In 1999, the Lome Peace Accord (LPA) was signed, this peace accord gave the vice presidency to Foday Sankoh and control of the nation's diamond mines in return for the cessation of fighting by RUF/SL soldiers, and a U.N. peacekeeping force to oversee the disarmament of rebel forces (LPA, 1999; Gberie, 2005). With the cession of fighting, the rebel forces no longer needed to maintain their numbers and a drop off of child soldiers was visible, this did not entirely end the practice of child soldiers but with little to no hostilities the end of the practice was in sight. However, poor implementation of the peace accord and a slow disarmament of the RUF/SL fighters allowed the RUF/SL to advance on Freetown. The British Government intervened to help the failing U.N. mission and prop up the weak Kabbah government. With the British supplying more U.N. assistance along with air support from Guinea, Sierra Leone finally saw the defeat of the RUF/SL and the Civil war officially declared over on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

## **Collier's Development Traps Applied in Sierra Leone:**

The application of Collier's development traps in Sierra Leone can help explain some of the issues that Sierra Leone has faced since its independence from Great Britain in 1961. Sierra Leone has suffered through six successful coup d'états and several unsuccessful ones, outside interference funded by the Liberian government, and a long and bloody civil war. Sierra Leone has natural resources (diamonds in particular) that are exploited to the detriment of other sectors of the economy. Also, Sierra Leone ranks 119 of 177 with a score of 30 out of 100 on the Corruption Perceptions Index produced by Transparency International<sup>44</sup>. Along with the poor ranking on the Corruption Perceptions Index Sierra Leone ranked 33 of 178 with a score of 91.2 (120 is the worst) on Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index in 2013<sup>45</sup>. These last two rankings show that the leadership within Sierra Leone is poor and have created a culture of bad governance. The one trap that does not fully apply to Sierra Leone is being landlocked with bad neighbors. While Sierra Leone does have bad neighbors which will be discussed they are a coastal nation-state with access to the Atlantic Ocean.

### *1. The Conflict Trap*

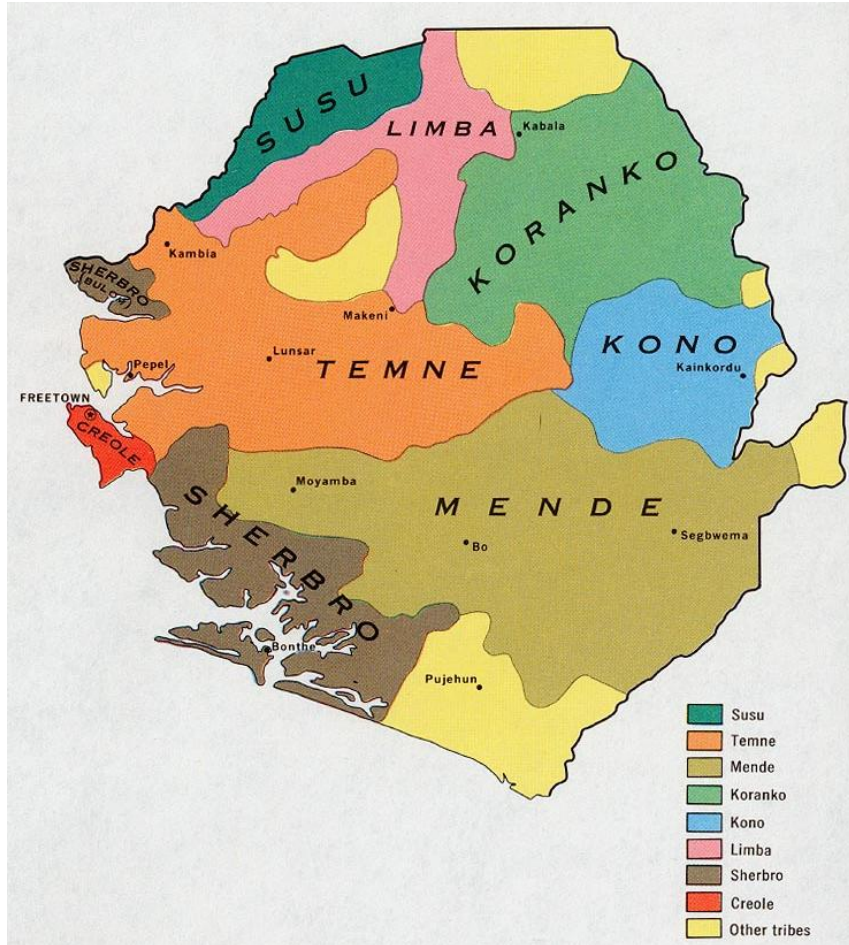
Unlike the other African nation-states discussed in this study, Sierra Leone has no major ethnic division within its borders. While there are eighteen different ethnic groups in Sierra Leone there is little conflict between them, the largest ethnic groups are the Temne, Mende, and Krio (CIA World Factbook). The map 6.2 shows the region of Sierra Leone these ethnic groups reside.

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<sup>44</sup> The Corruption Perception Index can be found at Transparency International at <http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview>

<sup>45</sup> Fragile States Index is located at Fund for Peace at <http://ffp.statesindex.org/rankings-2013-sortable>

## Map 6.2 Ethnic Groups in Sierra Leone



*Source: Perry Castaneda Library Map Collection University of Texas at Austin*<sup>46</sup>

This does not however mean there is no conflict in Sierra Leone. There have been six successful coups since 1961, with the most recent being the overthrow of Johnny Paul Koroma in 1998. Along with often violent coup d'états, Sierra Leone was involved in a civil war lasting from 1991 to 2002, with an estimated 50,000 dead (Gberie, 2006; p. 6; Hirsch, 2000; p. 31). Since these conflicts have been discussed above I will not go into detail about them here, however, these conflicts especially the civil war, are directly related to the natural resource trap.

