

Inter-Communal Violence and Land Ownership in South Sudan: Bari-Mundari Land Boundary Conflicts in Mangalla

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Abstract

This paper aims to use this boundary conflict as an entry point to reflect upon two major issues. First, we intend to use the eruption of the dispute between Bari and Mundari to analyze and historicize the Bari-Mundari land and boundary conflicts that date back to the colonial era. Land disputes are not only limited to political dynamics, but also reconfiguration of state and local administrative units have added to the fuel. The research establishes that land in Mangalla has become an issue of intense contestation between the two ethnic communities because, partly, it is a productive agricultural land for growing sugarcane. The two communities, as result, compete over rights in the wetlands with either group accusing the other of encroaching its boundary or territory. This study relies on secondary sources. Archival documents that consisted of colonial and post-colonial documents relating to the land boundaries between Bari and Mundari were used. Most of these documents were accessed from the University of Juba's library. These documents include: Colonial land reports, land commission reports and government correspondence on land issues. The real issue lies in the unclear territorial boundary demarcation between Mundari and Bari that dates back to the colonial period. The conflict has a deeper history which one cannot understand without exploring both the colonial and post-independence history of creating, demarcating and defining states as territorial and administrative units.

Keywords

Boundary Conflict, Land, Mangalla, Bari, Mundari and Inter-Communal Violence

1. Introduction

In Sub-Saharan, land has become a critical source of conflict and its access is tra-

ditionally characterized as egalitarian. Local conflicts that are land related have often resulted in large scale strife and political movements. It has been noted that some underlying factors such as urbanization, industrialization and population growth among others have generated land conflicts (Rodgers, 2009). Such land-related conflicts have proven difficult to resolve because, in Africa generally, land tenure systems are not well designed to resolve such conflicts (Foley, 2007). Additionally, formal institutions tasked to administer land are often imposed on traditional structures without a clear delineation of responsibilities and competencies, implying that they lack both outreach and social legitimacy (Rodgers, 2009).

In South(ern) Sudan in the 1920s, the British officials drew administrative and territorial district boundaries along rough ethnic lines although sometimes they put several ethnic groups under one district (Mills, 1985). Over the course of both the colonial and post-independence years, some of the districts were further subdivided into near ethnic entities. This generated tensions as different groups struggled over control of different issues and were further subdivided into near ethnic entities. This generated tensions as different groups struggled over control of different issues and resources.

In Juba, the centrality of the land question for the reintegration of returnees cannot be overemphasized. The current legislative vacuum has led to increasing tension over land relations between GOSS, the government of Central Equatoria State (CES) and the Bari community (Deng, 2011). Tensions with the Bari are mainly related to the allocation of new land to expand the boundaries of Juba and demarcate new parcels for services, investment, government offices, capital infrastructure and residential plots for returnees. Disputes are also rife over plots already gazetted (mostly pre-war or during the war), where ownership is contested as a result of prolonged displacement and ambiguous or absent land documentation. All gazetted land is owned and leased by the government, though leases are transferable once allocated (Deng, 2011). There is a large disparity between government and market lease prices, with the latter unaffordable for most returnees.

There is another dimension in relation to land question. Land is contested, and has become a source of civil strife between communities. There have been reports on media of violent clashes that involved Mundari and Bari over the ownership of land in Mangalla Payam in Central Equatoria State in the last years (Sudan Tribune, 2011). According to Hakim and Vries in May, 2016, the newly-appointed commissioner of Mangala County, Elario Paulo Fataki, held an inauguration celebration in Mangala, tearing down the old flag and raising a Jubek¹ flag instead. Local Mundari youth resisted and fighting broke out between them and Fataki's security detail. Three soldiers and one woman were killed in the clashes and 1200 people fled their homes in fear. "I was going to my place to raise my flag, and the Mundari youth attacked our celebration", Fataki said in a phone interview. "The youths from Terekeka started the shooting". Mangala should belong to Jubek under the

