Safety at the Margins: perceptions of justice and (in)security from South Sudan's southern border

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February 2015

Introduction

This paper forms the Pajok Payam Mapping Paper for the Eastern Equatoria State (EES) section of the Justice and Security Research Programme's investigation of end-users' experiences of justice and security within the newly independent nation of South Sudan.[1] As such, this paper reports on and analyses data collected as part of a specifically JSRP-focused investigation undertaken during the initial stages of a longer-term ethnographic research project among the Pajok community of Magwi County, EES.[2] This paper aims to produce a context-specific report analysing the "structures of authority that define end-users' access to justice, protection, and security". The focus is therefore "both on 'practices of public security' and on 'the politico-social order' that conditions these practices" (JSRP 2013).

Funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), the JSRP is a multi-disciplinary international research consortium led by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) for the purposes of "undertaking research on justice and security in some of the world's most difficult places – poor, badly-governed, politically-fragile and conflict-affected environments" (JSRP 2012a). The objectives of the JSRP are

> ..to study formal and informal governance and authority structures in conflict-affected areas in Central Africa and to investigate the provision of security and justice for civilian populations under various authority structures…through rigorous field research in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), South Sudan and northern Uganda (JSRP 2013).

This paper uses definitions for the terms 'end-user' and 'local public authority' (LPA) laid out in earlier JSRP publications. Following this rationale, 'end-users' are defined as "individuals or collectives, who are actual or potential victims of insecurity, and, conversely, actual or potential 'recipients' or beneficiaries of security" (Luckham & Kirk 2013: 342). In other words, they are "the person or people who are the supposed beneficiaries of public goods provision by those claiming or exercising public authority" (Hoffman & Kirk 2013: 6, note 10). At the same time, however, it is important to "acknowledge the possibility that they [the end-user] may have the agency (power and resources) to shape the security agenda, as well as be subject to it" (Luckham & Kirk 2012: 5; cf. MacDonald 2013: 8-9; Stein & Valters 2012: 7, note 37).

Public authority, on the other hand, is defined, following Cummins (2013: 157), as "a complex process that is negotiated by local leaders as they use existing resources to meet community needs and to pursue individual agendas". In this way, public authorities are considered as "'emergent'…always in production and never definitively formed" Hoffman and Kirk (2013: 36). As Hoffman and Kirk (2013: 36) contend, this

> ..suggests that public authority must be consistently practiced or performed by those claiming it. Combined with the need for authorities to accord with local expectations and provide public goods, this depiction of public authority

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[1] South Sudan was formed in July 2011 following a January 2011 referendum on regional independence from the larger Sudanese state.
[2] Pajok is also sometimes written as 'Parajok' or 'Parjok'. This paper attempts to follow as closely as possible the local vernacular and thus uses 'Pajok'.

recognises the agency of both power holders and the wider groups they govern, however subtle this may be.

The Research Site: Pajok Payam

Eastern Equatoria State (EES) "lies in a region experiencing chronic and recurring armed conflict (internal and cross-border), widespread cattle rustling, and general lawlessness" (McEvoy & Murray 2008:12). The wider region "has been considered one of the most conflict-prone regions in the East and Horn of Africa" (McEvoy & Murray 2008:12). In 2011 it was estimated that EES had a population of around 910,000, of whom around 86 per cent were agro-pastoralists (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) 2011). EES covers an area of 73,472 km^2 and stretches from the Ethiopian border in the east to the Nile River in the west (NBS 2011). Pajok Payam is the south-easternmost of Magwi County's nine payams,[3] itself one of eight counties in EES. Pajok is roughly 140 kilometres southeast of the national capital Juba, 30 kilometres north of the Ugandan border, and about 30 kilometres south of Magwi town, the county capital.

For the purposes of definitional clarity, this paper makes a distinction, in descending order of scale (both territorially and demographically), between: Pajok Payam (the official government administrative area); Pajok centre (a less conceptually distinct unit, Pajok centre may, at its smallest, refer only to the collection of shops around the main north – south road or, at its largest extent, refer to all four bomas comprising Pajok town in their entirety);[4] Pajok Boma (the north-eastern most of Pajok Payam's five bomas); and Pajok village (one of the small administrative entities within Pajok Boma customarily regarded as the centre of the boma). These are separate and distinct conceptual entities and are spoken about as such by most end-users. Most residents are consistent in their distinctions: if they are speaking about Pajok Payam, Boma, or village, they specifically mention the administrative entity they are referring to; when speaking about Pajok centre, they may simply say 'Pajok', 'centre', or 'town'. Therefore, in this paper the unqualified term 'Pajok' refers to Pajok town. Likewise, the term 'Payam' may be understood as referring to Pajok Payam in its entirety.

According to the Payam Administrator of Pajok Payam, the Constitution of South Sudan states that a payam is an administrative unit composed of four or more bomas.[5] Another LPA asserted that a Boma should ideally contain around 3,000 to 5,000 people.[6] As mentioned earlier, Pajok Payam has five bomas. These are: the payam's customary hunting area, Pugee Boma, in the south,[7] which runs from the Ugandan border northward toward Pajok centre, and then four other 'urban' bomas which together comprise Pajok centre and its immediate environs. Pajok centre is divided into two by the Atebi-Pii, a small but swift-flowing river which runs from the Imatong Ranges about ten kilometres to the east down through Pajok and off westwards to meet the Nile River north of Nimule in the far west of Magwi County. In the middle of Pajok centre the river is crossed by a small one-lane bridge, once apparently the only bridge along the entire length of the Atebi and thus of great strategic importance during the war. The boundaries of the four 'urban' bomas are those created by the quartering effects of the river running east – west and the road running north – south. Pajok Boma lies in

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[3] Again reflecting local vernacular, 'Magwi' is preferred over 'Magwe' when referring to Magwi town and County.
[4] For the purposes of clarification, this paper sometimes refers to these four bomas as the 'urban' bomas.
[5] Interview with Payam Administrator, 22/10/2013.
[6] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.
[7] Again, the spelling of the name 'Pugee' rather than 'Pagee' reflects the local idiom.

the northeast quadrant (north of the river and east of the road), Lagi Boma to the northwest, Lawaci Boma is the south-eastern-most of Pajok centre's bomas, and finally Caigon Boma is to the southwest.

These five bomas are in turn divided into 21 villages. Rather than being customary or historical local Acholi cultural units, these villages are the smallest units of governmental administration throughout South Sudan (Unrelated interview; cf. Leonardi et al. 2010: 13).[8] Indigenous end-users, although considered members of a single larger Pajok *kaka* (clan), are divided into 23 *dogola* (sub-clans). The *kaka* is headed by the hereditary chief, the *Rwot Kwaro* of *Ywaya pa Rwot*, the 'royal' *kaka*. While, as administrative units, the villages are distributed more or less evenly among Pajok's five bomas, the sub-clans all originate from the four 'urban' bomas and are historically divided in the following way:[9] Caigon Boma (ten), Lagi Boma (five), Lawaci Boma (five, including *Ywaya pa Rwot*), and Pajok Boma (three).[10] Pugee boma does not have any original sub-clans within its territory. Instead, the people now living in Pugee are members of the Pajok centre sub-clans who settled in this previously 'unused' area after their return from exile (around 2007 onwards).[11] This is because the area now referred to as Pugee Boma was Pajok payam's historic hunting grounds and therefore virtually without settlement. All Pajok *kaka* members have usufructuary rights to the land and animals in Pugee, although the final decision regarding this land most likely belongs to the *Rwot Kwaro* and his advisers, the *Kal Kwaro* (see below).

The 2008 census puts Pajok at a population of 21,343 (Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation (SSCCSE) 2008). However, residents of Pajok Payam estimate the population of the payam to be 59,200. This is allegedly based on a census conducted as part of the 2011 referendum on independence, although it is not entirely apparent that any census was ever actually undertaken. This second estimate, although widely cited, is also widely critiqued: as it was seemingly conducted by the Sudanese government, it is considered to be biased, poorly organised, and poorly conducted. It is therefore not considered to accurately reflect the local population or its distribution.[12] This leads to end-user population estimates that can range anywhere upwards of 100,000. The disparity between the two "official" results is significant, and this disparity is even more so if the population is estimated at 100,000. Certainly, the author considers the total real population of Pajok Payam in 2013/2014 to be much closer to the 2008 result than either of the community's own estimates.

It is unknown how many people reside within any one of Pajok Payam's five bomas, although this population is thought to be divided in the following order (from largest to smallest): Lawaci; Pajok; Lagi; Caigon; and Pugee.[13] Acholi speakers (both South Sudanese and Ugandan) are without a doubt the dominant ethno-linguistic group within the Payam, although there appears to be a small number of Baria and very small numbers of other ethno-linguistic groups and nationalities.[14]

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[8] According to one LPA, in Acholi society the village is also a collection of spatially connected households (Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013). Thus, when speaking about Pajok, a distinction needs to be made between the village as this historical residential unit and the village as an administrative unit. In this paper the term 'village' refers solely to the contemporary governmental administrative structure.

[9] Unrelated interview.

[10] Public Authority Focus Group, 16/10/2013.

[11] Unrelated interview.

[12] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.

[13] Interview with Head Chief, 16/10/2013.

[14] For example, among other South Sudanese residents, there are some definitely some Dinka, Madi and Nuer, while there are also Ghanaians, Kenyans, and non-Acholi Ugandans living in Pajok. This is as well as the many

Despite the relatively small distance between Pajok and other major centres, the Payam remains somewhat isolated. This is due to a number of factors, chief among which is the condition of the region's roads and other infrastructure. For example, on a good day in the dry season, a good vehicle can take around two to three hours to travel north to Magwi town and another four to five to travel from there to Juba. Likewise, going south it may take two or three hours to reach the Ugandan border and then at least another hour to reach Kitgum, the closest large market town. These estimations change considerably anytime the road is wet.

Work on a new Norwegian-funded and Chinese- and Japanese-built road which may connect Magwi town and Pajok Payam has recently begun (as of 7 October 2013), although the exact route the road will eventually take remains a matter of some debate among Pajok end-users. Some say the road will continue through Pajok to Pugee and end at the Ugandan border, while others believe that the road will branch off at Palotaka in southern Obbo Payam before continuing on to Lobone.[15] This latter version seems most correct, as all LPAs interviewed mentioned that this was route the road would take.[16] The true direction the road will take will have a significant impact on the future development and security of the entire Pajok Payam community. This road, and the Payam's roads in general, are the focus of a later section.

Pajok Payam lies on the border with Uganda, and is the Payam directly north of one of the research sites investigated in JSRP's Acholi Mapping Paper (Hopwood 2015), Ngomoromo.[17] As will be made clear later, this fact is significant to Pajok end-users' understandings of security and justice. Much as was discovered during JSRP research in northern Uganda (Hopwood 2015), this border location means that the residents of Pajok are highly susceptible to ongoing border disputes and other international tensions: the Kitgum – Ngomoromo – Pajok – Magwi road can be conceptualised as a minor trade route (cf. Eaton 2008a, 2008b; Finnstrom 2005; Schomerus & Titeca 2012), as well as the means of connecting a wider Acholi community that many respondents considered formerly much better integrated but now divided in multiple ways by the international border. This division affects the movement of both goods and people, and has become something of a flash-point within inter-community relations.

Background and History of Pajok Payam

This section of the paper provides a brief overview of relevant events in the recent history of Pajok and is included for two reasons: firstly, to demonstrate the widespread effects of both the Sudanese and Ugandan conflicts upon end-users in Pajok Payam, and secondly, to provide the first comprehensive account of the recent, war-affected history of Pajok. Given

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Ugandan-born Acholi who are considered "local" due to their having a South Sudanese parent or other historical and kinship ties to the area. This resident Ugandan Acholi population is to be expected within a population that experienced almost total displacement, as well as within one that longer historical migratory and marital connections, and mirrors the findings of JSRP's Acholi Mapping Paper (Hopwood 2015).

[15] Obbo Payam is the Payam directly to the north of Pajok Payam, the largest town in which is also called 'Obbo'. The route of the only direct road from Pugee on the Ugandan border to Magwi and onwards goes through Pajok centre in Pajok Payam and then into Obbo Payam through Palotaka.

[16] Although, according to an unrelated chance encounter with the G4S Magwi unexploded ordinances (UXOs) team on 30/10/2013, G4S were specifically in Pajok surveying and removing UXOs because of the future direction of the road. Thus, the truth of this highly-debated and much-maligned project is as unclear as ever.

[17] For further information on Ngomoromo and other northern Ugandan research sites, please refer to JSRP's Acholi Mapping Paper (Hopwood 2015).

the dearth of reliable data on such issues in the region, the majority of this information comes from local narratives of the conflict and a few, rather excellent, sources.[18]

The First Sudanese War (1955-1972) began as a southern independence movement led by officers within the Sudanese military establishment and ended with the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement (Allen 1991:68; The Conflict Transformation Group 2002; O'Ballance 1977). According to Allen (1991:68), nearly the entire population of Magwi County fled during this conflict. After eleven years of peace, war reignited in September 1983 with the Sudanese government's decision to impose Sharia law on the self-governing southern states (The Conflict Transformation Group 2002; Hutchinson & Jok 2002; Institute of Security Studies 2004). According to Johnson (2011), a combination of global geopolitical, economic, and Cold War interests alongside widespread social, political, and economic discrimination were dominant among the many causal factors for both conflicts.

It is estimated the Second Sudanese War (1983-2005) killed more than two million people and caused four to five million refugees (The Conflict Transformation Group 2002; Morrison & De Waal 2005). As Hutchinson and Jok (2002) demonstrate, internal conflict among dissident groups within southern forces led to escalating levels of violence against women, children, and other non-combatants. In fact, fighting among splinter groups of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) was responsible for more deaths than government-directed or government-driven violence (Jok & Hutchinson 1999).

According to local informants, the war came to Pajok in 1989 with a surprise SPLA attack on Payam residents, leading to the area's first widespread displacement of the second war. The payam remained a Sudanese government stronghold for several years, although fighting in and around the area was intense and the SPLA eventually captured most of the region between 1991 and 1993. Like many in EES, Payam support of the SPLA remained ambivalent during the early years, as many in Pajok (as well as Equatoria more generally) thought the SPLA was a Dinka-oriented ethnic movement (Branch & Mampilly 2005; Leonardi 2011; McEvoy & Murray 2008; Schomerus 2007):[19] many residents of Magwi County apparently saw no difference between the atrocities committed by the government and those committed by the SPLA (Schomerus 2008a; 2008b). Although this feeling has since dissipated somewhat, many Pajok end-users hope the SPLA does not return to the area.

Moreover, from 1991 onwards, EES was continually affected by the Ugandan rebel force, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), supported by the Sudanese government. During the period of southern Sudan's worst violence in the early-mid 1990s, the LRA was renowned for attacks on Sudanese towns and refugee camps. For example, between 1991 and 2007, LRA actions caused displacement on an unprecedented scale within Magwi County: entire villages were deserted and up to 85% of the population of the county was displaced (Institute of Security Studies 2004). Further, in 1993, pro-government SPLA-United forces recaptured Magwi County,[20] allowing uninterrupted lines of communication and supply between Khartoum and

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[18] The previous work of JSRP researcher Mareike Schomerus in the middle of the last decade proved particularly helpful. For further background on the history of the Sudanese conflicts, the author recommends Douglas Johnson's seminal work, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars: Peace or Truce* (Johnson 2011).