<sup>46</sup> Map 6.2 located at [http://images.nationmaster.com/nm/motw/africa/sierra\\_leone\\_ethnic\\_1969.jpg](http://images.nationmaster.com/nm/motw/africa/sierra_leone_ethnic_1969.jpg)

## 2. The Natural Resource Trap

Sierra Leone has large and valuable alluvial diamond reserves in the southern and eastern regions especially in the districts of Kono and Kenema, and is easily attainable with little commercial equipment (Abdullah, 2004). The diamond mines were a vital part of the Stevens government from 1971 to 1985, and a major contributing factor to the civil war that raged in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002. The diamond wealth was controlled by a joint venture between the Stevens government and the DeBeers Corporation, and much of the government share went to the personal wealth of Stevens (Federico, 2007; Keen, 2005). This lack of wealth distribution and corruption by Stevens led to popular dissatisfaction of the government. DeBeers decided to end the joint venture in 1984 and as a result the Sierra Leonean government lost control over the diamond mines. During this time the majority of diamonds were smuggled out of the country and profits went to private individuals primarily Lebanese traders (Keen, 2005; Hirsh, 2000). After Stevens retired from politics in 1985, the succeeding government attempted to reduce or stop diamond smuggling but their efforts were too little and the illegal diamond trade continued.

Diamonds also contributed to the civil war because diamond sales provided funds for the RUF to buy weapons and outfit troops. Since many of the diamonds are shallow and easily extracted the RUF needed to keep control of the region by removing the civilians in the area, often through violent means (Abdullah, 2004; Gberie, 2006). The violence that was perpetrated for control of the diamond mines gave rise to the term “blood diamonds” or “conflict diamonds” which refer to any diamond mined in areas of

conflict or controlled by non government forces, or diamonds sold to fund military actions against the legitimate government (Curnow, 2012).

Since the civil war ended, some stability has returned to Sierra Leone, but the government is still relying on diamonds as a major source of revenue. In 2003, Sierra Leone joined the Kimberley Process, which is an international certification scheme that attempts to certify that all diamonds being sold are conflict free and helps to protect the legitimate diamond trade (Kimberley Process)<sup>47</sup>. While the Kimberley Process is not an official international agreement, since it is left to the participant nation-states to adhere to the requirements, it has helped legitimize the diamond trade. However, even with this voluntary safeguard in place, there is still diamond smuggling throughout the world; but it is a relatively small share of the diamond trade today. The World Diamond Council claims that 99% of diamonds being sold today are conflict free diamonds<sup>48</sup>.

The diamonds coming out of Sierra Leone are now classified as “conflict free,” likely a part of their increased sales; in fact diamonds accounted for 46% of Sierra Leone’s exports in 2008 (Bermudez-Lugo, 2010). Sierra Leone is also ranked number one in the world for industrial production growth in 2013, at a rate of 42% per year, this sector of the economy includes manufacturing, construction, and mining (CIA World Factbook). With the ability to label diamonds as conflict free and receive a higher price for the rough stones, there has been a growing emphasis on mining. The focus on growing the industrial sector, especially resource mining, of the economy is likely at the detriment of the agricultural sector, which currently accounts for nearly 48% of the GDP

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<sup>47</sup> A more detailed explanation of the Kimberly Process can be located at <http://www.kimberleyprocess.com/en/about>

<sup>48</sup> A detailed explanation by the World Diamond Council may be located at <http://www.worlddiamondcouncil.com/>

in Sierra Leone (CIA World Factbook). As more land is used for mining and more industrial jobs are offered, the lure of a better life will bring people out of the agricultural sector into the industrial sector. Although this shift does not necessarily always have drawbacks, in the case of Sierra Leone, it creates a reliance on natural resources, a lack of local food production, and a lack of diversification of the economy, all of which can lead to economic collapse. As Sierra Leone embraces the high global prices of diamonds and rushes to exploit the market they may just be falling into this development trap.

The neglect of an economic sector such as manufacturing or agriculture will negatively affect the overall economy, while short term returns are immense with the exploitation of a natural resource, in this case diamonds, sustainability is often not a facet of the economic plan. Furthermore, oil, gold, or diamonds are not going to provide basic goods to the individuals in a nation-state that need them most. In Sierra Leone this produces a number of jobs and improves the GDP per capita, but it does not help to provide the basic needs for survival. The increase of GDP per capita does not take into account the increase cost of living due to the lack of production of daily goods such as food or clothing; higher priced versions then need to be imported causing further economic harm to the average worker.

### *3. Being Landlocked With Bad Neighbors Trap*

Sierra Leone does not suffer from being a landlocked nation-state having access to the Atlantic Ocean, but they do suffer from having bad neighbors. Sierra Leone borders Liberia and Guinea, nation-states that on the Corruption Perceptions Index ranked 94 out of 175 (score 37/100) and 145 out of 175 (score 25/100) respectively. Liberia has improved dramatically on this index from 2007 when they were rated 150 of



179, in part due to the resignation of Charles Taylor in 2003 and, after a 3-year vacancy, the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2006 (Transparency International). Along with their poor rankings on the Corruption Perceptions Index these countries did poorly on the Fragile States Index as well. Liberia ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> of 178 with a score of 95.1 and Guinea ranked 14<sup>th</sup> of 178 with their score being 101.3 on the Fragile States Index. Liberia and Guinea have GDP per capita's of \$700 and \$1,100 respectively, both of which are lower than the GDP per capita of Sierra Leone's \$1,400 (CIA World Factbook). The combination of poor rankings on both of these indexes, along with low GDPs show that the neighbors of Sierra Leone have little to contribute to the Sierra Leonean economy (Fund for Peace).