¹Jubek State was one of the 28 states created by president Salva Kiir before a revert to current 10 states. Mangalla became contested between Jubek and Terekeka State.

president's decree, Fataki said, and he saw no reason to seek local approval to hold his ceremony there. "I don't need to tell the other commissioner (of Terekeka) anything", he said, defiantly. In Terekeka, Minister of Information Modi Lomindi disagreed. "What happened was uncalled for. I condemn the action done by my colleagues in Jubek state", he told Sudane Tribune. "If an area is contested, you cannot take it by force", Lomindi said. "You come to celebrate in someone's home. You tear down their flag and put your own [Does that make it] your house?" (Hakim & Vries, 2019).

In this research project, we want to use this conflict as an entry point to reflect upon two major issues. First, we intend to use the eruption of the dispute between Bari and Mundari to analyze and historicize the Bari-Mundari land and boundary conflicts that date back to the colonial era. What is it that Bari and Mundari fight over in Mangalla and how is it related to historical boundary between Bari and Mundari? What does land in Mangalla mean to either Bari or Mundari in terms of its strategic importance? The research establishes that land in Mangalla has become an issue of intense contestation between the two ethnic communities because, partly, it is a productive agricultural land for growing sugarcane. The two communities, as result, compete over rights in the wetlands with either group accusing the other of encroaching its boundary or territory. For example, in May 2016, it was reported in media that there had been series of attacks by Mundari against Bari in Mangalla that resulted in deaths (Hakim & Vries, 2019).

In an effort to prevent further bloodshed, the state governor² proposed dividing the payam into Mangalla North and Mangalla South; this would have seen Mangalla North remain part of Terekeka County under the authority of Mundari chiefs and Mangalla South become part of Juba County under the authority of Bari chiefs. This proposal, however, was rejected by representatives of both groups as it would have compromised their land rights: The Bari would have lost their ancestral land rights, whereas the Mundari would have lost part of "their county" (Terekeka County) had Mangalla South become part of Juba County, which was considered a "Bari county". Within the 28-states system, each of the two counties has been upgraded to a state, thus making the conflict a state-level dispute. However, the border between the two new states is the same border that the two communities have been disputing since 2009.

Clearly, this conflict is not limited to territorial ownership. It involves struggles over access to farming rights and accusations and counter accusations of encroachment which stem from a larger historical problem—that of defining who has right of ownership to Mangalla. We would, therefore, like to make it clear that we are not interested in the political economy associated with the area per se because we believe that struggles over land right and ownership are merely offshoots of a longstanding problem. The real issue lies in the unclear territorial boundary demarcation between Mundari and Bari that dates back to the colonial period. The conflict has

²Emmanuel Adil is the current governor of Central Equatoria State who attempted to divide Mangalla into North and South.

a deeper history which one cannot understand without exploring both the colonial and post-independence history of creating, demarcating and defining states as territorial and administrative units. This history dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century when the British colonial officials in South Sudan put both Bari and Mundari ethnic communities under one administrative unit, Central Equatoria State. Over the course of the colonial and post-independence periods, Central Equatoria State was divided and further sub-divided into various counties (Hakim & Viries, 2019).

Secondly and more broadly, exploring this conflict will cast light on broad debates relating to inter-communal violence and struggles over land, politicization of land rights and the role of land in the articulation of political belonging (Leonardi, 2013). No doubt, land is an important economic resource that figures prominently in the questions of authority and control—issues which drive politics and livelihood in many African societies. Disputes over rights to land constitute some of the prominent sources of conflict across the African continent. These struggles increasingly intensified during the second half of the twentieth century and they have continued to have adverse consequences on the continent. Land disputes generate violence resulting in the destruction of life, property, and generally affect people's willingness to invest in economic activities. As Obala points out: "Competition over land has followed myriad social fault lines, pitting national and local elites against ordinary citizens, neighbor against neighbor, kinsman against kinsman, and husbands against wives" (Obala & Mattingly, 2013).