[19] According to Schomerus (2008b:79, note 6), the designation 'Equatoria' is often used to 'refer to the entire region now covered by the present-day states of Western, Central, and Eastern Equatoria. Much like the more specific ethnic term 'Acholi' (Allen 1991:78), the term 'Equatoria' originated under 19th century British–Egyptian rule and included areas of northern Uganda'.

[20] The SPLA-United were an SPLA splinter group aligned for some time with the Sudanese government in Khartoum and originally led by Riek Machar, until recently the Vice-President of the Republic of South Sudan.

the LRA. Pajok and the surrounding countryside then became an LRA training area (Doom & Vlassenroot 1999). These actions and the SPLA counter-offensive in October 1995 caused numerous deaths and refugees throughout Magwi, including many within Pajok Payam, and led to Pajok's last large population displacement, after which the Payam remained virtually deserted.

While the January 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Sudanese government and the SPLA ended open conflict, it did not sufficiently address the underlying causes of the war[21] nor the region's other conflicts (Schomerus 2008b).[22] Indeed, Schomerus (2008b: 12) argues that 'the lack of tangible improvement in security since 2005 does little to endear residents to their new local and regional government, and exacerbates persistent antagonisms that many Equatorians have harboured against the…SPLA…since the early days of the second civil war'.[23]

LRA activity continued after the 2005 CPA, and there were numerous attacks on towns throughout Magwi County, including Pajok. However, by late 2005 most LRA combatants had left South Sudan for neighbouring countries following South Sudanese government attempts to end LRA action in the country (Schomerus 2007; 2008b). The first refugees returned to Pajok from exile in Uganda around the same time, with the majority of displaced persons returning after mid-2007, the largest increases being in 2008 (following total LRA withdrawal) and from late 2010 onwards (anticipating the referendum and subsequent independence of the new Republic of South Sudan) (O'Byrne 2014; Schomerus 2008a, 2008b; UNHCR 2007).

Methods, Tools, and Techniques

In the interests of supporting as much cross-site comparison as possible, the data collected for this paper was gathered using locally-specific adaptations of the same two survey and interview tools intended for all the JSRP's central African research sites. These tools were

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[21] The root causes of the Sudanese wars can be found in a long history of marginalisation, segregation, and an imposed hierarchy of religion, culture, and tradition favouring the North which dates from well before the imposition of colonial rule, with the second war stemming from the continuing effects of the South's political and economic marginalisation (Annan & Brier 2010; Hutchinson 2000, 2001; Hutchinson & Jok 2002; Johnson 2011; Jok & Hutchinson 1999; Schomerus 2007, 2008a, 2008b). As Schomerus (2008b:18; cf. Abdel Salam & de Waal 2001) notes, 'religious and tribal identities did not cause the war but were exploited by the warring parties'. The widespread Western misconception of purely religious conflicts positing a 'fundamentalist Islamic North' engaged in genocidal violence against a 'Christian and animist south' desperately fighting for freedom from tyranny and oppression is simplistic and reductionist in the extreme. See Salomon (2013) for a similar critique.

[22] Such as those among South Sudanese over access to land and other resources, between the South Sudanese government and nomadic Sudanese pastoralists in the north and east of the country, and between the Turkana, Karamajong, and Jie in the southeast (See Schomerus (2008a, 2008b) for further details).

[23] Although the continuation of these antagonisms into the present in Pajok is not borne out by this research project (only two end-users denounced the SPLA for their current practices of looting (both interviews took place on 26/10/2013), while only one LPA remarked on their history of gun- and alcohol-related violence in the area (Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013)), it must be acknowledged that a more interrogative and less rigidly-structured interview process may have delivered slightly different results. Personal safety and security may be of particular concern to some interviewees, especially so given the SPLA continues to demonstrate rather authoritarian practices at almost every level of government throughout the country. Indeed, South Sudan remains a virtual one-party state, and, as evidenced by the Payam Administrator's discussion of rival political parties and interests as "*spies*" and "*terrorists*", political dissent is rarely tolerated (Interview with Payam Administrator, 22/10/2013). For a recent damning report on the authoritarian and undemocratic nature of South Sudanese politics and politicians, especially the President and other political elites, see Jok (2013).

specifically created for the purpose of establishing baseline information about each research site in order to allow for future investigation. One of these tools was developed specifically for interviewing end-users, with the other developed for interviewing local public authorities and NGOs.

The paper is based on twenty interviews and four focus groups. Target groups for the questionnaire were: Women; Younger Women (married, unmarried, living with their husband, or living with their parents); Men; Younger Men. Of the 20 interviews conducted, 15 were among end-users and another five with LPAs. Further, four focus groups were conducted: one Local Public Authority Focus Group (LPAFG) composed of the Payam Head Chief and four of the five Boma Chiefs; one Younger Women's Focus Group (YWFG); one older Women's Focus Group (WFG); and one Younger Male Focus Group (YMFG). Given the on-the-ground realities of Pajok Payam, these target groups were difficult to accurately define. People, especially women, marry early, often during their mid-teens. As well as this, many women often bear multiple children while still in their teenage years. On the other hand, it is not uncommon to find people still attending primary or secondary school until well into their twenties, and some continue education until much later in life (for example, at least one woman nearly ending her secondary education is 35).[24]

Therefore, for the purposes of this research, target groups were defined so as to follow the local vernacular as much as possible. In this way, following local customs and practices, 'Younger Women' were generally considered females in their twenties while 'Younger Men' were taken to be younger than 30–35. These ages represent common end-user responses when asked to define 'young', 'youth', or 'younger'.[25] For example, one English speaking end-user specifically defined "*the youth*" as "*those people 18 to 35*".[26] Although the community's responses often mentioned everyday aspects such as children, marriage, or education, the age 30 to 35 became an almost unanimous settling point when pushed to justify these definitions.[27]

Acholi was the native language of all but two interviewees, with one female end-user speaking Madi and one YMFG member speaking a Bantu dialect from Uganda. However, two end-user interviews were conducted in English, two using both Acholi and English, and eleven in Acholi only. Further, four of the five LPA interviews were conducted in English and only one in Acholi. The WFG and YWFG were conducted in Acholi, the YMFG in a mixture of Acholi and English, while the LPAFG was conducted in English after the researcher was assured reasonable English fluency.[28] All Acholi interviews used the same translator. The gender composition of end-user interviews was nine women and six men, while males comprised four of five LPAs interviewed. Females ranged in age from 15 and 70 while men were between 18 and 70.

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[24] Unrelated interview.

[25] Or, indeed, 'old' or 'older'. For example, the author (34) was consistently referred to as "*old*" or "*a big man, a big person*" by end-user youth. This seemed based on the fact he was "*older than 30*", "*married*", and "*getting the grey hairs*". This reflects Acholi generational norms found in the author's previous research (O'Byrne 2012), as well as reflecting the use of the Acholi word/concept 'ladit' (literally 'the big', meaning "Mr, an old man, a boss, an important man" (Adong and Lakareber 2009: 53)) to refer to community elders.

[26] Interview with Male End-user, 70, 30/10/2013.

[27] According to Abbink and Van Kessel (2005: 5-6), this definition is almost universal within Sub-Saharan Africa, at least, and reflects multiple customary age and gender related practices, with the term 'Youth' in particular being conceptualised as those young males, around 15 or 18 to 30 or 35, who would have historically fit into the 'warrior' class in their culturally appropriate age grade systems.

[28] In retrospect, this was possibly a mistake, as two Boma chiefs took little part in the following interview.

As much as possible, the relevant academic and grey literature has been incorporated into this paper. However, given the conflict-ridden recent past of South Sudan (comprising two separate civil wars running from 1955 – 1972 and 1983 – 2005), as well as changing conditions in the region following the signing of the CPA in 2005 and independence in 2011, there is very little relevant literature on Pajok Payam specifically or even Magwi County or EES more generally. Particularly problematic is delineating anything resembling a comprehensive history of the area. Further, almost all of that written about the Acholi ethno-linguistic group focuses on neighbouring Uganda, and of this, the focus falls heavily on traditional justice mechanisms and the indigenous Acholi concept/ritual *mato oput*. Therefore, earlier research conducted by fellow JSRP researchers Tim Allen and Mareike Schomerus proved invaluable.

This report also incorporates data accumulated as part of the wider ethnographic, non-JSRP related research with which the author is currently involved. Thus, as well as data gathered specifically for JSRP, this report includes data from many other formal and informal conversations, as well as several non-related semi-structured interviews. It also incorporates the author's ongoing observations of and participation within Pajok community events, especially observation of, and interviews conducted with, participants within the local Boma-level judicial system and the Pajok community's response to the ongoing land/border disputes with the Ugandan community around Ngomoromo. The author believes this adds important complexity and detail to the description and analysis contained herein.

Governance and Administration within Pajok Payam

The JSRP's Acholi Mapping Paper (Hopwood 2015) provides a comprehensive account of the historical development of customary authorities within the wider Acholi ethno-cultural area, of which Pajok Payam is one of the most northerly parts. As such, this paper skips over the historical development of LPAs in Pajok Payam and instead provides descriptive accounts of the Payam's various administrative entities and their roles and responsibilities. In this way, this paper provides a comprehensive account of the state of LPAs and security and justice mechanisms in Pajok Payam as of late 2013. In doing so, this paper can therefore function as a baseline for future research on these issues.[29] Given the lack of information on the specific development of customary authorities within South Sudanese Acholi communities, this is all that can be attempted without resorting to unsubstantiated conjecture.

Governmental Structures of Governance

As elsewhere in South Sudan (cf. Leonardi et al. 2010), Pajok Payam follows the basic governmental structure set up during the British Condominium period (1899 to 1955).[30] A payam holds a unique position in this structure, being both the highest branch of local government and the lowest branch of national government simultaneously. In practice, this means not only that Pajok Payam is a relatively self-contained structural entity, within which most governmental and judicial systems function comparatively autonomously, but that it is also the lowest level at which independent South Sudanese government departments are

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[29] For further information on the historical development of the juridical and legal systems in both Sudan and South Sudan, the author strongly recommends Leonardi, Moro, Santschi, and Isser (2010).

[30] From lowest to highest, the structural entities within this system are: village, boma, payam, county, state, and nation.

found and at which their decisions are disseminated. At the lower (Boma) level, there are few governmental employees and day-to-day functioning remains extremely localised and personal. At the higher (County) level, structures of government are extremely hierarchical and inaccessible for the average end-user. In this way, the Payam effectively functions as a meeting point for two entirely different systems of governance.

Figure 1 shows the Payam governmental system through its two main governance streams: the official national governmental stream and the customary or non-governmental stream. Both these governance streams are described in greater detail in the following sections.
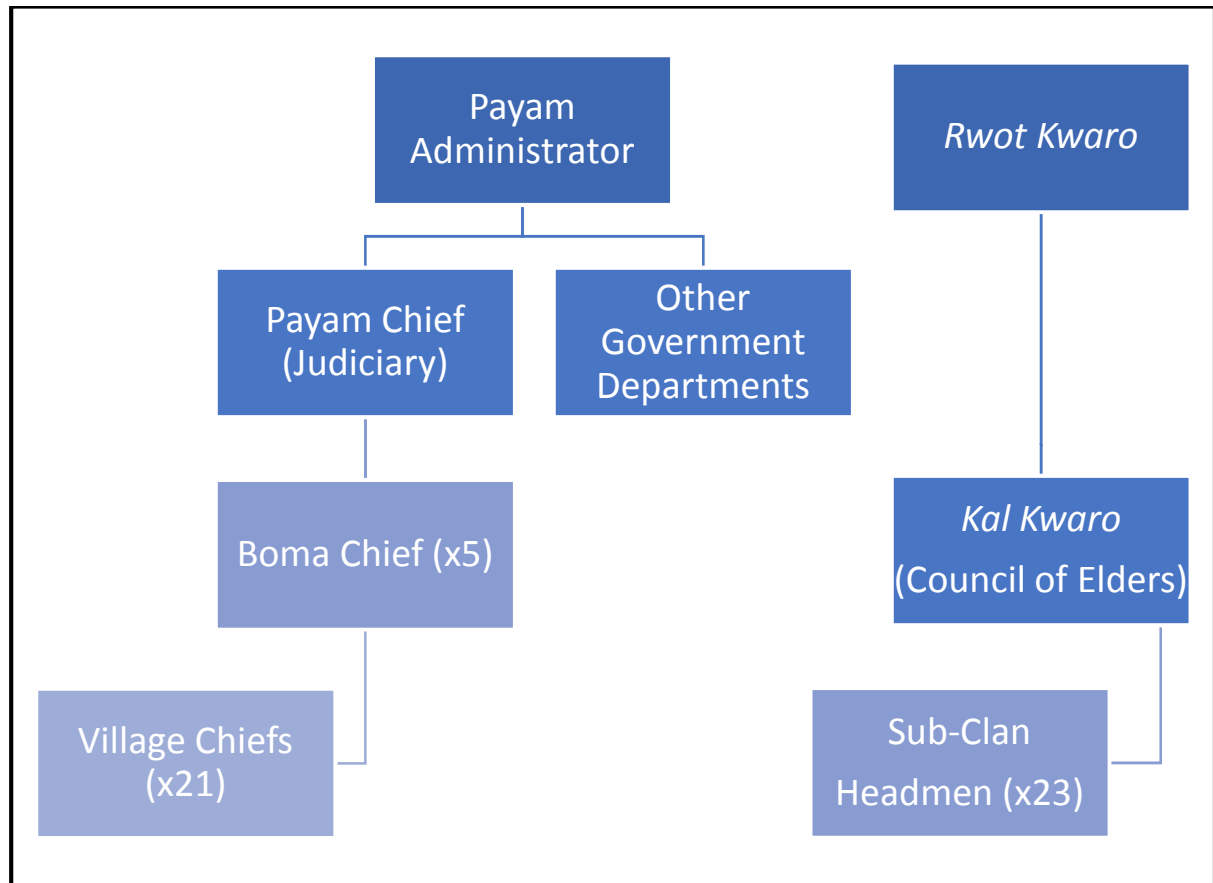
Figure 1: Map of the Pajok Payam Governmental System

The Payam Administrator

Although the day-to-day administration of Pajok Payam is overseen locally, the payam is controlled by the Payam Administrator under national governmental authority. As the national government representative in Pajok, the Payam Administrator is Pajok's head civil servant, appointed by State government in Torit and reporting to the Magwi County Commissioner. Pajok Payam has six separate Payam governmental departments,[31] whose representatives attempt to guarantee that national, state, and county-level decisions are conducted and implemented at the Payam level. The Payam Administrator heads up and organises the local governmental and administrative departments, chairs Payam-level

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[31] The six governmental departments are: Agriculture; Education; Health; the Judiciary (run by the Payam Chief, see below); Police and Law Enforcement; Water and Sanitation.

governmental meetings, and is responsible for maintaining order and security throughout the Payam. Interestingly, like many low-level civil servants and government employees throughout the country (including police and teachers), the Payam Administrator currently works on a voluntary basis.[32] According to Jok (2013a), this is most likely due to nationwide austerity measures imposed with the shutdown of oil production in 2012.