While Sierra Leone does have sea access, they do not have modern port facilities, this limits the amount of goods they are able to import and export; this along with the weak economies of these neighboring nation-states has not allowed for Sierra Leone to have nearby markets to sell their goods to, the top four trading partners for Sierra Leone are China, Belgium, Japan, and Turkey, showing that even shipping from outdated facilities is better than trading with their neighbors (CIA World Factbook). The limits of Sierra Leone's port, along with having bad neighbors, has made improving the Sierra Leonean economy difficult, so while not landlocked with bad neighbors, the "limited port and bad neighbors trap" has many of the same effects for Sierra Leone.

#### *4. The Bad Governance Trap*

The Sierra Leone government has been stable since 1998, having only two presidents during that time. This does not mean that there was effective governance during that same time frame. Sierra Leone ranks 119<sup>th</sup> out of 178 with a score of 30 on

the Corruption Perceptions Index and 33<sup>rd</sup> of 178 with a score of 91.2 on the Fragile States Index. These two indexes show that while the government has been stable, progress has been slow. Ahmad Kabbah first came to power in 1996, when he was able to secure the presidential election as a compromise candidate after the recent overthrow of the Strasser government in 1992. During this time the Sierra Leonean civil war was raging and Kabbah did little to put down the rebel fighters. He mostly relied on outside forces, notably, Nigeria and the United Kingdom, for help in the conflict. In 1997, Kabbah was overthrown by Johnny Koroma and exiled to Guinea, this exile was short lived however, and he returned to power after 263 days (BBC NEWS, 2014).

After Kabbah's return in 1998 he worked closely with international forces and negotiated with the rebel leaders to put an end to the civil war, this goal was finally achieved in 2002. Later that year Kabbah won reelection in a landslide and ruled until 2007. While Kabbah, by most accounts, was an honest leader, not everyone in his administration was free of corruption. Kabbah was too weak to stand up to his corrupt ministers and during his presidency Latin American drug lords moved into the country and used it as a staging ground for smuggling cocaine to Europe (Telegraph, 2014). Due to constitutional term limits Kabbah could not run for reelection in 2007 ushering in the era of Ernest Koroma. Koroma has been attempting to put in reforms to improve the government but, again, the results are slow. Since his election Koroma strengthened and supported the Sierra Leone Anti-corruption Commission and vowed a zero tolerance policy on corruption in government. Koroma also stated he would crack down on the drug trafficking in Sierra Leone and pass tougher laws dealing with narcotics to attempt to remove the drug trade from Sierra Leone. Government bureaucrats have been targeted

by drug smugglers because of the poor economy and the ability to buy protection from the government on a local level (BBC NEWS, 2008-1). Koroma also dismissed several government officials that were charged with corruption, including two of his ministers that were indicted on corruption charges by the anti-corruption commission (Doyle, 2009).

Along with the government reforms on corruption and the drug trade, Koroma has declared that he wants to focus on agriculture and tourism and not mining as a method to improve the economy (Manson, 2007). Koroma seems to be following through with at least part of this declaration, while diamond mining still accounts for nearly half of the country's exports he did create the Gola Forest National Park in 2007 and banned the export of timber (BBC NEWS, 2007, 2008-2). Although corruption is not as direct as in many countries and there have been some positive reforms and sound policies slowly working their way into place, corruption and residual bad government policies are still very apparent in Sierra Leone's government.

Overall, Koroma seems to have put in place good governance policies. There has been improvement since he took office, as shown by the rankings on the Corruption Perceptions Index. In 2007, Sierra Leone was tied for 150<sup>th</sup> of 179 and has currently improved to 119<sup>th</sup> of 178 in 2013. This is a small improvement but it is an indication that they are moving in the right direction, however, Koroma is term limited out in 2017 leaving the future uncertain.

### **Discussion - Child Soldiers and Development Traps:**

As seen throughout this discussion, there are many factors that contributed to the use of child soldiers in Sierra Leone. There were economic factors, such as high rates of

poverty, low GDP per capita, trade imbalances, and poor neighboring economies. There were issues of bad governance and corruption, along with instability of the government structure and institutions; and there was conflict. During the height of the use of child soldiers there was a violent civil war occurring, this war was fueled by blood diamonds and greed. The rebel forces wanted to replace the current government and used diamonds and the backing of Liberia to pay for their campaign of aggression. During the eleven year civil war that utilized children as soldiers all of these characteristics were present within Sierra Leone showing a connection between the use of child soldiers and these characteristics. All of these characteristics are related to the development traps that Collier formulated. The only trap not present in Sierra Leone is being a landlocked nation-state but it does suffer from bad neighbors.