All over Africa, struggles over land respond to different social processes and they involve, among others, competing debates over power, precedence and entitlement. Their intensity and outcome vary, "depending on particular social, economic and political contexts in which they occur[ed]" (Obala & Mattingly, 2013). Focusing on the territorial boundary conflict between the Bari of South Mangalla and the Mundari of North Mangalla, this study will examine the competing interests and how different men and women conflicted and clashed as they sought to gain, defend and justify their claims over the Mangalla wetland during key historical moments.

Through examination of both the local and official discourse relating to the boundary conflict and, together with the emergent competition over access to land rights, my project hopes not only to provide a historical evolution of the conflict but also to explore the historical processes that have shaped its terrains. By so doing, this study will contribute to scholarship on land conflicts and articulation of political belonging.

2. Bari-Mundary Boundary Conflict in Mangalla: A Brief Historical Analysis

2.1. About Mangalla

Mangalla is a payam disputed to either belong to Juba or Terekeka county. It borders Juba County to the south and is located some 70 kilometres north of Juba

town along the White Nile River. Although the Mundari³ are the majority ethnic group in Terkeka County, they are the minority in Mangalla. The Bari⁴, on the other hand, are the majority in Mangalla as well as in Juba County. According to local narratives, the Bari were the first settlers in this area, but had always coexisted peacefully alongside the Mundari, even after the division of Juba District into Juba and Terekeka Counties in 2005 (UNOCHA, 2010).

2.2. How Contention over Land Ownership Began

The question of landownership had never been an issue between the two communities. In 2009, however, investors began to express an interest in leasing land in the payam. This resulted in the issues of landownership and the Juba County-Terkeka County border becoming a point of strong contention between the Bari and Mundari communities. Indeed, and as Deng (2011) notes, the interim period saw an unprecedented rush by both foreign and domestic investors to acquire large tracts of land in many rural areas in South Sudan, which brought the question of landownership and administrative borders in many rural areas to the forefront. The conflict in Mangalla is thus one of the many examples not only throughout the country but also in Central Equatoria State. In 2007, for example, the Madhvani Group, an Indian-owned Ugandan conglomerate, expressed its desire to lease a piece of land in Mangalla for agricultural and industrial purposes. It eventually signed two memoranda of understanding with the government of South Sudan: the first for a land lease and the second to build a sugar cane processing facility (Deng, 2011, p. 16). According to legislation, land-leasing negotiations in rural areas should involve consultations with local communities, who are presumed to be the landowners, and determine adequate compensation to be paid (before the start of any activities) to those who will be affected by the investment in question (e.g. LA 2009). In addition, the Investment Promotion Act states that local communities should be given priority in terms of employment and the delivery of any services associated with the investment project (McMichael, 2014). Determining whether the Mundari or the Bari is “the community” of Mangalla thus became a fiercely contested issue. The Bari’s claim to be the legitimate landowner, arguing that they are autochthonous to the area and also the majority group in the area. The Mundari, on the other hand, argue that Mangalla is in Terekeka County, where they form the majority. Unsurprisingly, both Mundari and Bari chiefs, elders, and intellectuals who did not live in Mangalla backed the claims made by their ethnic communities—thus taking the dispute beyond the borders of the payam. It also resulted in conflicts between individuals that members of the two communities framed as Mundari-Bari conflicts in an attempt to mobilize others to join these confrontations and provoke violent clashes.

³Mundari are an ethnic community in South Sudan known as the Bari Speaking group who found mainly in the counties of Terekeka, Jemeza and Juba.

⁴Bari are also an ethnic community known as the Bari Speaking found mainly in the counties of Juba, Lobonok.