The Head Chief

The Head Chief is the superior judicial position within Pajok Payam.[33] It is his responsibility to co-ordinate the various judicial bodies within Pajok Payam and to act as the point of liaison between the Payam and County-level judiciaries. As a governmental, civil servant-type position, the Head Chief is distinguished from the Hereditary Chief, which is a customary or cultural position. The Head Chief is responsible for ensuring reports are submitted every month by each Boma Chief, advising of the judicial activity carried out at the boma level. These are then sent to the Paramount Chief in Magwi for review and analysis.[34] Although it is not known exactly when this system begun, it remains similar to that imposed by British colonial officers during the condominium period and still in force today throughout much of South Sudan (Leonardi et al. 2010). The Head Chief is also responsible for chairing any meetings between the community and local branches of government held within the Payam.

The Head Chief is selected by the twenty one village headmen and the five boma chiefs, who are considered representatives of their various constituencies in such an election. Although once elected the Head Chief is a position ideally held for life, the actual timespan of this depends upon his continuing support from the Payam community, and is largely based upon the fairness and transparency of his decision making processes. As the head of the Payam judiciary, he is responsible for decisions made at the boma level, as well as for judging cases the boma chiefs feel unable to pass judgement on. The Head Chief is also the court of appeal for community members who feel they have been unfairly treated at the boma-level. Because of these responsibilities, it is of paramount importance that the Head Chief be fair and impartial. If end-users feel he is not, or if he is abusing his position or power, he may be removed at any time. This is done by writing to the County Commissioner and requesting an inquiry, as has happened twice already in the recent past. The first post-CPA Head Chief of Pajok was removed in early 2011 (after serving in the position since 2006), and his successor was removed in late 2012. The current Head Chief has held the role since September 2013.[35]

Boma Chiefs

Each of Pajok Payam's five bomas is a local governmental administrative unit managed by a boma chief. These positions are contested every two years in elections during which every resident over 18 years is eligible to vote. The boma chief position is one of the most important within the entire payam system, as, alongside sitting as members of the judicial board at the payam level, they effectively function as the chief mediators between all levels

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[32] Interview with Payam Administrator, 22/10/2013.

[33] The Head Chief is also commonly known as the Payam Chief, although one end-user referred to the Head Chief as the *Nyampara*, a term which Adong and Lakaberer define as a "Headman, leader of a group of workers" (2009: 78) (Interview with Female end-user, 31/10/2013).

[34] Despite what the title may infer, rather than being a customary position, the Paramount Chief is also an appointed civil servant who acts as the head of the Payam courts at the County level (cf. Leonardi et al. 2010).

[35] Interview with Head Chief, 16/10/2013.

of administration and society, as well as being the principal judges, arbitrators, and general 'first port of call' for all matters within their own bomas, judicial or otherwise. In describing the normative ideal underlying the Payam's judicial process, the Head Chief laid out the levels of authority by stating that:

> *The community starts right from the household, it must start with the family and clan elders. They will try and settle any issues first. If the issue cannot be solved there, or if it is not related to the family or the clan, then they must go to the village chief who will come in and try to settle the matter. If he cannot, then they must tell the Boma Chief. And this is already the level of government, the local authority.*[36]

Boma chiefs organise and chair community meetings held within their respective bomas. They are also responsible for ensuring information is gathered and/or disseminated at these meetings. Such meetings can be on the behalf of any level of government as well as the local community and are held as and when relevant stakeholders believe something important needs discussion. For example, one series of meetings on behalf of the Payam People's Committee (see below) during 2012 led to the decision to construct permanent buildings for Agola Secondary School. This is the only secondary school in Pajok and is being built on an entirely voluntary basis, mainly through remittances.[37]

Village Headmen

Each of the 21 villages is led by a 'Headman' or 'Village Chief', elected from among village residents under the framework of the Local Government Act (GoSS 2006). Each headman cooperates with his relevant boma chief to help with the administration of security, justice, and other everyday concerns among his particular village community. The village headman also functions as the mediator between any sub-clan, village, and family disputes and the higher boma-level judicial system.

Non-Governmental Structures of Governance

The Rwot Kwaro and Kal Kwaro

As well as the Head Chief and Boma Chiefs, Pajok Payam also maintains the customary position of hereditary chief, the *Rwot Kwaro*. The *Rwot Kwaro* always comes from the 'royal clan', the *Ywaya pa Rwot*.[38] Customarily, the *Rwot Kwaro* is accountable for regulating access to land and other resources, ensuring the performance of local rituals, and continuing important traditional justice mechanisms, particularly as they relate to land disputes and mediation (cf. Atkinson 1994).

Under the auspices of the *Rwot Kwaro*, the *Kal Kwaro* (Council of Elders) is responsible for dispensing traditional justice and maintaining social harmony among the different families and sub-clans of the Payam. This is particularly so in relation to inter-personal crimes such as

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[36] Interview with Head Chief, 22/10/2013.
[37] Unrelated interview.
[38] Several people spoken with during ethnographic research have called the *Rwot Kwaro* the "*King of Pajok*", with one elderly community member calling him "*King of Equatoria*". Interestingly, although unable to give his name, one LPA also translated *Rwot Kwaro* as "*King of Pajok*" (Interview with SPLA Women's Association Leader, 29/10/2013).

rape and accidental killings, where justice must be seen to serve the individual victim, their family and sub-clan, and the wider community. As the Head Chief said, it is '*important for the harmony of all the people to settle these problems at the local level*'.[39]

In this way, the responsibility of these customary LPAs for maintaining social harmony is similar to justice responses found among individual, community, and extended family structures in cases of socially-close rape among the Acholi community in northern Uganda (Porter 2012). JSRP researcher Holly Porter discovered that, in cases of rape between individuals in socially-close relationships, or where the offender held an important social or cultural position, ideals of social harmony were often more important than ideals of justice. In these cases, settling things 'locally' often had the moral jurisdiction, and maintenance of social harmony was the primary cultural ideal. The same pattern seems to hold in Pajok, although it seems that traditional justice mechanisms administered by community elders are a more important means of restitution among the Pajok community than they were for Porter's participants (Porter, 2014, pers. comm.).

As well as their responsibility to maintain traditional justice and social harmony, these elders hold important social, cultural, and ritual functions. However, much of their customary power has been eroded by the establishment of boma chiefs, who have taken over many of the traditional rights and powers of the *Kal Kwaro*. Indeed, the author was informed that boma chiefs may sometimes be invited to *Kal Kwaro* meetings to guide them in their decisions in relation to local and national security needs and to ensure that their decisions reflect the wishes of the national government.[40] This seems to reflect what is happening at the national level more widely, where the state-backed erosion of customary power structures is taking place alongside and despite the continuing importance of these same structures for the local level maintenance of social stability (Leonardi et al. 2010)

Nonetheless, the sub-clan elders on the *Kal Kwaro* maintain many of their customary powers. As Finnstrom (2008: 94-95; cf. Atkinson 1994) notes about Ugandan Acholi traditions, 'the power of the chief can never be absolute. He must earn his position and demonstrate his ability to lead his subjects. He must show hospitality, and make sure his people do not starve and that they can live in peace'. This is still true for the *Rwot Kwaro* and elders on the *Kal Kwaro* in Acholi South Sudan. According to some community members, these men can still use the traditional authority inherent within their positions to sway decision-making processes on behalf of members of their own sub-clan.[41] This continues to make them important brokers within local struggles at all community levels.

Historically, the *Kal Kwaro* would have comprised elderly, well-respected males from throughout the Payam who would have been specifically chosen to act as *Rwot Kwaro's* advisers by the *Rwot* himself, often on the basis of knowledge, friendship, or previous political support. As it is constituted today, this body consists of 23 members, with each of the 23 sub-clans of Pajok electing one representative. As such, it seems as if the customary governance structures of Pajok have been somewhat incorporated into a wider national governmental framework, repeating a similar pattern of partial customary incorporation found throughout South Sudan (Leonardi et al. 2010).

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[39] Interview with Head Chief, 16/10/2013.
[40] Interview with Head Chief, 16/10/2013.
[41] Unrelated interview.

The Pajok Community People's Committee: A Local Manifestation of Hybrid Governance

An extremely interesting development in Pajok end-users' responses to the lack of governance and governmental interest in, or representation of, their community is "The Pajok Community People's Committee" (hereafter called the "People's Committee"). The People's Committee seems to be the local manifestation of Pajok end-users' disappointment with what they see as their everyday and structural marginalisation in the workings of the South Sudanese state. In this sense, the People's Committee is a localised Pajok Payam response to community-wide feelings of insecurity and a lack of protection and development across the entire Payam, which they trace to corruption, nepotism, and similar signs of poor governance at the county, state, and national levels. It is an attempt by Payam end-users themselves to take control of the development of the Payam's social and economic security. In this way, as a very local response to the lack of formal governmental public authority at work within the Payam, the People's Committee is a specifically localised manifestation of a Hybrid Political Order in its almost archetypal form.[42]

Although, as an independent non-customary body the People's Committee is not specifically part of Pajok's sub-clan system, each of the Payam's 23 sub-clans elect 10 people to act as their clan representatives on a 230-person group whose role is to represent the best interests of the entire Pajok community, at home and abroad.[43] As well as this central committee, there are also committees representing, and elected by, former members of the Pajok community who now live in Juba, Magwi, Nimule, and Torit. The number of representatives of these other communities is unknown, and indeed may fluctuate with the number of former Pajok members now residing in those other places. These other committees are elected to represent the interests of Pajok end-users within the environs in which they now live, for example helping them with their dealings with state and national offices. They also represent the interests of these non-resident former members of the Pajok community at meetings of the People's Committee, especially at the General Assembly of The Pajok Community People's Committee which is held in Pajok Payam at the end of every year.

This annual conference is attended by representatives of all communities, whether in Juba, Magwi, Nimule, Torit, or Pajok itself. Representatives of former Pajok residents now living overseas are also invited, although due to the costs involved the representation of these communities is often minimal. The Assembly is for high-level large-scale decision making about end-users wishes and requirements for development, justice, and security within the Payam over the coming year, as well as to audit the implementation effectiveness of the previous meeting's objectives.[44] It seems that the People's Committee is an idea which grew out of the Pajok community itself, rather than representing the wishes of any other outside body, such as the South Sudanese government. As far as the author is aware, it is the only structure of its kind within Magwi County and may even be unique at the state and national levels.

Heading the People's Committee is a 15 person Executive Council. These 15 members include a Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and General Secretary, as well as Secretaries for Education, Finance, Information, Society and Culture, Women and Children, and Youth and

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[42] Luckham and Kirk (2012: 13) note that "'Hybrid' security arrangements are characterised by complex interactions among a variety of actors following different animating logics and drawing on varying sources of authority within fragile and conflict-affected spaces" and "are characterised by the existence of multiple non-state providers of 'security, welfare and representation', as the state shares 'authority, legitimacy, and capacity' with other actors, networks and institutions that transcend the formal / informal distinction" (cf. Hoffman & Kirk 2013: 20).

[43] Interview with Head Chief, 16/10/2013.

[44] Interview with Head Chief, 16/10/2013.

Sport. Each of these Secretaries is supported by a Deputy Secretary who has the authority to act on behalf of their relevant Departmental Secretary in the condition of their absence. It is the function of the Executive Council to implement the wishes of the Pajok community and to follow the decisions of the full committee.[45]

Each representative on any of the various Pajok People's Committees (whether in Pajok, Juba, Magwi etc.) is elected for a term of two years, with the last election taking place on 16 and 17 November, 2013. These end-users representatives are supposed to act in a broadly democratic manner, with each of the sub-clan representatives functioning as conduits between the community and the committee when the dissemination or gathering of information and opinion is required, or when especially important issues need community-wide decisions. In doing so, the People's Committee acts as a means of representing the wishes of end-users in local governance. The People's Committee therefore sits outside formal structures of governance but ideally acts as an important community-led balance upon the non-democratic application of local governmental authority.[46] Indeed, it seems that one of the People's Committee's prime functions is to fill the everyday, developmental, and governance vacuum left by the virtual lack of South Sudanese state presence in Pajok Payam.

Practically, the People's Committee works through the small-scale, low-level everyday interactions of the committee members. It seems that, rather than having regular large meetings, much of the work of the committee is done through the ongoing day-to-day relationships which committee members maintain and that larger meetings are only held on those rare occasions when it is felt that the full consensus of the community is required. One such example is the construction of Agola Secondary School, mentioned earlier, which is entirely organised, funded, and built through the work done by the Pajok branch of the People's Committee and their national and international affiliates.

Local Councils
Pajok Payam has several other locally-elected committees to help with the maintenance and development of various other aspects of social and economic life within the Payam. These are the Land Board, the Women's Council, the Youth Council, and the Business Council, each of which is comprised of Payam community members and led by an elected government official termed the 'Head Councillor'. The role of these committees is to hold regular meetings within their elected bodies and to discuss relevant issues as and when they occur and they are tasked with representing their electorates' specific interests. The Land Council represents land-holders and land-lords throughout the Payam, while the Business Council represents local merchants and businessmen. As could be expected, the Youth Council represents the Payam's youth while the Women's Council represents the Payam's females and children. The Land Council has a particularly important role in the ongoing Ugandan – South Sudanese border disputes (see below), especially with how this disputed land is accessed and used. As a civil servant who is a named South Sudanese government official, albeit outside of the official governmental system, a Head Councillor also represents the interests of the larger South Sudanese government in Pajok. Similarly to the *Kal Kwaro*, these councils are all made up of one elected individual from each of the 23 sub-clans.

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[45] Interview with Head Chief, 16/10/2013.
[46] Unrelated interview.

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Other Local Public Authorities

NGOs, CBOs, and the UN

There are no NGOs currently based in Pajok Payam, and very few have been operational in the area over the last few years. The exception seems to be UNICEF and SSIMAS (South Sudan Integrated Mine Action Service), who give UXO education to local school children). The only Community Based Organisation (CBO) currently registered in Pajok Payam is Saint Monica Women's Association, which specialises in educating women around issues of family planning, HIV/AIDS, and farming, as well as attempting to provide internet and computer access.[47] There are also several independent and end-user run organisations, such as God's Tender Mercy Orphanage and Nursery School in Lawaci Boma. Further, there is a USA-based Church of Christ (CoC) mission outreach initiative called The Sudan Project which ideally makes several trips a year to undertake development-related work.[48]

The presence of UNMISS (United Nations Mission in South Sudan) and other UN-related organisations is extremely sporadic in Pajok Payam. Although, according to one boma chief, UNMISS makes twice yearly 'checks' on security in the region, their actual presence is nominal: they have minimal interaction with the local populace and usually leave the area within two days.[49] Such an opinion is borne out by interview data: not one end-user interviewed had ever heard of UNMISS, and every LPA made comments similar to '*UNMISS only ever meet with the policemen*'.[50]

Although most Pajok end-users generally consider the UN a beneficial organisation, it does receive some mixed opinions, with a minority of end-users and focus group participants noting the UN had stopped offering people in Pajok much assistance since their return from exile. Due to the continuing difficulties associated with post-repatriation life, they consider this lack of support tantamount to abandonment. As one YMFG participant argued, '*the UN should help people because South Sudan are still the new country. And so there are people still coming back. So they should continue supporting them, not forgetting them*'.[51]

The SPLA and Police

Just as there is a total absence of NGOs in Pajok, so also there is a complete lack of SPLA forces. Although a small contingent was based in the area after the 2005 signing of the CPA, they were removed in 2008. During the LPAFG, however, Pajok's Boma Chiefs alleged that the Constitution of South Sudan requires a SPLA contingent within every Payam in the country.[52] Due to ongoing feelings of insecurity relating to issues between the Pajok and Uganda communities over the border, a formal request has been made to the Magwi County Commissioner for immediate reallocation of a SPLA unit to the Payam. The date of reallocation is yet to be decided and, given the recent conflict, probably unlikely.[53]

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[47] Saint Monica's is at least somewhat supported by funds from NCA (Norwegian Church Aid), who seemed to have a presence in Pajok until 2012, and a volunteer from VSO (Volunteer Services Overseas).