All of the aforementioned characteristics are contributing factors in creating a failed state, poor economic conditions along with poor governmental services, corruption, and the presence or possibility of conflict can lead to a state being classified as failed. While the Fund for Peace Fragile States Index does not list any nation-state as “failed” the nation-states that are in lowest percentile are listed in the “alert” category, this category is the equivalent of a failed state or near failed state. Sierra Leone falls into the bottom twenty five percentile on the Fragile States Index with a rank of 33 of 178, while this is higher than some other African nation-states it is on the border of “warning” and “alert” and with neighbors that rank lower, and the current presence of two of Collier’s development traps, resource trap and bad governance trap, Sierra Leone may easily be drawn into the “alert” category.

Looking at the development traps that Collier discusses applied to Sierra Leone it is shown that currently Sierra Leone is dealing with two and a half traps within their borders, natural resource trap, bad governance trap, and bad neighbors trap. However, when Sierra Leone had high rates of child soldiers the conflict trap was also present. While Sierra Leone is not a landlocked nation-state they do suffer from the other aspect of this trap, having bad neighbors. So, while the landlocked aspect of this trap is not a factor, this trap needs to be appraised to the degree that bad neighbors play a role. For Sierra Leone, the poor economies of its neighbors and the interference of Liberia during their civil war are factors that contributed to the use of child soldiers when the conflict trap was present. The most recent report issued by Child Soldier International indicates that Sierra Leone is no longer using child soldiers; this is important because as the conflict trap no longer applies in Sierra Leone, we also see that child soldiers are no longer needed. However, since there are two traps still present and these two traps are contributors to conflict, this may change in the future. If the return of hostilities occurred, it is likely that the old methods of fighting would resume in Sierra Leone. If, or perhaps when, violence returns to Sierra Leone so will the haunting apparition of the child soldier return to Sierra Leone.

### **Conclusions:**

Sierra Leone is a nation-state that has the potential to be a model for other African nations to break away from the dependence on child soldiers in conflict. Sierra Leone has not utilized any children as soldiers since the end of the civil war in 2002 and has seen improvements in their economy. The potential issue with the economic improvement is that it relies heavily on mining diamonds. With the conflict free

certification of diamonds increasing profits for the government and some of that money being reinvested into the infrastructure and government services, much of that profit goes into updating mining sites to become more efficient at exploiting their biggest export.

If the governing apparatus of Sierra Leone could shift their priority from what is currently a profitable export and invest in other areas, such as building a better port for trade or update their agricultural system, they could create a healthy sustainable economy. A long term economic plan for success would be beneficial in the fight to end the use of child soldiers; with a healthy economy governments can adequately provide services, such as health care, education, and security, to its citizens. As the populace of Sierra Leone sees their lives improve through new investment in the economy, the nation-state, and more importantly in their lives, the urge to rebel lessens. As Ted Gurr noted in *Why Men Rebel* (1970) without relative deprivation, or the realization that they do not have what others have, the desire to change the system decreases. When people have nothing to lose, it is worth fighting for change, however when the people have a decent life there is no reason to change.

While Sierra Leone has not experienced conflict in over a decade they are still at the edge of the failed state cliff looking over a chasm that is far too easy to fall into. Sierra Leone currently only has two and a half of the development traps present within their borders, those of bad governance, natural resource, and the half trap of bad neighbors. The lack of the conflict trap has greatly helped Sierra Leone avoid being a failed state, a category they would have fallen into as late as 2002. This example helps to illustrate that the presence of these four development traps are needed to be a failed state, in other nation-states that have all four traps present so is the moniker of failed state.

Sierra Leone assists in drawing a conclusion to research question 2B. By looking at the development traps that are present and the traps that are not present in Sierra Leone, a nation-state not considered failed, we see that the omission of the conflict trap is imperative to success. This does not however suggest that the other factors are not important to a failed state status. Sierra Leone is teetering on success and failure, because of the strains placed on the economy and government of Sierra Leone, even a minor conflict within its borders would easily lead the country into a downward spiral into chaos and failure. While it may not be necessary for all four traps to be present for a nation-state to be considered a failed state, the lack of one trap, conflict, is enough to lift a nation-state out of the failed state category. At the same time, with the lack of conflict, the reliance on child soldiers is lost. If no conflict exists, there is no need for soldiers, especially from the most vulnerable populations. Applying Collier's traps in Sierra Leone we are able to see which traps were most important to the use of child soldiers in that nation-state, the most important trap is conflict trap, followed by resource trap, then bad governance trap, lastly would be landlocked with bad neighbors trap as this trap only partially applies to Sierra Leone. As we have seen, with the cession of hostilities in Sierra Leone we have seen first the reduction of child soldiers and the potential eradication of the practice.

Sierra Leone has made great strides to eliminate the use of child soldiers, and can now boast that they are free of their use. The lack of any major conflict within their borders for the last 13 years, the increase in economic revenue from diamonds, and the now moderately stable government have helped to contribute to this success. The issue is whether that success can be sustained, with the current President term limited out in

2017, the volatile commodities market, and the threat of violence in other nation-states near Sierra Leone could lead to instability and violence in Sierra Leone. The ability of Sierra Leone to serve as a model to other nation-states in Africa looking to eliminate child soldiers within their borders is a realistic possibility. This would require a long-term economic plan that includes investing in infrastructure, government services, diversification of the economy, and abstention from military conflict. If Sierra Leone is able to achieve in these areas, other nation-states can emulate the concepts that led to their success and see positive gains as well. This potential to serve as the model for Africa will of course hinge on the near future of Sierra Leone's economy and whether there will be sustained success.