2.3. Analyzing the Land Conflict within the Historical Context

The territorial borders established by the British colonial authorities in Sudan continue to form the basis of the internal borders in South Sudan. Like in other countries of colonial Africa (Martin & Mosel, 2011), the internal borders in South Sudan have been subjected to multiple administrative and political changes by various postcolonial governments. Changes to those borders are still ongoing. For instance, the latest administrative shift occurred in October 2015 and will trigger the establishment of new counties, payams, and bomas. The colonial authorities and the South Sudanese authorities exhibit a noteworthy similarity in their approach towards establishing administrative units on the basis of ethnic majorities. This increasingly contributes to the exclusion of those who are locally perceived as “outsiders” or minority groups. However, the literature and local narratives suggest that changes in governance structures used to be less violent during the colonial era than they are today. This raises questions about the relationship between local conflicts and national politics and its link to access to land and resources. In the case of Mangalla, we observe a number of intertwined factors that contribute to the increasing levels of local conflicts in the area. Most of these conflicts are sentimentalized as identity-related land conflicts or border disputes between communities. But the case shows that competition over natural resources and economic and political power struggles are among the immediate causes of the conflict. They are further exacerbated by the weak institutional capacity to mitigate or resolve conflicts at the local and national level. Two aspects deserve further illumination Linking Resource Conflicts to Identity. The marginalization of rural communities by various postcolonial governments in Sudan has been a central factor to the protracted civil war between the south and the north (Serels, 2007). The interim period offered opportunities to develop policies that addressed the injustices of the past. In reality, however, many turned out to be counterproductive: they not only failed to address marginalization but they also increased local conflicts. On the basis of the 2009 Local Government Act, the government placed rural areas under the authority of chiefs, thus making chiefs local government officials. Yet the 2009 Land Act gave more land rights to rural communities, including the right to decide on how to use their land. The government adopted both of these acts at independence in 2011 and enshrined them in the Transitional Constitution. With the lack of clarity about what constitutes a community, the policy gap in the two acts made it easier for elites to manipulate local people on the basis of identity for personal economic, political or socio-cultural gains. From 2005, SPLM elites became deeply involved in leasing land that was traditionally owned by rural communities (see Deng, 2011). With the government resorting to the creation of local administrative units along identity lines, the manipulation of these identities by elites became even more prominent. In Mangalla, the main question was how to share the spoils of the investments in the area. The lack of clarity on what defines a community prompted intellectuals, chiefs, elders, and other traditional leaders to “construct” identities for the benefit of their own communities at the cost of excluding “others”. The use of identity as a mobilization strategy to exclude “others” as a result of competition over re-

sources is not uncommon in Africa. In Ivory Coast, for example, (Bartlett et al., 2012) notes that indigeneity is used as a means to establish control over land and to distinguish between those entitled to land and those not. In Uganda, the Buganda people continue to call for federalism with the hope that it will limit landownership within the Buganda Kingdom to the Buganda (Branch, 2013)). In Ethiopia the country introduced “ethnic federalism” as a strategy to distribute resources equally among the different “nationalities” in the country (Gómez, 2009). Though it is too early to tell what impact the decision to increase the number of states in South Sudan to 28 will have on the relationships between identity, resources, and local conflicts, emerging evidence suggests it is likely to contribute to more conflict, violence, and instability. After independence, SPLM retained most chiefs it appointed during wartime, included them on the government payroll, and made them upwardly accountable to local government officials who are predominantly from the party. In this regard, chiefs became government agents rather than advocates for rural communities. Indeed, chiefs continue to play crucial roles in local and national politics, often under instruction by the government. Towards the end of the interim period, chiefs vigorously mobilized their communities to vote for an independent South Sudan, which made a significant contribution in shaping the outcome of the referendum in favor of an independent state. But the fact that identities can also be constructed, reconstructed, and even negotiated—as argued by (Peters & Kambewa, 2007)—means that depending on ethnic identity as the sole criterion for the establishment of local government structures is not a viable option. As pointed out elsewhere, distinctions can be made between members of the same ethnic group. In Burundi, for example, in addition to the general Tutsi–Hutu divide, distinctions are also made between early settlers and later comers and between stayees and those who fled the war (Zartman, 2011). Prior to the establishment of the county–payam–boma system, districts formed the basic local government structure; this meant that the borders between the Bari and the Mundari (both in Juba District). As Burawoy (1998) argue, the establishment of local governments is vital to the processes of state-building, yet it remains a complicated process, particularly in relation to the creation of borders. With the current trend to place greater emphasis on ethnicity in the establishment of local government, local administrative units in South Sudan have become a source of contestation at the lower levels of society as seen in Mangalla.