[48] For example, over the last two years they have built a church, a school, a Bible training school, and a health clinic in Pajok. A plan to construct 15 boreholes over Christmas 2013/2014 was disrupted by the recent conflict.

[49] Interview with Boma Chief, 17/10/2013.

[50] Interview with SPLA Women's Association Leader, 29/10/2013.

[51] YMFG, 12/12/13.

[52] LPAFG, 16/10/2013.

[53] LPAFG, 16/10/2013.

Some people are not unhappy that there are no SPLA in Pajok, however. Even the leader of the SPLM Women's Association in Pajok Payam said '*The SPLA, they are good people. But what they are doing now from up is not coming down to the local people here*'.[54] A further two end-users, the WFG, and one LPA observed the SPLA had a history of bringing fighting, looting, and stealing to the area. Indeed, that LPA's attitude to the SPLA is worth quoting at length. He noted that:

> *The SPLA were here when we returned from exile in 2005 and 2006. Then they were like rebels, not professional soldiers. They were harassing people, setting up road blocks. Instead of protecting the community they were a threat to the community. So the community wrote letters to the government and the government took them away. That was in 2008.*
>
> *Now the Minister of Local Government came here last month and said he was going to send troops here to protect us. But people up to now are still sceptical. They remember the harassment. Some say let them be brought. Others say take them far away. Because they did not do very well in terms of security! Drunk, moving with guns. They just interfere with the day to day life.*[55]

The police force in Pajok Payam comprises seven officers, three based at the Ugandan border in Pugee Boma and the other four at the main Payam administration office in Lagi Boma. Although Boma Chiefs are usually considered the first stop to obtain justice by end-users, police are thought especially important in the event of violence, particularly if involving bloodshed. Similar to end-users' perceptions of police elsewhere in South Sudan, end-users in Pajok feel the police are corrupt or, at the very least, requiring some form of payment before action will be taken (Leonardi et al. 2010: 47). As Leonardi et al. (2010: 48) note, the very fact money is required only reinforces the popular perception of police corruption, whether or not individual officers are corrupt (cf. Jok 2013b).

Churches
A number of churches operate in Pajok Payam. In Pajok centre there are: two African Inland Churches (AIC) in Caigon and Lagi Bomas; a large Church of Christ (CoC) north of town in Lagi and another small one in Caigon; a Roman Catholic church with the oldest and largest congregation in Lawaci; an Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lagi and another being built in Lawaci; and branches of the Evangelical Free Church, Seventh Day Adventists, and Episcopal Church of Sudan based in classrooms at schools south of the centre in Caigon or Lawaci Bomas. Further, there are branches of the AIC, CoC, Catholic, and Lutheran churches in Pugee Boma.[56]

In early November 2013, there was uproar within Pajok's religious communities over the apparent introduction to the area of the Baha'i faith. According to several Christian end-users, the Baha'i were not wanted because they were '*teaching against the Bible*' and thus attempting to lead the community's youth astray.[57] This threat was taken so seriously that the Inter-Church Committee of Pajok Payam held a community meeting on the issue,[58] the result

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[54] Interview with SPLA Women's Association Leader, 29/10/2013.
[55] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.
[56] Unrelated interview.
[57] Unrelated interview.
[58] The Inter-Church Committee are elected from local church leaders to represent and act on behalf of Pajok's Christian congregations.

being the threat of formal and permanent removal of all Baha'i unless its practitioners 'voluntarily' left within a week.[59]

There is also some talk of so-called 'traditional Acholi religious practices', such as people visiting *ajwaka* or praying to or honouring ancestors, although these are usually spoken of in cautionary and discouraging tones.[60] However, open discussion of such matters is rare, and pointed questions usually result only in answers negating the existence of such entities or practitioners within the community. Despite this, one YWFG member said '*I go to the ajwaki when I have a problem. You know, those people who give you the medicines, the loyat*'.[61] Ethnographic research suggests such practices must actually be quite common, as visiting *ajwaki* is often spoken of as bad practice during church sermons.

Results Overview

The overall impression from the research comprising this paper is that life in Pajok is hard but reasonably safe and secure. Furthermore, it is the researcher's opinion that although most Pajok end-users consider their lives difficult, they are generally happy living in a conflict-free area and glad to be cultivating their ancestral land. The Payam remains significantly underdeveloped, however, and most interviewees highlighted the personal, social, and economic insecurities this lack of development brings them, their families, and their community. The Payam Administrator summed this up, saying '*The roads are bad. Business is bad. Organisations are few and the projects are few. The health services and the educations, the schools, are all poor! Nothing is going forward, because of the lack of funds*'.[62]

Both objectively and subjectively approached, Pajok's development needs are many. As any resident quickly points out, Pajok has virtually no functional roads or health services, no market, a dearth of educational facilities (with those present being oversubscribed, under-resourced, and poorly maintained), and no real economy to speak of. In Pajok, life is hard, as interviewees continued to repeat. As the pastor in one of the churches said, '*The needs here are great, especially in the areas of education, health, and roads. These three*'.[63] He then went on to say, '*It will take very long for the government to be able to address all our needs…We encourage people to organise together and help with the shared projects…Because we have the feeling that if we sit here and wait for the government, it will not happen*'.[64]

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[59] Unrelated interview.

[60] The Acholi word '*ajwaka*' (plural '*ajwaki*') is usually poorly and slanderously mistranslated as 'witchdoctor' by most contemporary and historical sources, foreign and Acholi. It is the opinion of the author that this is likely the result of hegemonic discourses promoted by early Christian missionaries and colonial government authorities in the region, the results of which has been the demonization of any customary Acholi socio-cultural practices seeming to disagree with or deviate from normative Christian conceptual definitions such as 'religion' etc. For early examples of some of these hegemonic discourses in Acholiland, see: Baker (1874); Crazzolara (1938, 1950); Ingrams (1960); Johnston (1902); Malandra (1939); Menzies (1954); and Thomas & Scott (1935). For similar critiques, see Oxford-trained Acholi anthropologist Okot p'Bitek (p'Bitek 1970, 1971).

[61] YWFG, 8/12/13. This was given as a response after the YWFG asked for further clarification of what a 'judiciary' meant and being told it was somewhere to go when you had a problem with people in the community.

[62] Interview with Payam Administrator, 22/10/2013.

[63] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.

[64] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.

This summarises the dominant end-user perspective on everyday life in South Sudan: there are many needs but there is so much to do that the national government is unable to respond to most of them.[65] Due to the central government's inability to provide the developmental programmes required, many Pajok end-users believe future development it is solely up to themselves. This belief is seemingly shared by Pajok's diaspora, as their independent funding of Agola Secondary School demonstrates.

The data given in Figure 2 (below) shows Pajok's greatest perceived needs, given in percentages, as identified by the different interview groups. Focus group responses have been aggregated to treat each group as a single individual. This was done as different focus groups not only had varying numbers of members but also varying numbers of active participants. Furthermore, there was a distinct tendency for each focus group to come to a consensus about most questions, particularly on issues of needs and sources of insecurity. This finding may merely result from the nature of group interviews, such that consensus is common and controversy less so, or it may demonstrate some type of categorical unity within the groups (such as among most of Pajok's women or young men, for example) such that group members generally share a common existentiality. On the other hand, this finding may reflect the Acholi tendency toward social harmony described by Porter (2012).
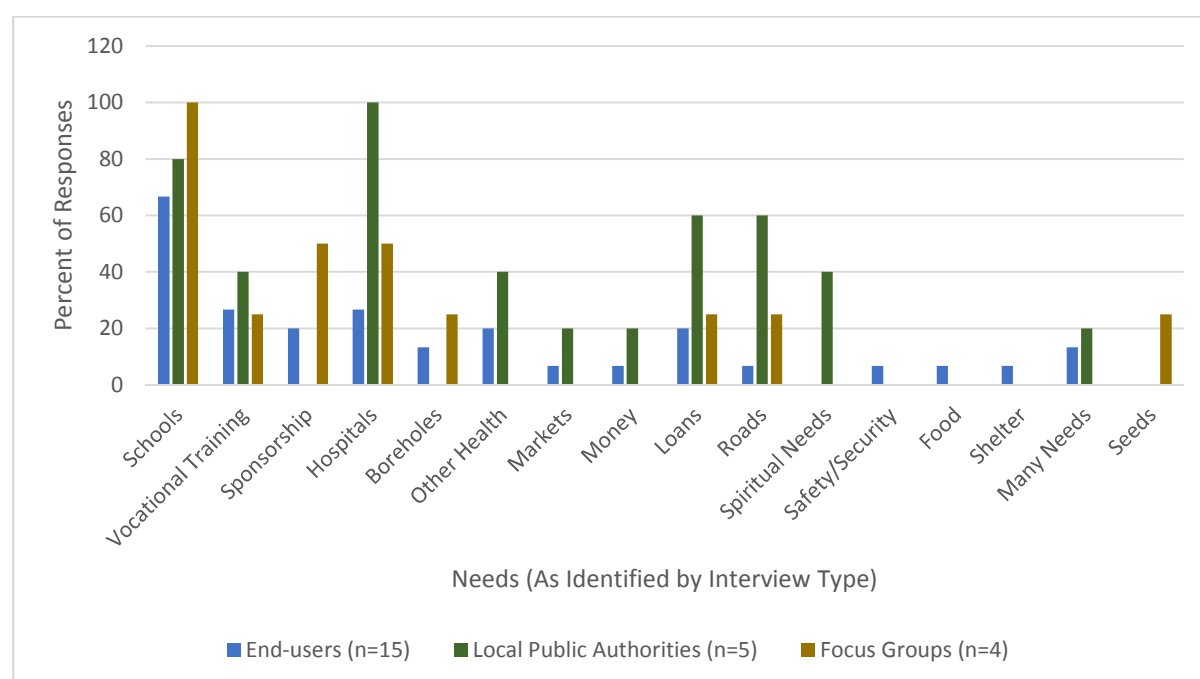
Figure 2: Perceived Greatest Needs as Identified by Interview Type

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[65] This is a perspective which, according to many reports from both the post-CPA (2005 – 2010) and the post-independence (2011 to present) periods, seems to be somewhat standard among end-users throughout South Sudan (cf. Jok 2013a; Leonardi et al. 2010). That is, the South Sudanese people are allowing their government some time to come to terms with the many problems associated with their independence and the circumstances in which it arose (i.e., one of zero to minimal local and national development).

Educational Needs: Securing the Future?

As can be seen from Figure 2, educational needs broadly defined are the primary developmental need for residents in Pajok Payam, end-users and LPAs alike. All the focus groups, four LPAs, and ten end-users regarded more or better school facilities as among their greatest needs, with a further four end-users and the LPAFG identifying vocational training as a major need for Pajok, while another three end-users and the YMFG and YWFG stating they needed the provision of sponsorship money to allow their education to continue. Further, both the YMFG and the YWFG said they needed other education-related things to be provided, such as the construction of libraries and greater access to supplies.

Although Pajok does have one secondary school (serving around 240 students), five primary schools (with nearly 2400 students), and three nursery schools (having almost 400 students), the facilities at these schools are poor at best, most classes have upwards of 50 students, and almost all teachers work voluntarily (which in practice means they do not receive a government-guaranteed income but must instead wait on the payment of school fees before they get paid).[66] Further, the entire South Sudanese curriculum is taught and assessed in English, no matter students' exposure to the language. This is a problem for two reasons: not only do most young students have almost no exposure to English before attending school, older students and even teachers struggle to read, write, or speak fluently. Moreover, many teachers have no formal training and, although South Sudan national requirements state all teachers must have secondary school education, in practice this is not always the case. In combination, this means Pajok's standard of education is exceptionally low by international standards.

Health Security

Like schools and education, the state of Pajok's 'hospitals' (really health centres) and health system were an almost universal area of concern for end-users and LPAs alike.[67] Four end-users, all five LPAs, and the LPAFG and WFG identified hospitals as among Pajok's greatest needs, while three end-users and two LPAs mentioned other health-related concerns, such as more medicines or doctors, and two end-users and the YMFG mentioned a need for boreholes or safe drinking water.

Pajok does have a government funded health care provider, the Pajok Primary Health Centre (PPHC), which allegedly provides affordable health care to all Pajok residents. According to all end-users in this study, however, PPHC never has the medicines required to treat the majority of (apparently malaria and typhoid related) cases taken there. Several end-users therefore considered attending PPHC a waste of their time and money. This is confirmed by ethnographic research, wherein several malaria cases were diagnosed without a malaria test being performed but where anti-malarial drugs were also unavailable. Such occurrences are common, as is the perception that 'doctors' at the PPHC are personally benefiting from government-provided drugs. For instance, one end-user said '*There is the hospital, but what*

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[66] However, even teachers on allegedly 'government-guaranteed' contracts were still awaiting the payment of their 2013 salaries by year's end (Unrelated interview). According to the Payam Administrator, due to budgetary constraints state and county officials pushed all employees' 2013 salaries back until January 2014 (Unrelated interview).

[67] Although most end-users and several LPAs referred to the local health centres as hospitals, all three explicitly define themselves as (and only provide the services expected from) local health centres.

they do, when the drugs come, they just take them to their own clinics and then they charge any price!' [68]

As well as the PPHC, there are two private health centres and several private drug clinics in the Payam. However, the quality of care provided by some of these facilities is debatable. In the researcher's opinion, the best is based at and run by the Church of Christ (CoC), who are in turn funded by their American parent church. Although drugs at the CoC are limited in variety, they are well stocked and offer free consultations and medicine to all their patients. According to the Head Nurse, the CoC provides services to around 50 people per day,[69] but ethnographic research suggests many end-users are unaware of the services provided by this facility.

Furthermore, no health facility in Pajok offers anything beyond very basic medical checks, birthing assistance, and drug dispensary services. Anyone with health-related needs beyond these basic issues needs to travel to Kitgum, Uganda. As one end-user noted, Pajok end-users *'need more hospitals here, because getting the drugs is difficult! And also, if you are needing an operation, then you must go to Uganda. But that is hard because the road is so bad!'*[70] Such a response, like many others, highlights one of the end-users' dominant themes when speaking of insecurity in contemporary Pajok: the roads.