## **Chapter Seven: Discussion and Conclusions**

### **Child Soldiers: Overview**

The concept of child soldiering has been in existence since the first time two autonomous groups decided to go to war. Of course the methods, weapons, and reasons have changed significantly over time. This is not an issue that will quickly be remedied nor will the principle actors involved change their mindset. The persistence of issues, in this case focused on Africa, such as famine, governmental instability, corruption, disease, environmental issues, and conflict, ensure the continuation of children put in danger as they are needed to fill the ranks of rebel groups or government sponsored militaries.

Child soldiering is generally seen as a negative consequence of civil conflict, social strife, and non-democratic regimes. While there are numerous negative impacts of child soldiering, there are also a few understandable reasons that encourage children to join fighting forces. As many as 64% of child soldiers willingly join fighting forces because they see no other opportunity to obtain their basic needs (International Labour Organization, 2014). Many of the children that end up in fighting forces are faced with poverty, starvation, and physical insecurity before the opportunity to join these fighting forces presented itself. The fighting forces that these children join typically are able to provide these basic needs to them. In many instances joining a fighting force may be the only option for a child to attain regular meals, even if they are modest.

In conjunction with the lack of food is the lack of housing for these children. In several instances the villages or towns that the recruits formerly resided in were destroyed during civil conflict. This results in a large number of people living without the basic necessity of shelter. Far too often one or both parents of a child are killed or

disappear during these conflicts and are thus unable to provide or help their child with shelter, resulting in the child joining a fighting unit. If recruiters provide food and shelter for the child, no matter how primitive it may be, it is an attractive option.

Physical security is another factor explaining why children may join fighting forces. Children that lose their families are often unable to protect themselves from the dangers frequently confronted in life, including encounters with fighting forces. Children that willingly join these forces are less likely to face violence from them, and are more likely to be trusted by the commanders, thus may receive rewards from looting and pillaging. These children may also be protected from other dangerous elements in society such as gangs, thieves, and violent criminals. This protection is of course limited.

Overall, the main benefits for the children to join fighting forces, largely deal with the basic needs of humanity. To a recruited child, the potential benefits of food and shelter outweigh the negative aspects of having to fight. As far as armed forces are concerned if they can exploit these issues to recruit and abduct children and then use them for their own personal gain, it is providing an opportunity to better the child's situation.

As previously explained, children in fighting forces are mostly used for non-combative roles, but are also seen as expendable soldiers and are, time and again, singled out for dangerous assignments. Rebel commanders understand that children may not fully grasp the dangers they face and may not understand their own mortality; this makes them useful tools in battle. Children are often assigned to clear roads or paths for landmines and likely do not realize the danger of that task. Children are sent in the first attack wave of a confrontation, sometimes without weapons simply to serve as cannon fodder, and because many soldiers have a difficult time shooting a child, even when they

are seen as a threat. There has been a rise in recent years in the use of children as suicide bombers in part due to these reasons (Achvarina and Reich 2006).

Child soldiers also face possible harm from their commanders and fellow soldiers while in the fighting unit. Many of the girls in the fighting forces, whether abducted or not, wind up as child brides or bush wives to older soldiers, and often become pregnant. This is harmful to the girls in a number of ways. The girls face the risk of death or injury during child birth due to unsanitary conditions and lack of basic knowledge or medical care. In addition, the rate of HIV/AIDS in many fighting units is higher than in the general population resulting in an elevated risk of disease transmission.

Commanders will also use violence against child soldiers, both male and female, for disciplinary purposes. To ensure that the children will not try to escape they will often beat a child who attempts escape, as a warning to others. In addition, they randomly beat children to make certain they understand they should not get out of line and continue to work hard. These beatings can be quite severe and, in some cases, lead to death either from the brutality of the beating or from complications resulting from the beating, such as infection.

Another long-term negative effect of child soldiering is the loss of education. In the formative years of adolescence these children are in the bush learning military tactics and training instead of reading and writing. The length of the child's abduction is related to the loss of education, each year spent with a fighting unit equates to a little over a half year of education lost (Blattman and Annan, 2010). Many of the girls who are abducted and give birth will not reenter school once they escape or are released because they have to take care of their children and do not have resources for school (McKenzie, 2007).

This loss of education not only hurts the abducted youth but also the economy of the nation as they have a less educated workforce.

Child soldiers also face psychological issues from the atrocities that they are forced to either witness or commit. Children who experience violence during their time in a fighting force display symptoms of distress (Blattman and Annan, 2008). This can be an issue after the child leaves the fighting force, as they may have a more difficult time adapting back to society. Furthermore, these children, who would benefit from mental health treatment, often do not receive adequate treatment due to the lack of resources available to the individual or the organization attempting to provide services.

Overall, the issue of child soldiering needs to be a topic of discussion on the international level. In Africa alone, reducing child soldiers can help increase development, lifting hundreds of millions out of poverty. With a population boom on the African continent, the potential for the use of child soldiers will increase unless the underlying causes can be addressed. The issue of child soldiering has been discussed in academic literature but has not adequately looked at the effect that the “development traps,” as discussed by Collier, contribute to the use of child soldiers in Africa. Collier’s development traps do help identify the underlying problems in Africa. By looking at the results from this study we can begin to have a meaningful discussion on how to best address the issues that contribute to child soldiering in Africa.

## **Results from Research Questions**

In this dissertation I have addressed three research questions:

1. What nation-states use child soldiers and what characteristics do these countries share, i.e., is it possible to identify characteristics within these nation-states that lead to the use of child soldiers?