2.4. How Strategic an Area Is Mangalla?

Mangalla is strategically located, and it is of importance to people who have inhabited it. First Mangalla is a highland area in the Sudd wetland area that suitable for agriculture and grazing. It also has a port that serves Juba and Bor. Most fisherman and businessmen ship their fish products to Mangalla port, and then destined to East Africa for market. The area is fertile making it attractive to agro-industrial investors. In the 1950s and 1970s, successive government administrations made trial attempts to grow sugar and establish an industrial complex in Mangalla (Deng, 2011). In both instances, the attempts were short-lived, though smaller community-driven

agricultural projects can still be found in the area. In 2007, the Government of Southern Sudan entered into discussions with a Ugandan company named the Madhvani Group to establish a sugar plantation in the area, but the company suspended its activities in 2015 due to the underlying dispute over Mangalla's administrative status (Hakim & Vries, 2019). Mangalla is adjacent to Bandingilo National Park making it suitable for tourism. Investors look at the area as strategic for hotel and hospitality.

2.5. Conflict Dynamics in Relation to Land Conflicts in Mangalla

The status of Mangalla as an Administrative County is still contested. The Bari and Mundari Communities have been at logger with each other over the ownership of Mangalla. The two communities belong to Bari Speaking group and have a lot in common in terms of culture. They speak one language; they have had a lot of intermarriages. However, in terms of socio-economic organization, the Bari are predominantly agrarian in that they rely on Agriculture as their traditional means of livelihoods. The Mundari are agro-pastoralist who keep and rear cattle. Consequently, the two communities contest Mangalla because they both see it as strategic area which is rich in resources, hence making it vital for livelihood and investment.

During the tenure of Clement Wani Konga as Governor of Central Equatoria State, from 2005 to 2015, numerous conflicts over land erupted including land disputes between the communities of Bari and Mundari. The ownership of Mangalla and its administrative status were contested. During the election of 2010, land issue became an issue of political wrangling. Konga's main contender in the 2010 elections was a Bari politician and military figure named Alfred Lado Gore. Gore advocated on land issues during the election as the issue resonated strongly with his base in the Bari community. Although Konga managed to win the election, the political contest contributed to the politicization of the dispute over Mangalla (Sudan Tribune, 2016).

Land disputes are not only limited to political dynamics, but also reconfiguration of state and local administrative units have added to the fuel. When the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in 2005 with the establishment of the Government of Southern Sudan, Juba District was dissected into Juba and Terekeke Counties, hence creating an ethnically defined boundary dividing Mangalla into two, where one part was owned by Bari and the other by Mundari.

Again, in 2015 four years after Independence, President Kiir issued a decree that divided South Sudan into twenty-eight states. Central Equatoria State was further sub-divided into three states—Jubek, Terekeke and Yei River States (Hakim & Viries, 2019). This further fueled dispute over Mangalla. Apparently, the newly constituted administration of Jubek State issued ultimatum to the Mundari local government officials to leave Mangalla Administrative Head Quarters and go to Terekeke. This was met with resistance by the Mundari officials leading to violent confrontation in which scores of people were killed. This tension dragged on for long leaving Mangalla with unclear status. In 2018, when the created 28 states were rescinded,

Hon. Adil Anthony became the Governor of Central Equatoria State, and he stopped all forms of allotment of land indefinitely, in response. These administrative changes thus served to raise the stakes for the two communities, driving more exclusionary conceptions of ethnic identity, and reinforcing zero-sum approaches to not only the underlying land dispute, but also the non-sharing of services between the two groups.