Economic Security

Markets

Just as the education and health systems are over-subscribed and under-resourced, so too are many of the other basic facilities throughout Pajok Payam. For example, there is currently no official market within the Payam, although three small and poorly supported local markets do exist (one each in Lagi, Lawaci, and Pugee). One female end-user, effectively summarising many end-users' opinions on the situation said *'There is no market here! What we have is not even a real market! Because if you want to go to get the clothes, then you only find the medium fish!'*[71] Although land in Lawaci Boma has apparently been put aside for constructing an official Payam market,[72] the timeline for this is unknown and, given the lack of central government support, is likely not to be starting anytime soon.[73]

The lack of a proper market is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, end-users needing food security items and basic consumer goods must either shop at the small and expensive local stores or travel to Juba or Kitgum. Moreover, the local economy is predominantly small-scale, family-based subsistence-level agriculture, and, as most of the community grow similar crops, end-users with excess have no reliable demand for their goods. End-users in turn perceive this lack as retarding the local monetary economy. In a rather standard response to questions regarding economic security, one end-user said *'Money? There is no money here! We have the things to sell, but no market, so no money. Because the road is so bad and no one brings the things here to buy and cannot take the things to sell'*.[74] Similarly to the point made above, reference to the Payam's roads is common when speaking about the local economy.

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[68] Interview with male end-user, 25, 31/10/2013.
[69] Unrelated interview.
[70] Interview with Female end-user, 70, 25/10/2013.
[71] Interview with Female end-user, 20, 26/10/2013.
[72] Interview with Head Chief, 22/10/2013.
[73] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.
[74] Interview with Female end-user, 70, 25/10/2013.

Seeds, Tools, and Food Security

All end-users mentioned they needed tools, with 13 of 15 saying they also required seeds. This mirrors findings at both sites in JSRP's Acholi mapping paper (Hopwood 2015). Also in common with that paper was the fact that 12 of 15 end-users said they felt food insecure. However, two respondents said this food insecurity was due to lack of variety rather than quantity, and six end-users and the WFG specifically mentioned that food insecurity was due to drought in 2013's first growing season (March to June). One end-user said his family had no food '*because last season the sunshine was working on all our property and so now we are crying with the hunger, seriously!*'[75] This finding, echoing that of the Acholi mapping paper, seems reasonable given Pajok and Ngomoromo's geographical immediacy.

Therefore, it seems likely that the conclusion drawn in that paper is relevant to Pajok as well: "it would be natural for end-users to assume, given their experience over the last few years, that there was at least a chance that our researchers were assessing people prior to distribution of practical support" (Hopwood 2015: 30). This paper goes further, however, and suggests it is not only food insecurity that leads end-users to respond in the way they do, but also the larger suggestion in Hopwood's statement: that of the provision of support *in potentia*. Once again quoting Hopwood (2015: 30), "this is not to suggest that food insecurity is not a very real concern for very many rural Acholi… [as] the loss of crop produce will have had a cost in terms of household incomes and wellbeing". Rather, it is to suggest that direct 'yes' or 'no' questions regarding the provision of specific needs only invite end-users to interpret such interviews purely in terms of resource allocation assessment. This seems supported by the answers end-users give to 'greatest needs'-type questions, where the researcher was personally asked to provide anything ranging from cows,[76] through permanent buildings,[77] to loan schemes.[78] As Hopwood (2015: 30) notes, when the right answer could prove the difference between receiving assistance or not, "it would also be sensible for poor families to identify these as needs".

Roads

Alongside land issues (discussed below), the state of Pajok's roads was the other concern unifying most end-users and LPAs when talking about the problems they and their community faced, security-related or otherwise. Many debates about the state of the community and development in Pajok start and end with the condition of Pajok's roads. Or, as one end-user replied, '*What road? No road at all*!'[79]

It is true that, as one LPA noted, '*The roads in Pajok are almost non-existent, just like animal tracks*',[80] but the same could be said for many roads throughout Magwi County, EES, and South Sudan in general. It is also almost certainly true that the state of the region's roads negatively affect Pajok Payam. Indeed, roads are used as the dominant idiom in a form of discursive short-hand allowing Pajok residents to speak of how separate spheres of economic insecurity are co-constituting, with problems in one domain reinforcing difficulties in others. As the Payam Administrator noted:

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[75] Interview with Male end-user, 38, 28/10/2013.
[76] For example, YMFG, 12/12/13.
[77] For example, Interview with Female end-user, 19, 13/12/13.
[78] For example, WFG, 4/12/13.
[79] Interview with Male end-user, 25, 31/10/2013.
[80] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.

The road is a very bad problem. It does not attract the people to come to Pajok, it does not attract the investment or the business. If people are thinking they want to come to Pajok, they will not, because of the road! For example, there is no market. But if some of the people want to transport the food to the other town, then they cannot because the road is too bad! It cost too much to be good to do. How much money will they make? […] And there is no hospital. So the sick people, they need to go to Uganda or to Juba. But there is no way to take the sick people, because of the road […] And there is no insecurity here in Pajok, it is safe. No guns […] The only major problem is the road.[81]

Given the extent of GoSS's widespread corruption (Jok 2013a) alongside South Sudan's democratic, security, and fiscal crises (Jok 2013a; Leonardi et al. 2010; Schomerus 2011) and the cost of road projects, it seems unlikely Pajok's roads will change any time soon. This is especially so given the country's recent violence, as foreign workers on the Magwi road construction project mentioned earlier withdrew in mid-December 2013. Further, Pajok's economic development, widespread subsistence farming, and an over-reliance on remittances mean that, unlike the Agola Secondary School project, the community have neither the skills nor the money to create a road themselves. Therefore, it seems likely that this element of economic insecurity will continue for the foreseeable future.

Personal Safety and (In)Security

Overview
The data given in Figure 3 show the currently perceived sources of insecurity within Pajok as identified by different interview types. Interview results combined with ongoing ethnographic research leads to the conclusion that most end-users consider their lives reasonably safe, particularly in comparison with the past.

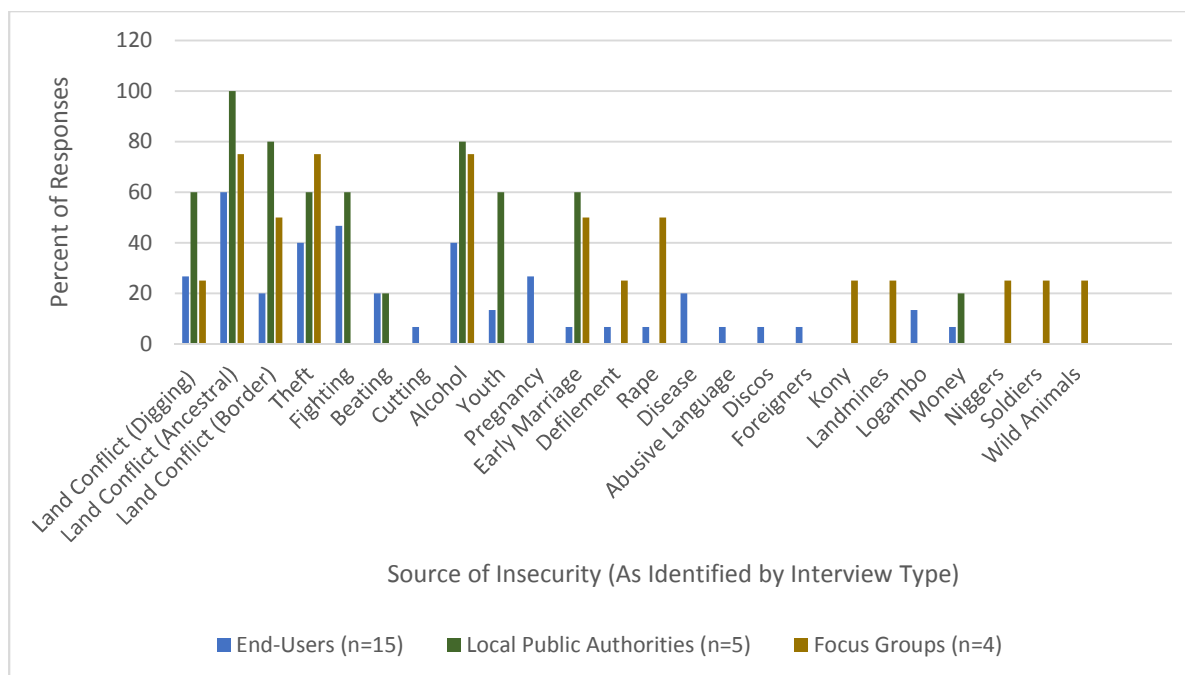[81] Interview with Payam Administrator, 22/10/2013.

Figure 3: Perceived Sources of Insecurity as Identified by Interview Type

There are no armed groups operating in the Payam (every interviewee responded in the negative to these questions) and small arms ownership is said to be extremely uncommon, if not absent entirely.[82] Indeed, one Boma Chief noted there is *'Nothing unsafe in Pajok. There are not even the guns. Only the police have the guns'.*[83] Furthermore, when asked direct questions about issues of personal and/or physical safety, only three end-users, one LPA, and members of two focus groups answered that they felt unsafe in Pajok. Moreover, of these responses, two end-users and the LPA said this feeling of insecurity was due to the local health system while one end-user and the LPA also mentioned it was due to economic rather than personal insecurity. For example, the leader of SPLM Women's Association in Pajok said *'No, I am not safe! Because sometimes I am feeling sick and there is no money for things, so I am not happy!'*[84] Moreover, one end-user in the WFG felt unsafe because the LRA leader, Joseph Kony, was still free,[85] and YMFG members noted taht things such as landmines, wild animals, and poor drinking water made them feel unsafe.[86]

Disputes, Argument, Conflict, and Crimes

As shown in Figure 3, perceived sources of insecurity are thought to result from three major factors: land; anti-social behaviour (especially theft and violence); and 'sexual transgression' (Leonardi et al. 2010: 60). Land-based conflict broadly defined is the most common response from all interviewed groups and is the focus of a later section. Anti-social behaviour includes

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[82] Although, since the outbreak of the recent violence in December 2013, many end-users now say the exact opposite, now usually indicating the high levels of small arms ownership in the community are one reason the researcher should feel safe in Pajok. This in itself demonstrates how answers to many interviews are purposefully constructed to fit the perceived needs of the interviewer or the interviewee.

[83] Interview with Boma Chief, 17/10/2013.

[84] Interview with SPLM Women's Association Leader, 29/10/2013.

[85] WFG, 4/12/13.

[86] YMFG, 12/12/13.

the categories of theft, violence (fighting, beating, and cutting with *pangas* (machetes)), alcohol, abusive language, *logambo*,[87] and, potentially, youth,[88] and "*niggers*",[89] because these crimes are qualitatively explained as against the best interests of the community. Sexual transgression includes early marriage,[90] defilement,[91] pregnancy,[92] and rape. Alongside how it is widely considered an attack on Acholi society and culture to breach gendered and generational sexual norms, the physical and structural violence inherent within the various sexual transgression categories means these acts could also be considered forms of anti-social behaviour. Further, in Porter's (2012) terms, all activities under both anti-social behaviour and sexual transgression are contrary to the core Acholi cultural value of social harmony.

The number and nature of these various perceived sources of dispute, argument, conflict, and crime together seem to indicate the largest non-land related sources of insecurity in Pajok Payam broadly relate to violent, sexual, and anti-social behaviour. This certainly seems correct: ethnographic research suggests that, outside of land complaints, the majority of court cases in Pajok relate directly to one, if not all, these categories. However, some such cases do not seem to lessen the security of other Pajok residents. For example, fighting (usually emically defined as an act of violence between young drunk males) is seemingly quite common, especially at night and within discos. Despite its prevalence, however, many end-users do not consider it a community issue and share the attitude of one elderly end-user: *'The problem with the youth...they are very difficult people to control! There is not much*

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[87] Logambo is the Swahili word for 'gossip', although it was translated to the author as *'walking around with a person's name'* (Interview with Female end-user, 48, 26/10/2013). This translation is apparently the literal translation of its Acholi equivalent term (Porter, 2014, pers. comm.). Logambo is attributed to many long-lasting disagreements between neighbours and other socially-close persons. Although males in Pajok see it as a peculiarly female trait, ethnographic research suggests similar patterns of behaviour to be just as prevalent among men.

[88] Youth are included in this category because, in the emic sense of the concept, the term 'youth' as used in relation to security universally denote groups of young males who gather to drink alcohol, go to discos, and otherwise disrupt social harmony. Discos are included in this category for the same reason: in this context, the term 'disco' refers to any social situation involving contemporary music which encourages young people to gather together, forming the collectives needed for 'gangs', 'niggers', and 'youth'. Discos are also conducive to drinking alcohol, violence, and activities regarded as sexual transgressions. In this way, they form the problematic context within which other deviant social behavior takes place.

[89] "*Niggers*" was explained to the researcher as being *'a group of girls who steal things and beat people at night'* and explicitly defined in opposition to *'gangs, who are groups of boys who are doing these things'* (YMFG, 12/12/13). Although Leonardi et al. (2010: 59) found 'nigger' is a common descriptor for 'problem' youth throughout South Sudan, they found that it usually referred to males influenced by African American youth culture, as represented in USA-based music and television sources. Indeed, according to Leonardi et al. (2010: 59-60), 'these styles have also come to be linked with immoral and antisocial behaviour among youth, and the "nigger" has become an increasingly sinister and criminal figure'. Although there is no evidential basis to disagree with this, the author strongly doubts there are any groups of girls involved in stealing and beating within Pajok.

[90] In an unrelated interview, one Boma Chief defined 'early marriage' as pregnancy before the age of 18. It seems, following local patrilocal residence rules, such a girl is then expected to leave school and perhaps even marry the father of the child. Certainly, this is a common social practice. Whether or not the girl has much choice in the matter is obviously context specific. Equally uncertain is whether the girl has much choice in the sexual activity leading to her pregnancy. Following the findings of Porter (2012), the element of choice in many female sexual activities may be significantly limited. Local hearsay and rumors would certainly suggest this is the case.

[91] Leonardi et al. (2010: 61) notes that the common South Sudanese idiom of 'defilement' can be defined as 'sex with an unmarried girl' or 'pregnancy...of schoolgirls'.

[92] Given the definitions of 'defilement' and 'early marriage' above, 'pregnancy' could very easily be the same qualitative phenomenon.

crime here in Pajok. Like, if they are dancing and beating themselves, that is their problem only. It does not worry us. So the killing and so on, that is not happening here'.[93]

Ethnographic research suggests, however, that the attitude this quote epitomises is indicative of two other major security concerns for Pajok end-users, rather than being the disregard of such problems it seemingly represents. The first of these is the problem of alcohol. The second is the problem of getting justice.