2a. Can the nation-states that share these characteristics be classified as a failed state (as defined by Collier and Chauvets (2006), Collier (2007) and the Fragile State Index from the Fund for Peace)?

2b. Using Colliers (2007) work focused on four development traps that often plague failed states, is it possible to assess which development trap(s) most commonly lead(s) a failed state to use child soldiers?

Research question 1; (What nation-states use child soldiers and what characteristics do these countries share, i.e., is it possible to identify characteristics within these nation-states that lead to the use of child soldiers?) affords the opportunity to look at the underlying issues in the nation-states that use child soldiers and allows for a comparison between nation-states to identify any generalization that exist and address the problem as a whole. The nation-states that use child soldiers do in fact share many characteristics that have been identified in this study. Attributes such as poverty, disease, conflict, lack of education, and refugee/internally displaced people are visible in the nation-states that use child soldiers. By identifying and addressing the underlying causes of child soldiers the struggle to eliminate the use of child soldiers can become effective. With the reduction of one or two of the underlying causes, such as disease or lack and education, the ability to move a nation-state from failed state to developing

state can lower the rates of child soldiering. To be considered a failed or failing state there needs to be a failure in social, political, and economic spheres; a failed state does not need to be failing in all three areas, failure in just one category can be enough to be considered a failed state. High rates of poverty coupled with a low rate of education can lead to a failure in the social and economic areas. By addressing these issues, the risk of failure in those two areas could be reduced enough to improve the rate of child soldiering as well.

Research question 2a; (Can the nation-states that share these characteristics be classified as a failed state as defined by Collier and Chauvets (2006), Collier (2007) and the Fragile States Index from the Fund for Peace?) shows that nation-states with characteristics identified in research question 1 can often be categorized as failed states or near failing states. The presence of these attributes creates an environment conducive to internal or external conflict allowing rebel groups to flourish and encouraging military forces to recruit child soldiers.

In creating classifications for what makes a failed state, several criteria were utilized including: demographic pressures, refugees and internally displaced people (IDP), group grievance, human flight, uneven economic development, economic decline, factionalized elites, and external intervention, along with a lack of elements such as state legitimacy, public services, human rights and rule of law, and security apparatus (Fund for Peace); Collier and Chauvet (2006) look at the per capita income as well as the sustained poor economic policies of a nation-state's government and describes them as "low income states in which policy and governance is persistently very bad" (Collier and

Chauvet; 2006; 1) All of these elements combined together help to illustrate a picture of what factors lead to the classification of failed state and the use of child soldiers.

Research question 2b; (Using Colliers (2007) work focused on four development traps that often plague failed states, is it possible to assess which development trap(s) most commonly lead(s) a failed state to use child soldiers?) shows results as applied to the four nation-states: Sudan, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Uganda. Each of the four nation-states, which all use/have used child soldiers, were examined to determine the importance of the presence of each of the development traps, outlined by Paul Collier in the *Bottom Billion* (2007). These four development traps are conflict trap, natural resource trap, landlocked with bad neighbors trap, and bad governance in a small country trap. Using the case studies of Sudan, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Uganda it is possible to determine that the presence of the conflict trap is the most important trap for the use of child soldiers. The second most important is the “natural resource” trap, followed by “bad governance in a small country” and “landlocked with bad neighbors” traps.

As a result of the examination of the development traps, the development trap that is most important to leading failed states to utilizing child soldiers is the conflict trap. Without the presence of conflict within a nation-state the necessity of child soldiers is no longer a reality. When an environment is created where violence is no longer present the need for soldiers is eliminated and as a result, child soldiers are eliminated. In all four of these nation-states child soldiers were used during a time of internal or external conflict. If the international community, led by the U.N., can intervene with a diplomatic approach to a potentially violent situation allowing for diplomatic processes to defuse the situation,

the use of child soldiers should drastically decline. This is of course a slightly optimistic suggestion, but with the backing of leading nation-states throughout the world, the effectiveness of U.N intervention would dramatically improve. While the developed world tends to get involved in the affairs of the developing world when it suits their objectives, there needs to be a global approach to the actions taken by the developed world.

The second most important development trap associated with the use of child soldiers is the natural resource trap. Having a desirable and profitable natural resource may be seen as a way to improve the economy of a nation-state, but only if it can be successfully exploited by private or public industry. However, in many of the developing nation-states this resource is a contributing factor to conflict. For example, in the disputes between Sudan and South Sudan oil is a leading factor to the disputes over control of oil fields and oil revenue. Similarly, the recent discovery of oil in Uganda has begun to create violence between government and rebel forces as well. While oil in Uganda has not yet led to the level of conflict seen in the Sudans, as oil production increases, the chance of conflict will increase along with oil revenues. While in Sierra Leone, diamonds led to an 11 year long civil war partially funded by neighboring Liberia over control of the rich diamond mines in the eastern region of Sierra Leone. These natural resources seem to be a source for economic improvement, but often lead to conflict and economic inequalities between the elites and the general population. The existence of a resource that can bring wealth to a group or organization that controls the resource often results in conflict. Sudan and South Sudan are experiencing turmoil over control of the oil fields along their shared border and the more importantly the oil



revenues. The occurrence of a natural resource often seems to be an economic windfall for the nation-state the resource is located in, but many times it is incorrectly exploited or leads to conflict over who will control, and thus benefit, most from that resource.