Lastly, in 2019, there was an influx of Internally Displaced Persons from Bor in Jonglei State because of flooding and inter-communal violence into Mangalla accompanied by humanitarian response. This further amplified the historical tensions and created new tension relating to grazing land for cattle. Dinka are traditionally agro-pastoralists. Wherever they settle, they settle with cows. This also raised suspicion that the Dinka purported to be coming as IDPs could be coming to settle permanently, hence, increasing the risk of losing the land to Dinka Bor Community. If humanitarian agencies are unaware of these tensions, and are seen to implicitly endorse the claims by either the Mundari or Bari to “control” the land around Mangalla, or to prioritize assistance for Dinka IDPs, some of whom have come with their cattle, it could further enflame tensions. The example of Nimule where the displacement of Dinka Bor and their cattle in the 1990s led to more permanent settlement and conflict between the “resident” Madi community and IDPs, should serve as a warning (Deng, 2010). The current situation in Mangalla could lead to similar tensions and serve as a potential trigger for conflict between the Bari, Mundari and Dinka Bor who bring their livestock. Given the highly fractured political and security context in South Sudan, such conflicts could easily become intertwined with national political interests.

2.6. How Bari-Mundari Land Conflicts Evolve under the Current Political Climate in South Sudan

Over time, these conflicts have taken a much wider political dimension than previously. It appears that while the causes of conflicts appear to revolve around access to the use of natural resources, a number of factors including historical grievances, alleged economic deprivation by some groups, perceived disparities in power relations and control over it and lack of participation in the State Government, are changing the perceptions of the protagonists at the grassroots levels over the years.

One of the important sources of current conflict in the area is the extent to which the Bari community is alleged to dominate the politics of Central Equatoria State, and the control over the allocation of rewards. Some groups, like the Mundari, feel deprived of leadership opportunities now as well as in the past, because they were less exposed to the sources of power in Juba (Justin, 2020). The Bari had easier access to education and hence political participation because of Christian mission education. Moreover, services, like health and education continue to be poor in the Mundari area compared to those in Juba and Bari area. These feeling of exclusion might ferment future conflicts in the area (Gore, 2014).

The Mundari and the Bari share the same state of Central Equatoria, and the majority of the Mundari from Tali currently live in Bari area. A number of social ser-

vices, i.e. health centers, schools and water, are located in Bari villages. The Mundari do not want to use these facilities; instead, they have tried, through their elites, to establish similar services in areas they occupy with limited success. For example, they have built their own schools; but lack of water and teachers in these schools has resulted in very low enrolment and high drop-out among children. This political dynamic contributes significantly in driving the current land conflicts between Bari and Mundari in Mangalla.

3. Literature Review

Several studies indicate that territorial boundaries and borderlands link people together and they help in promoting mutual interdependence. Considering the border between Benin and Nigeria. There is a river known as Okpara river that links the two countries together. It has created the boundary that has helped in promoting mutual interdependence and cohesion among the borderland communities (Post, 1996). It is a site where different cultures and identities converge. In contrast, several studies have also indicated that boundaries generate conflicts (Fox, 2014). One good example, the United State-Mexico border is a source of conflict between the developed and under developed world (Keen, 2012).

In Africa, boundary disputes are common because, to certain extent, borders and borderlands were a means through which colonial administrators divided the peoples of African and their territories. Africa was largely colonized by Europeans who partitioned Africa into national and local administrative units; these resulted in inter-ethnic conflicts over boundaries.

According to Badiy, British ruled indirectly by making people's social and cultural identity central in accessing rights (Badiy, 2014). Therefore, it is important to note that colonial boundaries also divided homogeneous cultural areas and ethnic communities (Author). As a result, some ethnic entities who were homogeneous in nature were placed under different administrations, thereby giving them access to different political and economic opportunities.

By responding to the colonial initiative, Berry argues: "Africans sought to negotiate new social identities in order to take advantage of commercial or political opportunities. This led to "an on-going debate about how rules of access were linked to social identity, and vice versa" (Kunkeler & Peters, 2011).