Alcohol-Related Incidents

Alcohol and alcohol-affected youth are, for many end-users, emblematic of insecurity within Pajok. Comments similar to the following were common: '*Youth here like drinking the alcohol a lot and they end with the beating people without a reason [...] But basically there is no other disputes apart from that*';[94] or '*People is fighting here seriously, fighting is being common here. They drink the alcohol and disturbing and fighting with their women and sometimes other men*'.[95] What is obvious in these and in similar responses is the link between alcohol and violence, and thus insecurity, through the vessel of intoxicated young males. Certainly, such attitudes dominate everyday narratives of insecurity in Pajok.

Although these narratives do represent end-users' perceived reality about everyday insecurity in Pajok, it is worthwhile questioning if the narrative content manifests the same way in reality. Abbink and Van Kessel (2010: 2-3) argue that 'youth' has always been a problematic social category across Africa, one which needs continual monitoring and social regulation. They argue that in contemporary post-colonial Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, 'youth' has become something of a metanarrative for all society's ills (Abbink & Van Kessel 2010: 11). Young, disaffected, unemployed, without a coherent or easily recognised place within the cultural and generational systems structuring much of African society; youth are the largest and most quickly increasing demographic in Africa, as well as being the one demographic sector largely unaffected by development initiatives (Abbink & Van Kessel 2010: 23). As such, Abbink and Van Kessel (2010: 16) argue, youth also pose the largest internal threat to the long-term stability of the post-colonial African state.

Indeed, such a problematic structural position is at least implicitly recognised by some Pajok interviewees. For example, the Payam Administrator said '*That is why the youth are becoming idle, with nothing to do, because they have nothing, no education, and no work. And also, there are many widows, many orphans [...] There is no one to help, no one to give the support. And so this is why they are drinking*'.[96] Thus, without disregarding the overwhelming end-user response that young, drunk, violent males are problematic for safety and security in Pajok, the researcher recommends that future research be conducted on the connections between youth, alcohol, and violence in Pajok Payam and elsewhere in Africa. This research should especially connect these issues to the similarities and differences between the perceptions and realities of safety, security, and justice among end-users in such locales, perhaps comparing the perceptions of such end-users with those of the 'youth' themselves.

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[93] Interview with Male end-user, 70, 30/10/2013.
[94] Interview with Female end-user, 70, 25/10/2013.
[95] Interview with Female end-user, 30, 31/10/2013
[96] Interview with Payam Administrator, 22/10/2013

And Justice For All?: Justice, Injustice, and Social Harmony
Ethnographic research suggests that the other perception about security and justice implied in the quote from the elderly male given earlier is that formal judicial processes will not result in outcomes of justice. End-users' attitudes toward personal security often seem at odds with the idea of judicial justice. Furthermore, as well as being under-resourced and over-worked, both the police and the legal system are expensive and slow to act. Usually the losing party is sentenced to a combination of lashes and imprisonment, the incarceration component of which is then converted into a fine payable to the court of 30SSP for every month given as punishment. What this means is that instead of serving a prison sentence, the common punishment of three months' imprisonment becomes a fine of 90 SSP, plus the court fees associated with being a part of the case as complainant or defendant (usually around 20 SSP each).[97] This is a significant amount for the average subsistence farming family.

Ethnographic research suggests courts often do not decide in favour of the seemingly obvious victim, as in assault cases for example, but tend to support the Acholi principle that Porter (2012) describes as social harmony. They have a distinct tendency to normatively idealise Pajok social life as unproblematic and trouble free and thus make decisions in favour of the status quo. This tendency allows much interpersonal violence and other anti-social activity to go virtually unpunished, while petty disputes considered a breach of harmonic social relations seem untowardly penalised. An example is in order: a man who had been severely beaten (some say tortured because the attack left bite marks on his back, neck, and legs) by a group of eleven attackers was forced, individually, to pay the same fine (two months in prison, or 60SSP) as the eleven attackers collectively. The reasoning behind the decision: the man did not join a work group organised to clear a shared garden space. Such a ruling finds in favour of stable ongoing sociality rather than justice construed in a 'western' legal sense, and a history of such rulings may detract would-be plaintiffs from even beginning court proceedings. After all, why take the chance when some almost-inconsequential social interaction may lead to such a decision?

That is, of course, unless one can afford the court's favour.[98] As well as in South Sudan more generally (Leonardi et al. 2010:72), some Pajok end-users consider corruption to be widespread within the judiciary. For instance, five of fifteen end-users and all three end-user focus groups mentioned corruption in one way or another, and two end-users actually used the term '*money talks*'.[99] An exemplar of this comes from one female end-user, who argued that '*These days, if you do not have the money then you cannot win the case. So maybe someone has done the very bad thing, but they have the money. So automatically they will win the case. Because they have the money. And so we say here, 'Money talks!'*'[100] Further, it is commonly felt that courts are, if not exactly corrupt, at least too expensive for all but the

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[97] This is consistent with Leonardi et al. (2010: 37), who found a strong cultural dislike about imprisonment as a punishment throughout South Sudan. Instead, they found court fines are almost universally preferred and used. This is for several reasons: firstly, alongside not having enough prisons, those that do exist do not have the facilities to house either large numbers of inmates or long-term prisoners; secondly, imprisonment is seen as wasting human resources as well as highlighting and exacerbating the breached social relations at the heart of the problem in the first place.

[98] In a comparative study of the judicial system across southern Sudan, Leonardi et al. (2010: 39) found that the mere suspicion of corruption dissuades many plaintiffs from advancing a case.
[99] Interviews with: Female end-user, 48, 26/10/2013; Male end-user, 23, 28/10/2013.
[100] Interview with Female end-user, 48, 26/10/2013.

most intractable cases.[101] In a typical response to being asked if it is easy to go to court, one end-user replied:

> *It is very hard to be in the court. Because maybe you have been pulling rope with the neighbour over the land, and then if they have defeated you, you have to pay the money. And if you have been paying the money for the school fees, then now you have to pay that to the court. And then the children cannot go to school, so it is very hard.*[102]

Personal Safety

Seven end-users and three LPAs considered safety as relative to conditions during the twenty years of warfare which had beset the area. When comparing the current context to one of widespread violence, Pajok is, as the Head Chief noted, '*safe compared to the war. The 2005 CPA opened the door for us to come home and settle, for our children to go to school. There is the hospitals. People are cultivating peacefully, moving freely. So there is no insecurity in the area*'.[103] On the other hand, seven end-users and two LPAs noted the war had led directly to current insecurity within the community, with several respondents stating that crime within Pajok had significantly worsened since return from exile.[104] For example, one LPA said:

> *Our community here, security-wise it used to be very safe. Up to now I can say it is safe. But these days, we are experiencing things that we did not experience before…It did not used to happen. It is worse since coming back, because we picked up the bad habits from exile. Habits which are alien to this place. Because before the war, theft and so on, that was completely unknown here.*[105]

Furthermore, five end-users mentioned their feelings toward safety and security were negatively impacted by ongoing conditions of insecurity elsewhere in South Sudan, with South Sudan's various unresolved border disputes and continuing armed insurrections both specifically mentioned. As one English-speaking end-user said, '*Yes, it is better, but we still worry about the news which is coming this way, from other places and armies are still fighting. So, our heart is still hurting for our brothers. Because of security*'.[106] These feelings may have an important basis in reality: since the interviews for this report were conducted between October and December 2013, there has been a significant renewal of ethno-political violence throughout South Sudan. Armed violence and conflict certainly did not cease with independence.

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[101] Typically it costs around 20SSP to appear in court, whether plaintiff or defendant (Interview with Male end-user, 25, 31/10/2013). This fee is widely known as '*The Peace Money'*, as it is supposed to at least symbolically signify the ending of conflict and the resumption of between the two parties (Unrelated interview).
[102] Interview with Male end-user, 33, 27/10/2013.
[103] Interview with Head Chief, 22/10/2013
[104] The commonly used emic term for life in a refugee camp in Uganda or Kenya.
[105] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.
[106] Interview with Male end-user, 70, 30/10/2013.

Armed Groups in Pajok

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)

Personal experience of the LRA was widespread among interviewees, with only the three youngest end-users not being able to answer questions about them. Many of the rest (nine end-users, five LPAs, and members of all focus groups) said, for example, that the LRA were '*bad people*',[107] had killed or abducted many people, or been the reason for their exile during the war. Although no one said anything positive about the group, four female end-users and one member of the YMFG said they hoped LRA combatants would stop fighting and return to their families (For instance, '*We are begging them just to come back. If they could just come back, that would be good*').[108] This finding replicates those in JSRP's Acholi Mapping Paper (Hopwood 2015). Hopwood (2015: 28) notes that northern Ugandan respondents spent so much time in camps hearing hegemonic discourses demanding the peaceable return of former LRA combatants, they assimilated these discourses into their own LRA narratives. A similar rationale can reasonably be expected from Pajok end-users who lived in camps in Uganda. Conversely, one member of the YMFG said he hoped the relevant authorities would find a way to kill them all.[109] Therefore, further research is required before more definitive statements about end-users' LRA perspectives can be substantiated.

The Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF)

When asked about the UPDF (the Ugandan national army), six end-users and three LPAs were unable to comment due to a lack of knowledge. A further four end-users, the YMFG, and several members of the WFG said the UPDF had been good to them while in exile in Uganda, feeding and protecting them. On the other hand, two end-users, two LPAs, and members of the YWFG and WFG noted that the UPDF has a poor history in dealing with South Sudanese on both sides of the border. One LPA said '*The UPDF, they have been treating the people here badly! Just beating them like cows!*'[110] Other concerns include theft of South Sudanese land, minerals, and resources, and the rape and murder of South Sudanese civilians. Given continuing intercommunity conflict over the Ugandan – South Sudan border, recurring comments similar to '*they are in our land and we want them to go back to their country. Because there is no rebel here but the Ugandan Army is still here*' have a particular salience.[111]

The Equatoria Defence Force (EDF)

The only interviewee who knew about the EDF noted '*The LRA were here long ago, but left in 2005. The EDF left around the same time. Most of the people here were in exile then and so do not know the EDF or who they are*'.[112] This was borne out in interviews. No end-users or focus group participants even knew of the EDF, nor had three LPAs. Although it seemed they could provide some information on this issue if they chose to do so, the LPAFG declined to comment, possibly for political reasons.

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[107] For example, interview with Female end-user, 48, 26/12/2013.
[108] Interview with Female end-user, 19, 13/12/2013.
[109] YMFG, 12/12/13.
[110] Interview with SPLM Women's Association Leader, 29/10/2013.
[111] WFG, 4/12/13.
[112] Interview with Boma Chief, 17/10/2013.

Local Popular Responses to Insecurity

The Benefit of Good Neighbours

In a result that meshes well with ethnographic observations, Pajok's end-users generally feel other community members are the best people to turn to in an unsafe situation, or if having a problem with others. One woman summed this up, saying '*If something has happened within your area, you should go to your neighbour, because they will be able to help you…Because your neighbour is like your family and if something is happening in the night or something, then they will be the first to help you*'.[113] Although neighbours are often family members, this is not always the case, especially for end-users living within Pajok centre instead of on their customary ancestral land. Quantitatively, four end-users and the WFG said '*neighbours*' were their preferred response to insecurity, a further three end-users and the YMFG mentioned '*friends*', 2 end-users and the YWFG mentioned '*church*', and 2 end-users preferred '*community*'. The YMFG and 2 end-users also mentioned '*family*' and another end-user '*the clan*', for a total of 12 end-users and two focus groups preferring local-level, interpersonal responses to insecurity. This was a finding repeated for LPAs, with two LPAs each having '*church*' and '*community*' as their preferred response.

Mob (In)Justice

If analysis were based on interviews only, there would be almost no basis to think there are local responses to insecurity beyond going to a neighbour for support, taking an argument to a Boma Chief, or speaking to the police about violence. No interviewees said they tried to ensure their security by other means when asked directly. Ethnographic data and implied answers suggest a different social reality, however. For example, when talking about the drought in early 2013, one end-user said the following:

> *Last time, there was a shortage of rain and the people all got annoyed. So they went to the man they call the King… They call him to make the rain but he could not. So they said there were people who were not trying hard enough, not doing the right thing to bring the rain, so they were going to join together to get them killed.*[114]

On another occasion, a second end-user spoke of the existence of a shape-changer in the community, a man who was disturbing his neighbours, causing great anxiety, and leading to feelings of insecurity in the area in which he lives.[115] She said '*He is causing trouble…and I heard that there were the people in the market beating him up…And, at least now, it is fair, they have given him the fair warning. If he change again, they will kill him. Because now they have given him the serious warning!*'[116]

Thus, in direct opposition to specific answers, it seems public responses to insecurity are not as rare as suggested. This feeling is further highlighted by an incident observed on 31/10/2013. In this instance, a suspected thief was being publicly beaten '*until he told the truth*'.[117] The beating happened in a crowd of nearly 100 onlookers, some of whom

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[113] Interview with Female end-user, 38, 27/10/2013.
[114] Interview with Male end-user, 29, 24/10/2013.
[115] Apparently this man can change into a large cat-like animal at will, a useful defensive trait but also highly concerning to those who need to live alongside him. Such cosmological entities are common among many African. peoples
[116] Interview with Female end-user, 38, 27/10/2013.
[117] Unrelated interview.

administered punishment with a large stick. The group was presided over by a LPA, who questioned the accused between beatings. At this stage of proceedings, the man's guilt was still unknown; presumption of guilt was assumed as the result of an eyewitness who saw the man '*leaving the compound around the time of the theft*'.[118]

Taxes

Although most interviewees could describe a normative taxation system, with taxes paid to a local leader (commonly the Boma Chief) who remits the money upwards to the relevant Payam and County authorities, no one interviewed actually pays taxes. According to one LPA, '*There are no taxes. People, businessmen, pay the licenses once a year to the County. Fishmongers, they also pay annually. The vegetable sellers, they pay the rent collector in the market, who remits the money to the Payam office*'.[119] When pressed, respondents confirmed that paying taxes was gender specific and might be paid by men as household heads but not by women. Furthermore, no interviewees favoured future taxes unless the money paid went back into Pajok. Given the current state of development in Pajok, end-users were understandably sceptical of such targeted disbursement, often quoting received wisdom about the government's corruption and/or incompetence. Several older end-users remember paying taxes as part of the larger Sudan. None were sure who they paid those taxes to but, following independence, such distinctions were considered irrelevant.

Land Issues

Overview

Land issues are the largest area of conflict and insecurity currently facing end-users in Pajok Payam. There are three types of land conflict, each representing a different intensity of struggle and a different scale of social structure. In ascending order from smallest, most common, and most easily solved, to largest, most significant, and most intransigent, these are: 1) Small scale arguments mostly between neighbours or households over access to land for cultivation; 2) Larger, longer disputes over use of customary land that returnees feel they cannot access as it has been sold or is being used by someone without customary use rights; 3) Conflict over the placement and demarcation of the Uganda – South Sudan border. This last category is the most significant of these, involving multiple people and communities on both sides of the border, as well as being the site of a possible future cross-border incident. The first two forms of land conflict are addressed below, with issues surrounding the border being addressed separately.