This economic inequality is part of the next trap that leads to the use of child soldiers, bad governance in a small country trap. The existence of bad governance in a nation-state creates an environment that fosters the creation of rebel groups. These rebel groups will often gain popularity in the early stages because people are willing to fight for change when they have little to lose. Dissatisfaction with the ruling elites in Uganda, Sudan, and Sierra Leone were contributing factors to the formation of rebel groups such as the LRA, RUF/SL, and SPLA. These groups had the express interest in removing the governing apparatus at their outset; and the ineffectual leadership in many of the nation-states that experience internal conflict is a contributing factor to the use of child soldiers. In all four of the nation-states studied, the prevalence of bad governance was visible. However, there are many other nation-states throughout the world that have bad governance and but do not engage in child soldiering. For example, Bangladesh has bad governance that is riddled with corruption and yet still sees some economic success and has not utilized child soldiers. The presence of bad governance alone is not enough to draw a nation-state into using child soldiers, however, bad governance can lead to internal disorder that may lead to conflict.

In Uganda one of the worst offenders of the rights of children, Joseph Kony, is still free and able to ply his trade. Even with an ever increasing awareness of the crimes against humanity that have been committed by Kony and his rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), he has eluded capture and continued his tactics. In 2011 the

United States committed 100 advisors to the mission of capturing Kony and in 2014 added more military support in equipment and manpower. This was a move met with some resistance in America due political climate in both America and Uganda. Since 1986, Yoweri Museveni has ruled Uganda after the coup of Milton Obote, this stability in leadership however has not led to stability in the region. Uganda has been involved in the civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as other conflicts in the Great Lakes region; this interference allows for distrust and conflict to grow.

Sudan and South Sudan have not enjoyed the same levels of governmental stability as Uganda and Sierra Leone. Since the creation of South Sudan in 2011 there has been constant turmoil between the two nation-states, largely stemming from religious differences and oil revenue. The violence between the two nation-states may escalate in the region with the reelection of Al-Bashir in 2015 and his decision to expel two United Nations officials. This comes on the heels of Al-Bashir's request that a joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in the Darfur region of Sudan to leave the nation viewing the peacekeeping mission as a burden to Sudan (Lederer, 2014). These measures have not hurt Al-Bashir's confidence in his electability; Al-Bashir has stated that the national elections set for April 2015 will indeed take place as planned in order to maintain the "integrity and stability" of Sudan (Butty, 2015).

The issues in Sudan are not the only difficulties in the region; South Sudan has faced a series of problems since 2011. Sudan and South Sudan signed a non-aggression pact in 2012 which has largely been ignored by both sides. In 2012 the Arab League condemned South Sudan for using force to capture the disputed oil producing Heglig region. This was only the beginning of violence in South Sudan, aside from conflicts

with Sudan; South Sudan has had to deal with rebel forces fighting against government troops. In 2013 Vice-President Riek Machar was accused of plotting a coup against President Salva Kiir, a charge he has denied. However, he has since become the leader of a rebel force leading to increased fighting between government and rebel forces in three northern states within South Sudan. While Kiir has been accused of removing Machar to tighten his control on the government and attempting to create a dictatorial regime in South Sudan, the actions of Machar, a former rebel leader against Sudan, suggest there may be credence to Kiir's accusations. With increased fighting between the South Sudanese government forces and rebel forces and the increasing tensions between South Sudan and Sudan the prospect for widespread violence and the need for soldiers is progressively more realistic.

Finally, the landlocked with bad neighbors trap is the least important contributor to the use of child soldiers. Two of the nation-states in this comparative study, Sudan and Sierra Leone, are not landlocked and still had or have high rates of child soldiers and many landlocked nation-states throughout the world do not use child soldiers, such as Austria, Switzerland, or Luxembourg. Although, having bad neighbors does impact the use of child soldiers, Austria, Switzerland, and Luxembourg benefit from have strong economic markets around them; whereas Uganda and South Sudan do not have such a luxury. However, that does not mean that this trap is irrelevant; all four of the nation-states studied do have bad neighbors. The bad neighbors element is a contributor to the use of child soldiers, often neighboring nation-states will support rebel groups to further their own interests, as was the case in Sierra Leone and is the case between Sudan and South Sudan. As a result of having bad neighbors, nation-states are unable to build a

strong economy, so even when they do have access to sea routes they are often unable to invest in building a port that can exploit their ocean access. The lack of economically strong neighbors can contribute to economic stagnation and bad governance, which in turn can lead to conflict; but there are several steps from landlocked with bad neighbors to conflict with child soldiers. A sustained effort by the international community to understand and assess the underlying issues of child soldiering are needed to fully understand an effective approach to remedying the issue.

All four of Collier's development traps are contributing factors to the use of child soldiers, however they do not all contribute equally. As seen, when all four of these traps are present in a nation-state it creates a perfect environment for the use of child soldiers. In Uganda and South Sudan all four of these traps are present and those nation-states have high rates of child soldiers. Nevertheless, if the conflict trap can be removed from the equation the need for child soldiers is drastically reduced, as seen in Sierra Leone. With the conclusion of the Sierra Leonean civil war in 2002, and resulting relative stability, Sierra Leone has been able to eliminate the use of child soldiers within their borders. Unfortunately, the limited stability that Sierra Leone experienced has not been present in the other three nation-states in this study.