Moser and Rodgers argue that the under the rule British, have rights to productive resources was based on the membership of a given ethnic group (Moser & Rodgers, 2005). This cast lights on how social identities are fluid in the struggle over economic or political opportunities in Africa. However, these assertions do not explain how different ethnic communities express the politics of belonging and exclusion as they rival over some areas. This brings us to asking this critical question: How were rights of access to land where colonial and post-independent administrations used ambiguous physical features like indicate boundaries without making it clear which parts of a swamp to a given community? It is equally important to note that some of those boundaries were just boundaries and not clear on the ground (Schuld,

2013).

Redrawing of boundaries by post-independent administrators not an exceptional task in South Sudan. An ordinary member of the community may not be aware of the borders because there are no visible marks on the ground to indicate borders. Even when marks are indicated, those boundaries could still be fluid or permeable. Much of the literature on permeability of boundaries focus on issues of mobility, trade and citizenship.

Borders and borderlands are crucial because they make up a portal through which ideas, people and goods pass (Pantuliano et al., 2008). Nonetheless, other studies on porousness of borders and boundaries tend to focus on land rights and access to other moveable resources (Omenya & Lubaale, 2012). For example, Moser, has examined some conflict dynamics related a fish pond in Kyetuu in the border between Burkina Faso and Ghana. He narrates how the local communities in the area perceive boundaries with regards to land and water, and how this has shaped inter-personal and inter-communal relationship among people with international border. As he stated, the conflicts in Kyetuu illustrates “how claims to land and resources that are based on modernist discourses of the sovereign state can clash with local traditional rights vested in the custodians of earth shrines” (Moser, 2004). In his study, he clearly brings out the ways in which different sections of communities negotiate various notions of land rights and boundaries in different context. Therefore, Lent’s works inform the current study on the subject (Moser, 2004).

This study therefore intends to add more into this body of knowledge by looking at the long-term boundary conflicts between Bari and Mundari communities in which they both have taken advantage of the definite marker to claim rights of access to the land in Mangalla. By critically looking into this conflict, a lot can be said about the role of the state, that is not the focus at the moment. Durand-Lasserve, for example, argues that access to productive land was informed by changing economic opportunities by commercializing agriculture and this ignited serious debate on communities’ rights to allocate use to individuals. According to her, inter-personal relationships were shaped by commercialization of agriculture (Durand-Lasserve, 2006). Therefore, in historical context, how do we explain recurrent conflicts over access to land in Mangalla? What factors drive land conflict? What are the emerging drivers of land conflicts in Mangalla given the current dynamics like the arrival of internally displaced persons? My study intends to provide answers to these questions.

4. Sources and Methodology

This study relies on secondary sources. Archival documents that consisted of colonial and post-colonial documents relating to the land boundaries between Bari and Mundari were used. Most of these documents were accessed from the University of Juba’s library. These documents include: Colonial land reports, land commission reports and government correspondence on land issues. The study in use of these archival materials has confirmed that online reports by UNDP-South Su-

dan, National Bureau of Statistic and Census, Ministry of land and House both at National and State levels were vigorously used.

In addition to the county archives, the study was carried out in at Library of the University of Juba where government records were read—especially those pertaining to the creation of districts and defining of boundaries, district reports, newspapers and dissertations relevant to this study. We also got some informative sources from the Ministry of Housing and Land, particularly relating to the late colonial period. These archival documents became a time-efficient and easy to obtain source of information for the project by saving the time and cost required of conducting the research myself. Being generally quicker to collect than primary data allows more time for analysis. By utilizing existing information, it was possible to access information that would otherwise not be possible to collect. This information is particularly helpful because the project question requires me to analyze phenomena in multiple locations. However, one limitation identified with use of this method was some documents lacked authenticity—parts of the document might be missing because of age, and we were not even in position to verify who actually wrote the document, meaning it was not possible to check whether it was biased or not.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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