On Land in Pajok

In Pajok, customary land access and use is based on the same principles as Hopwood and Atkinson (2013) found in the Acholi regions of northern Uganda. The land is believed to 'belong' to those people whose ancestors (generally described as 'grand-fathers') had usufructuary land rights. The LPAFG described these rights by saying '*Land here is customary or ancestral, we, the community, especially the sub-clans, we have our own land. Anyone can use it, but if you want to use land in another place or belonging to another clan,*

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[118] Unrelated interview.
[119] Interview with Church pastor, 24/10/2013.

you must ask permission'.[120] Most end-users agree with this, although there is some confusion on the question of who actually owns the land. For example, one end-user asked '*the land belongs to the government? Because, in the Constitution, they say that the land is not belonging to the local people*',[121] while another said '*the land is belonging to the people from Pajok, but now, as you know, automatically this land is South Sudan so is belonging to the government. But this land here is Pajok and so belong to the people here*'.[122] The LPAFG instead said that '*If the government wants to use the land, then the 23 sub-clans must come together as a community to give the land, because the government does not have land here*'.[123] This was because '*the land belongs to the people of South Sudan, and it is the citizens of Pajok who are people of South Sudan, so therefore the land belongs to them*'.[124]

The commonality of usufructuary rights in Pajok meant that nine end-users, all LPAs, and all focus group participants said they had access to enough land for them and their families. Indeed, several end-users responded similarly to this young female from Lawaci Boma, who said '*Yes, we have enough land. Everyone here have enough land, because the land is very big*'.[125] However, although there is theoretically enough land, who can access which land is still somewhat problematic, and it is the specific nature of this access that is causing Pajok end-users' largest security concerns.

Small Scale Arguments

Small scale arguments are mostly between neighbours and different families over access and use of land for cultivation. Due to the communal nature of customary Acholi land holdings (Hopwood & Atkinson 2013), most arguments at this scale are rather easily and quickly solved through mediation at the sub-clan or village levels. It is uncommon for such a dispute to proceed into the formal (Boma-level) judicial process, and when it does it is usually the result of violence, or as the result of tensions between individuals from different sub-clans over larger, inter-clan land disputes. In these cases, as with most inter-clan arguments, the Boma court will be involved. Whether or not the argument stops there depends on many factors, including individual personalities.

As one LPA noted, the resolution of all land issues begins with the *Rwot Kwaro*. She said:

> *I have never used the land without first getting the information from the big person, the leader of the kingdom. [Researcher: Who is that?] The Rwot Kwaro. [Researcher: Who is the Rwot Kwaro?] Who is the Rwot Kwaro? They are those who are the kings in the Acholi kingdom. We go to them for the land issues, like with the neighbours, or like with Ngomoromo.*[126]

As noted above, the *Rwot Kwaro* and his advisors (the *Kal Kwaro*) are together ideally thought to be the repository of all knowledge of Pajok clan customs and traditions, especially concerning land, and this knowledge is thought equally valid at the inter-clan and inter-tribal levels.

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[120] LPAFG, 16/10/2013.
[121] Interview with Male end-user, 23, 28/10/2013.
[122] Interview with Female end-user, 48, 26/10/2013.
[123] LPAFG, 16/10/2013.
[124] LPAFG, 16/10/2013.
[125] Interview with Female end-user, 19, 13/12/2013.
[126] Interview with SPLM Women's Association Leader, 29/10/2013.

The *Rwot* and *Kal Kwaro* are not the only people knowledgeable about land, however. At the family and sub-clan levels, it is up to the chairman and elders of each sub-clan to have this knowledge. All inter-family land issues are initially dealt with by them and it is only a particularly stubborn dispute which enters the court system. This is because, as one female end-user argued,

> *Everybody knows where the land ends, so when you do the other side [i.e., cultivate another person's land], if you do not stop, then you will be taken to the court. Because everybody knows the land and where it stops. And that is the law and everybody knows what it is.*[127]

Disputes between different sub-clans are more problematic, however, as members of one sub-clan are not subject to the rules and proscriptions of another. This means inter-clan land security is dependent on governmental rather than traditional authorities, and often the only resolution for these disputes is the formal juridical system.

Long Term Disputes

Larger, longer term, more substantial land disputes are common within Pajok and usually result from disagreements between members of different sub-clans regarding land for cultivation. As noted above, most Pajok end-users have some knowledge of the correct land occupiers due to usage by their ancestral forebears. Due to displacement, however, some individuals' understanding of this knowledge has become disjointed. As one LPA noted, '*Regarding land, when we fled, only some few remained here. And then when they came back, they could not identify their exact land, so they just cultivate anywhere. So this is causing the problem*'.[128] Therefore there is significant dispute and disagreement over which clans have rights to which land, with border areas between clan lands and regulation over access to and use of land in and around the centre particularly strongly contested.

Inter-Clan Disputes

The reasons these usufructuary rights might be unknown or disputed are many, but disputes often take place between returnees once holding usufructuary rights over a piece of land they can no longer access and the current users of that land. More than one end-user raised this issue, for example saying that

> *People here are pulling rope [I.e., arguing] because of the land, because of when they were in Uganda, in the exile. Because they were coming back and, some people, they were not knowing which land belong to who. And people from the different clans, they were using the wrong land! Some say this land belong to my father, this land belong to my mother, and then the fighting will come and so that is the thing which is pulling rope*"[129]

Such inter-clan land disputes are relatively easily if expensively solved, however, at least in the short term, and they form the majority of cases brought before Pajok's Boma courts. Ethnographic observation suggests anyone losing a dispute over land is likely to be sentenced to several months imprisonment (which in practice is converted into a fine of 30SSP for each month of the sentence) and told to refrain from future use of the contested land beyond the

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[127] Interview with Female end-user, 48, 26/10/2013.
[128] Interview with Church pastor 24/10/2013.
[129] Interview with Male end-user, 33, 27/10/2013.

current season (thus not losing the current harvest). Any further use is then subject to extreme sanctions. Although technically allowed, appeals for judicial resolution beyond the court of the relevant Boma Chief are not looked upon kindly by most LPAs,[130] and even if accepted for appeal (which is never certain, even if they can afford the necessary fees),[131] they are unlikely to be treated kindly.[132]

Land in Pajok Centre

Land around Pajok centre is highly desirable for several reasons: usufructuary rights there are unknown or easily disputed; many people from all 23 sub-clans now live in the area; and movement to and from Pajok as well as one's gardens is relatively easy. Furthermore, much land in Pajok centre has been sold, confiscated, or taken for the development of local and national business and governmental purposes. This further heightens the feelings of anger, marginalisation, and insecurity that many poorer end-users feel. One particularly eloquent end-user from Lagi Boma is worth quoting at length on this issue. She argued that:

> *Since we came back from exile, it seems that all the people here are just staying within the government land [Researcher: What do you mean, government land?] This land here [in the centre] is belonging to the government of South Sudan. And people were stopped from moving back to their home or land or wherever due to the war and the landmines and so on. Instead, they were made to stay on the land in the centre, which they have to buy from the government. Because the land belongs to the government. But when I was still here before the war, the whole other side [of the road. I.e., Pajok Boma] was our land but when I came back home from exile, I saw that the government was selling that land to people! Yet that was the land belonging to my grandfather and my husband! And so, yes, there does seem to be a law on the land now. Because development is coming within the centre, so it seems that there is a law and it seems that the law has been made up to help some people and not others!*[133]

This highlights another problem many end-users have with Pajok's land security – the sale of land – which is thought to be widespread, especially within Pajok centre. This is despite the fact that, similarly to other places in both the Acholi cultural area (Hopwood 2015; Hopwood & Atkinson 2013) and South Sudan (Leonardi et al. 2010), customary rules not only dictate all land is communally held but is also ineligible for sale. The paradox of this practice was explicitly noted by one end-user, who argued, '*The laws say, 'Do not sell the land'. That is the rule. But some people are selling but the laws say not selling!*'[134]

Many of these disputes are ongoing and, given the nature and extent of the problem alongside Pajok's current population demography, also seem somewhat intractable and irreversible. Certainly, many people currently residing on the densely populated land in and around Pajok centre originate from further afield, and most if not all would need to return to their ancestral homes before this land can be reclaimed by those holding customary usufructuary rights. Yet many wait for change, either in government policy or the plans and/or location of the centre's

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[130] LPAFG, 16/10/2013.
[131] Interview with Male end-user, 23, 28/10/2013. Data from unrelated ethnographic observation confirms such reports.
[132] Data from unrelated ethnographic observation.
[133] Interview with Female end-user, 50, 27/10/2013.
[134] Interview with Male end-user, 23, 28/10/2013.

current residents, and mass population resettlement is considered ideal by end-users with usufructuary rights to Pajok centre. For instance, one elderly male, who has fled and returned three times to the same piece of land in Pajok's centre, said '*Since we come from exile, the people just stay here in just the one place. But still they have the other place! So, in two or three years, everyone should go to their own land*'.[135] What is implied, and then explicitly indicated in a later interview, is his opinion that secondary population movement is needed so land in the centre can be used by the 'traditional', or 'correct', usufructuary right holders.[136]

Against such residents' best hopes, and despite many LPA's best intentions, such secondary migration seems unlikely. Voluntary movement from Pajok centre out to land further afield is limited at best, and the scale of the problem is such that a government-prescribed solution is almost certain to be ignored. This is especially so given acceptance of three widespread assumptions regarding the forced movement of settlers: 1) given the sheer scale of the issue, alongside the extant manpower and capabilities of payam-level administrative personnel, local government cannot enforce such measures; 2) because any state or national government response is likely to be heavy-handed and detrimental to community security and stability, it is unlikely to be accepted at the local level; and 3) as many LPAs live on non-ancestral land in Pajok centre, local power structures have little desire for such actions and commands issued by central government will likely be ignored.[137] It seems likely, therefore, that ongoing disputes over land in Pajok centre will continue until some form of equilibrium is reached, perhaps through the negotiation and/or reallocation of usufructuary rights to such land, or through the eventual traditionalisation of rights attendant to that land. In either case, it does not seem as volatile or as likely to lead to the durable and widespread insecurity threatened by increasingly hostile inter-community relations over the demarcation of the South Sudan – Uganda border.

The Border: Pajok's Largest Insecurity Issue

The demarcation of the South Sudan–Uganda border between Pugee and Lokung is possibly the biggest contemporary security concern for many in Pajok, particularly LPAs, and it certainly has the largest security ramifications of any security issues outside South Sudan's recent ethno-political violence. This section builds upon JSRP's Acholi Mapping Paper (Hopwood 2015), especially regarding Ngomoromo end-users' perceptions of (in)security about the South Sudan–Uganda border. As well as the JSRP questionnaire, data presented comes from supplementary ethnographic research, including observation of several key court cases and community meetings, and interviews with participants in pre-dialogue meetings conducted by the South Sudan Development Agency (SSDA) in November 2013 in preparation for upcoming intercommunity mediatory meetings.

The background and recent history of the border dispute was repeated many times by different people throughout this research, but the Payam Administrator gave the most thorough interpretation. As mentioned earlier, the Payam Administrator is responsible for physical security in the Payam and seems to take the alleged incursions of Ugandan communities as a personal affront. What follows is his account:

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[135] Interview with Male end-user, 70, 30/10/2013.
[136] Unrelated interview.
[137] Unrelated interview.

The problem is, during the war, the Ugandan community encroached and crossed into Sudanese territory before South Sudan was even made. They said that the reason was they wanted to fight the LRA in Sudan. And so they were accepted to come and fight and chase the LRA away. But, in the process, they built the fence and then put the landmines along the fence [...] seven kilometres inside Sudan. This was in 1996. Then, in 2004, they said that this now is already the border! And then again, in 2008, they extended it up to Pugee and then they said that this is now the border! And the community in Pajok did not know until it was too late. When they found out, they [...] raised the complaint against Uganda with the South Sudan government. But the government said to wait, because of the problems with Sudan. Because they could not be distracted [and] did not want to fight with Uganda as well.

But everyone knows the border was demarcated at Limu, at the river. But the border is now many kilometres inside here now! Twelve kilometres! And this has really very annoyed the Pajok community, and some people have even said that they now want to go and be fighting the other community! And they have even wanted to get the SPLA and the government involved! But the elders here, they have said they do not want the war, so they start the process of talking and negotiating. But the Ugandan community got their government involved, and so that has been bad. Because now the Ugandan government want to be involved in community issues. And they have even taken the signposts. Because the RDC of the area in Uganda, he came and uprooted the signposts and he has refused to give them back, because those signposts showed that the place was Sudan! But now the Ugandan government wants it.

So some people went, taking the cattle and destroying the fields, and fighting. Some two were even killed, and three injured, and more were beaten badly! By the youth here in this community. And this is now when the South Sudan government got involved, and they got the two Police Chiefs from South Sudan and Uganda involved, and together they decide that the issues should be given back to the communities to solve, with the governments only as mediators.[138]

This narrative of conflict is almost exactly opposite that given in the Acholi version of JSRP's Mapping Paper (Hopwood 2015). In Ngomoromo, the narrative highlights the actions of the SPLA rather than the UPDF, the movement of the border by South Sudanese rather than Ugandan officials,[139] and the wrongful arrest of Ugandan rather than South Sudanese citizens.[140] Interestingly, the Ugandan narrative provides the same distances as the South Sudanese versions: seven kilometres in one instance and 12 in another. The similarities between the two accounts are remarkable.

As JSRP's Acholi Mapping Paper highlights (Hopwood 2015: 32), there is a noticeable lack of willingness "to consistently and decisively settle major issues over land claims and the location of borders" by authorities in either country. The "lack of conclusive action",

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[138] Interview with Payam Administrator, 22/10/2013.

[139] End-users in Pajok are adamant that the post at Pugee is an 'immigration office' rather than a 'border post'. This is more than a semantic issue: the difference between a border post and an immigration office is, to Pajok end-users, the same as deciding where the border is and, therefore, which country owns the land.

[140] The arrest and imprisonment of Pajok end-users, although not in the Payam Administrator's narrative above, has come up in several accounts regarding the border crisis, including the official SSDA version of events compiled from over two weeks of investigation of the issue in November 2013.

Hopwood perceptively argues, suggests "collusion and conflict between coalitions of military, political and customary elites […] across international borders with the likelihood [being] that this failure is based on the financial interests of powerful military and political elites on both sides of the border" (Hopwood 2015: 32). Indeed, following Eaton (2008a, 2008b) and Schomerus and Titeca (2012), it should be of no surprise Hopwood reaches such a conclusion: the respective political elites in these countries do share a particularly close history.

This issue is not just about the economic gain of some at the expense of many, however. The quasi-legal manoeuvrings over and around the demarcation and control of the Pugee – Ngomoromo area have very real consequences for the long-term security of residents in both countries. As apparent in the Payam Administrator's quote above, there are already instances of cross-border conflict over this issue. The same is apparent in statements made by members of Uganda's Ngomoromo and Lokung communities as quoted in JSRP's Acholi Mapping Paper (Hopwood 2015).

This conflict is relatively small and low-level in nature at the time being. However, there are indications the situation will not stay this way for long. Many residents are quick to point out both '*the Ugandan communities are continuing to move into Pugee and to steal South Sudanese land*',[141] as well as that '*the South Sudanese government does not care. They are doing nothing about it!*'[142] Such perceptions have already caused at least one incident of cross-border violence (see the Payam Administrator's quote above), and the author has heard of several similar incidents.[143] Furthermore, it was alleged Pajok's youth were planning to forcibly close the Pugee immigration office and restrict movement across the border, thus obliging the South Sudanese government to take a stand. This was ostensibly due to a rumour that the government was about to re-brand the immigration office a border post, thus indicating their, at least implicit, consent with Ugandan claims to the disputed land.