### **Looking Forward**

The international community could take steps to help stop the use of child soldiers, but blanket statements and international decrees are not the appropriate medium. A case by case assessment and individualized plan are necessary, and a willingness to invest in developing nations is required. If the issues such as education, infrastructure, economic recovery, resource development, security, and political stability could be addressed in the nation-states that use child soldiers, potential solutions could be put

forward in a collaborative effort between the international community and the nation-state affected. A cooperative effort of the U.N, African Union, European Union, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund is needed to address the issues with a multi-pronged approach that can alleviate the economic, social, and political issues at the same time; this multi-front effort would stand to have to the best chance of success. By using these international organizations to address the social, political, and economic issues it brings into question what the best approach to eliminate the practice of child soldiering is.

It is apparent that the international community needs to play a role in dealing with child soldiers; the problem is at what capacity their involvement should be. It is clear that U.N. resolutions dealing with age of soldiers has been ineffective at preventing child soldiers from being used, this does not however mean that the international community should have no role. Their role should focus more on eliminating the causes that lead to child soldiering and less time on imposing ineffective blanket resolutions, which have little to no enforcement. If the causes of the conflicts can be remedied than the issue of child soldiers may also be remedied.

The issue of child soldiering is not only an issue in the four nation-states in this study but elsewhere in African and the world. In Nigeria, the actions of Boko Haram recently have brought further attention to the security of children in Africa. In April 2014, this group abducted 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in the Borno State in Nigeria. Boko Haram opposes the introduction of a western influenced modern educational system in Nigeria and has focused many of their attacks on schools. As a result as many as 10,000 children have been unable to attend school and in particular the group targets

girls to be used as cooks and sex slaves for the organization (Dorell, 2014; McElroy, 2013).

The actions of Boko Haram have placed an international spotlight on the inability of the Nigerian government to adequately protect schools and children. This is not only an issue for Nigeria but is also an issue in many of the developing nation-states especially those using child soldiers such as Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda. Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has been widely criticized for the inability of the government to protect the schools from these attacks and contributed to his electoral defeat in March of 2015. In the aftermath of the abduction of the girls in Chibok, a global movement started on social media, which included celebrities posting pictures of themselves holding a sign that read “#bring back our girls”, this movement resulted in millions of tweets of support but ultimately did nothing to actually remedy the situation in Nigeria or other nation-states where child soldiers are used. Without substantial humanitarian support from international organizations and investment from private industry and governments, the environment that allows for the use of child soldiers will not change. Evidence that this social media campaign did little to raise awareness in the international community or provide greater support for the protection of children was seen in March of 2015; when another 89 children were abducted in South Sudan, where the U.N estimates 12,000 children were used as child soldiers in 2014. (United Nations, 2015)<sup>49</sup>

With ongoing conflict throughout the developing world the use of child soldiers remains high in those regions. Groups such as the Lord’s Resistance Army, Boko Haram, and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-in-Opposition use children as tools

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<sup>49</sup> U.N statistics on South Sudan located at [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49915#.VUDMkvnF\\_U8](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49915#.VUDMkvnF_U8)

of war with long lasting effects on the political landscape and the lives of children. Since groups like these do not enjoy widespread popularity they are forced to recruit or abduct children to fill their ranks. As such, the international community needs to be directly involved in ending the conflict within these war torn nation-states and actively seek the leaders of the rebel groups responsible for using child soldiers. Along with these steps there needs to be accountability of government military forces to ensure that they are adhering to international law and not using child soldiers. Without these measures being enforced, the issue of child soldiering will continue to fester.

The international community frequently attempts to set global standards on a range of issues including at what age an individual is able to fight. These blanket statements seldom work as they do not take into account the local culture or situations in that area that leads to child soldiers. There is a distinct difference between the developing world and the developed world and it is unreasonable to hold the developing world to the same standards. While developed nations often support a straight 18 standard for other nations they do not follow it themselves. In 2005 the United States had 13,793 new military recruits under the age of 18, and in 2007 the United Kingdom had 4,470 new recruits under the age of 18 (CSC 2008). The international community wants to instill a standard on the developing world that that nations of the developed world does not follow.

If the international community wants to help eradicate the use of child soldiers, there needs to be a case by case assessment. Nation-states such as the United States and the United Kingdom should adopt a straight 18 policy. These nations have the resources and ability to field an 18 and over military. In nations such as Rwanda, Uganda, and The

Democratic Republic of the Congo, there are limited educational opportunities and social strife that force many children into fighting forces.

The first step the international community should take to help eliminate child soldiers is to invest in the infrastructure of the nations that have high rates of child soldiers. If educational opportunities are available for children they may not feel that their situation is hopeless and feel the only option for a better life is through a fighting force. The next step in helping eliminate child soldiers is to help fight disease in the African nations, particularly HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS is a major cause of orphaning children, leaving few options but joining a fighting force to assist in their survival.

If investment in the nation-states that most commonly utilize child soldiers takes place then the reduction of child soldiers is possible. This will not be a quick fix situation however. The sustained investment into these nation-states is required; the U.N. would have to be prepared for a long term operation in these nation-states ensuring that any aid or investment actually goes to the programs and people that are most in need and not pilfered by local warlords. Reasonable steps need to be implemented to help lessen the conditions that lead to violence in these regions, while the complete elimination of violence is unlikely, measures that lessen the need for violence may help. If ethnic strife can be reduced through peace and trade agreements and clear defined borders that will help reduce some of the fighting. If investment into the governments in these areas can take place and create a sustained jobs program many of the young people that feel a rebel group may be their best option will be able to work in a trade or industry as a way to support themselves instead. The combined efforts of the developed and the developing world is needed to help reduce the need for child soldiers, this needs to be done in



conjunction with one another and not simply the developed world imposing their standards on the developing world.

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