This situation should be monitored closely in the future, ideally by teams on either side of the border, and especially considering South Sudan's current instability. Although Pajok Payam is virtually untouched by South Sudan's current conflict, many residents are quick to highlight that the situation allows Ugandan communities and the Ugandan government (who, they believe are at least tacitly supporting the Ngomoromo and Lokung communities) to further their incursions into South Sudan. Ugandans are, end-users say, coming further and further into South Sudan in greater and greater numbers. Whether or not this is true, it is a common belief, and threats of future violence ripple throughout some subsections of the community, perhaps checked only by concern about the current South Sudanese conflict. What is also certain is that many Pajok residents are growing impatient with government inaction, and it is highly possible that a small incident could ignite wider cross-border violence. This would be disastrous for the security of end-users on both sides of the border.

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[141] Unrelated interview.
[142] Unrelated interview.
[143] Although none of these apparently resulted in any real bodily injuries, let alone fatalities.

Further Discussion

> *There are no problems any more, no rebels. But the life of people is quite difficult because, as I told you before, things are missing here a lot.*[144]

The LPA's summary above is indicative of many responses to this research. Most people seem to think life is hard but relatively secure. Certainly it is less immediately insecure than previous iterations, whether in exile, in a refugee camp, in open warfare, or in the ongoing feelings of fear and powerlessness that come with not knowing when, how, or why someone would attack them, their families, or their community. The overwhelming feeling is that life in Pajok is now safe. Relatively speaking, it is, even in relation to the rest of contemporary South Sudan, an assessment seemingly borne out by the recent conflict elsewhere in the country.

Still, Pajok remains deeply insecure in many ways. There is little in the way of educational facilities or support, basically no health service, a substandard market and road, nothing else to provide the economic security needed when subsistence agriculture fails, a weak and autocratic local and national system of governance, an undermanned and under-funded police service, and a slow and possibly corrupt judicial system which seems to adjudicate in the interests of social harmony (Porter 2012) over individual justice or security (although, as Leonardi et al. (2010) note, this complaint is common throughout South Sudan). Despite this, as much of the rest of the country is gripped by fear over the possibility of yet another full-scale civil war, life in Pajok goes on almost as normal. This is possibly the greatest indicator possible of Pajok's relative calm and security.

There are two further aspects of the realities and perceptions of security and justice in contemporary Pajok that needs to be highlighted. The first is gender-based insecurity, especially regarding the actions and attitudes of many Pajok males towards female community members. The second is the widespread feeling of marginalisation felt by most community members.

The Gendering of Marginalisation: Gender-Based Insecurity and Violence

The first of these points, gender-based insecurity and violence, comes from concerns generated by ethnographic observation rather than JSRP research, although JSRP interviews provided several excellent examples of how gendered insecurities and injustices play out in the everyday realities of some of Pajok's female end-users. Only two female end-users and the WFG explicitly mentioned that gender-based violence made them feel unsafe or insecure.[145] Despite this, aspects of gender-based structural and everyday violence were sometimes given as examples for other issues. Similar problems were observed by or discussed with the researcher and others during ethnographic research. Further, the researcher's wife has had her own, similarly problematic gender-based encounters.

There are at least two levels of gender insecurity women in Pajok face: first, explicitly gendered threats or actions of violence on the interpersonal or everyday level; second, the embedded structural insecurities of being female within the hierarchical and patriarchal Acholi sociocultural system. These are dealt with in turn.

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[144] Interview with SPLA Women's Association Leader, 29/10/2013.
[145] Interviews with: Female end-user, 20, 26/10/13; Female end-user, 19, 13/12/13; WFG, 4/12/13.

Everyday and Interpersonal Gendered Insecurity

Many male end-users are hostile, aggressive, and/or domineering toward female end-users in their day-to-day interactions. Indeed, such interactions are so normalised they seem virtually ignored by most Pajok residents, especially men. Furthermore, such gender-based interactions are validated through discourses legitimating them through one of several means: 1) through recourse to Acholi tradition, custom, or culture which seats gender-based inequality in shared cultural heritage; 2) through a gendered division of labour which naturalises male social dominance based on perceived biological difference; and/or 3) on Christian/Biblical teachings that frame women as socially, physically, intellectually, and most importantly, morally weaker than men and demanding a woman's full submission to her husband , father, and/or brothers.[146]

Perhaps because of these patriarchal idea(l)s, it seems a fact of life in Pajok Payam that many female end-users face day-to-day gender-based insecurity that is so socially accepted as to be almost unthought of. Several female end-users have spoken of uncomfortable encounters with men, many of whom are intoxicated, and female end-users commonly referenced these encounters when speaking about problems of security and justice in Pajok Payam. The YWFG also mentioned that women are often coerced into sexual activity through the threat of violence towards themselves or their families. They said:

> *The problem here is the boys, they are always trying to trick the girls. And the girls, if she is rejecting them, then the boys can get very angry. They will say things like, "If you refuse me I will have to do something!" Then they can do something very queer to you or your family. You know, something funny funny. So then the girls must go with them. So that is making life unsafe for us here!*

The boundary between licit and illicit sexual activity, rape and consent, is thus much more a porous, variable, and contextual construct than often considered. Also apparent is the fact that gender (in)security and sexual (in)security are intimately intertwined. Although outside the parameters of this research, it would be of immense ethnographic, theoretical, and comparative interest to know the extent to which Pajok women's sexual rights are either consciously or unconsciously abrogated in favour of physical and economic security more broadly defined. Equally interesting would be a quantitative understanding of how gender and sexual norms affect women's ability to access, pursue, and achieve justice, especially in cases of sexual transgression at both the individual and social levels. These are two of the more pressing research needs in Pajok, and two areas which targeted developmental programmes should focus upon. Therefore, this paper strongly recommends further research be conducted into these issues within Pajok Payam specifically and the Acholi cultural region and South Sudan more broadly.

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[146] Both Atkinson (1994) and Finnstrom (2008: 190) note these perceptions are widespread in the Acholi sociocultural world, with Finnstrom not only suggesting "Manhood was associated with Christianity, even modernity" (2010: 191) but some of his informants mentioning that "women are weak" (2010: 190).

Structural Gendered Insecurities.

As well as the problems associated with the interpersonal dimensions of violence, injustice, and insecurity, women in Pajok Payam must also deal with the complications of simply being female within a sociocultural system of a very definite hierarchical and patriarchal nature. As has been noted in previous JSRP research within the Acholi ethno-cultural regions of northern Uganda (JSRP 2012b), a woman's security is often predicated upon marital status, and the preceding section confirms this in relation to sexual transgression in Pajok. This is only one side of the array of problems a woman's marital status may lead to, however. On the other side are problems faced when a woman formerly married is left in a situation where she is effectively not. This may happen for several reasons, whether through death, divorce, or simply her husband preferring another wife.[147] All of these are examples used by female end-users at some time during this research and Acholi society's structural bases are such that the end result is the same in all cases: a deeply insecure everyday existence for a woman and possibly her children.

For example, one young female end-user spoke of the impact of her recent divorce.[148] She said

> *I was married but then my husband rejected me and I am having the two children. And his family do not want me. And even my own brother was not wanting me now. So I have no one and nothing and nowhere to go […] So for me, life is getting very hard now and very bad. And so that is it, life is just like that.*

This woman's abandonment thus had extremely negative consequences on her own and her children's security, both social and economic. They now find it difficult to grow enough food to eat or to find enough money to pay school fees or make ends meet. They also find themselves socially excluded: unwanted in the household of either her husband or her brother, they are forced to share her childhood compound with only her sick and aging mother for company and support. More than this, being abandoned had further negative consequences:

> 'I am so ashamed, I am now even thinking that I just want to die'. [Researcher: 'What do you mean?'] 'I mean I am thinking I want to die! Of making the suicide, of killing myself! Because things now are so hard for me! The only thing stopping me are the children, but I do not know how much longer I can go on'.

This statement cannot be taken lightly, especially considering suicide was mentioned twice more during that interview. Also not to be taken lightly are how various social and cultural structural inequalities become embedded as everyday (in)justices and insecurities which, in turn, come to define this end-user's existential reality. In this way, perceptions of (in)justice or (in)security made by any one end-user must be understood and analysed as an ever-changing and context-specific combination of multiple factors. Therefore, despite the fact only three of twenty four interviews resulted in discussion of safety and insecurity relating to explicitly gender-based questions, it seems remiss to disregard the contextual relevance of such issues.

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[147] As a polygynous society, Acholi males can have multiple wives.
[148] Interviews with Female end-user, 20, 26/10/13.

One final, more methodological aspect of gendered marginalisation should be noted. This is that non-reporting of gender-based insecurity may have been heightened in this research by the fact both the researcher and his research assistant are male. It would be interesting to know if and how an all-male interview team affected women's responses. If, as is suggested, gendered inequality is so widespread as to be unrecognised by most end-users, it seems reasonable to think an all-male research team would be unlikely to gather this data. Therefore, this paper suggests further gender-based research in Pajok or other South Sudanese or Acholi communities. It strongly recommends a female researcher return to Pajok to investigate issues of gender-based insecurity and gendered inequality more generally. This research could especially look at how these issues relate to educational opportunities and results, as well as the linking of gender to positions of power, status, and respect within Pajok Payam. It is further suggested this researcher work alongside a female translator, and that focus groups not be arranged or organised by LPAs, as they were for this paper.

The Marginalisation of Pajok Payam: Perceptions and Realities

The second point is Pajok community members' widespread feelings of marginalisation. Discourses regarding the social, cultural, political, economic, and geographical marginalisation of Pajok are extensive idioms used liberally in community members' everyday interactions. Pajok residents feel deeply marginalised in relation to other peoples and places in South Sudan, especially Magwi (as County capital) and the Dinka (as an ethno-political elite). As widely recognised by end-users themselves, Pajok is a long way from anywhere, difficult and expensive to get to, not currently on any major trade routes, of little to no political or strategic concern, and populated by an ethnic minority.[149]

The conditions of the roads are given as one explanation for this, and it is certainly true the road is part of the cause. The other major reason given is that other people and/or communities are jealous of the people, community, and environment in Pajok. In these variants of the marginalisation discourse, blame is placed on either the historical strength of Pajok vis-à-vis neighbouring clans or, more usually, the fact that Pajok did not immediately support the SPLA during the Second Sudanese War. Allegedly, this has resulted in development not only being directed toward other parts of South Sudan but also in it actually and purposefully being moved elsewhere.[150] However, not only is the actual marginalisation of Pajok much more complex than either of these issues, the nature of this marginalisation cannot be reduced to any one causal factor.

It is therefore suggested that further, specifically focussed, research be conducted on the marginalisation of Pajok Payam at several different levels. The first would necessitate monitoring and tracking NGO, EES, and GoSS developmental assistance budgets and decision-making over time, probably from the signing of the CPA to the present, to investigate whether or not there is any basis for claims that developmental money has been purposefully removed from Pajok Payam. Such research may discover how and why such money is being used elsewhere and for what purposes, especially at the County and State

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[149] This is apparently an important consideration in what end-users say is an increasingly 'tribalised' political environment.

[150] For example, the Payam Administrator told the researcher *'There is much jealousy and segregation between the different areas. This is why any of the development or NGOs that comes here they get diverted. Because the people here are not involved in the SPLA, not participating through the fighting. And that is why those people do not think that Pajok should be developed'* (Interview, 22/10/2013).

levels. If this research discovers developmental resources are being purposefully diverted from the Payam, it could then argue for the necessity of more specifically-directed aid programmes that bypass local, regional, and national governments, much like the Magwi road project. Such programmes could instead work with existing social and/or developmental organisations and structures with international branches, such as the People's Committee or some religious groups.

Another level would be a specifically economic study of Pajok Payam, focussing on Pajok's potential as an agricultural product exporting/consumer good importing region and how these markets could be most easily and efficiently developed. Such research would ideally involve some sort of cost-benefit analysis for bringing developmental aid to the area, and especially look at the likelihood of economic development successfully changing agricultural practices and/or technologies, opening a functioning market for consumer goods and local and regional traders, or building an all-weather road allowing the Payam's agricultural production year-round access to high-demand food markets in Juba or elsewhere. The land in Pajok is certainly fertile, and the climate allows two and sometimes three harvests yearly. On the other hand, individual access to the resources needed to change agricultural practices or technologies remains extremely limited. The researcher considers a targeted microloan scheme could be particularly successful and beneficial. Therefore, an impact assessment of such a scheme is highly recommended.

Lastly, further in-depth qualitative research investigating and analysing the nature, sources, hold, and impact of marginalisation discourses throughout Pajok Payam is suggested. Knowledge about the construction, dissemination, and power of such discourses could then inform investigation of justice and security-related issues throughout South Sudan and elsewhere. For example, it may be discovered these discourses are somehow connected to the perceived 'tribalisation' of South Sudan's political processes and the simultaneous marginalisation of minority groups within developing, new, and/or 'failed' states. On the other hand, it may be such discourses result from the failure of developmental aid to successfully target the most geographically and economically isolated groups. No matter the result, such findings could be used to help direct political or economic assistance to the government or minority groups within such nations, as well as providing a basis for further comparative research on such issues among similar communities in South Sudan and across the globe.

Concluding Remarks

In all these instances, it is the contemporary nature and real world consequences of the Payam's ongoing marginalisation (gendered marginalisation included) that is, the researcher argues, the most current, pressing, and pervasive security need within Pajok Payam at this time. Although widespread structural violence (such as the forms, levels, and effects of economic, educational, and health-related insecurity within places like Pajok Payam) do not currently dominate global headlines about South Sudan, they are no less real than the country's current political violence, and, over the long term, potentially no less destructive. After all, it is widely recognised one factor in the current ethno-political crisis is the simultaneous perception of Dinka dominance alongside the marginalisation of other ethnic groups in the social, political, and economic development of the South Sudanese state. Although it may be the Dinka, Murle, or Nuer grabbing attention now, there is no reason to think that other groups feeling similarly excluded will not also resort to violent insurrection to

protest their growing dismay with the political system. It does not help that the South Sudanese government is widely recognised as one of the most corrupt in the world and has somehow inexplicably 'lost' US$4 billion in aid money since 2011 (Jok 2013a; Tiitmamer & Awolich 2014). To focus solely on the proximate causes of physical violence is to neglect a long history of marginalisation throughout South Sudan that forms the basis of not only the current but also the previous two conflicts. In a country where the poor have nothing and the rich are very obviously the current political elite, then as the rich get richer, the gap between haves and have-nots not only grows but becomes increasingly obvious and increasingly resented. As several Pajok end-users have recently pointed out, '*the fighting in Juba is not really a war. It is just the politicians fighting to decide who gets to keep the money*'.[151]

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[151] Unrelated interview.

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Appendix: Maps

Location of Pajok in the region

Source: map data © 2015 Google

Local Area around Pajok

Source: map data © 2015 Google

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