CONTRIBUTION OF TRACK ONE DIPLOMACY IN COMBATING BANDIT ECONOMY ALONG KENYA-UGANDA BORDER

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Conferment of the Degree of Master of Diplomacy and International Relations of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

June, 2025

DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original work prepared with no other than the indicated sources and support and has not been presented elsewhere for a degree or any other award

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for the gift of life, health and the strength to go through this demanding and rewarding exercise. Many thanks to my lecturers in the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, particularly for their unrelenting encouragement and mentorship. My Special thanks goes to my supervisors, Prof. Matanga and Dr. Kimokoti, for their invaluable guidance throughout the process of developing this thesis. My gratitude goes to the Lecturers and professors in the department of Peace and Conflict studies and the entire SDMHA Fraternity. I would like to specifically thank Prof. P.G Okoth, Prof. Iteyo, Dr. Simiyu, Dr. Odhiambo, Dr. Amakanji, Dr. Omondi, Mr. Oduor and Mr. Wamukota. I also thank the Dean, SDMHA, Dr. Nabiswa for his support. More thanks to all my peers for their encouragement.

I also wish to thank my colleagues for giving moral support. Finally, I thank my entire family, particularly my dear wife, for understanding the demands of this academic process and consequently giving me continuous encouragement and emotional and moral support throughout my long academic journey. It would also be pertinent to thank my research assistant, whose support has been instrumental in completing this research. I must acknowledge you for your hard work and dedication in collecting, compiling and analyzing data, which has been vital in this research. As before, your thoughtful ideas and actions should be praised for such a great improvement of this work. They must acknowledge your support, patronage, and passion. In this work being done to produce this article. I would like to acknowledge the effort and effort you have provided in this research. God bless you all.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family—your love, support, and belief in me have been my unwavering strength and inspiration throughout.

ABSTRACT

The bandit economy is a cross-border and transnational issue affecting regional security that has prevailed due to miscues in the employment of Track One Diplomacy by government agencies. Despite the supranational approach employed by Kenya and Uganda in adopting modern state-of-the-art virtual technology for aerial monitoring of banditry, the bandit economy has continued unabated. The overall objective of this study was to investigate the Contribution of Track One Diplomacy in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda Border. Specific objectives of the study were to: Examine the nature of Bandit Economy along Kenya-Uganda border; Assess the Track one Diplomatic strategies for Combating Banditry along the Kenya-Uganda border and evaluate the challenges and opportunities of track one diplomacy in managing the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. The study was anchored on a conceptual framework underpinned by two theories namely; Power Theory and Illegal Enterprise Theory. The Study was conducted in Lokitanyala along the Kenya-Uganda border. The study utilized descriptive research design. The study used both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The sample size of the study was 384, comprising Lokitanyala households, while key informants were drawn from political and religious leaders, administrative leaders, youths (former bandits) and civil society. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedules, FGDs and observation. Quantitative Data was analyzed using SPSS version 25 to generate descriptive statistics inform of frequencies and Percentages, bar graphs, tables and pie-charts. The findings of the study revealed that the bandit economy thrived through livestock trade as supported by 53.69% of the respondents, this included cattle, camels, goats, and sheep that were commonly traded along the border. Lorries or Long trucks were the commonest means of transport aiding bandit economy, 38.91% argued that bribery of officials was a common tactic that aided movement goods across the border 31.19% stated that traditional customary practices were a major factor motivating individuals to participate in bandit economy. Regarding Track one diplomatic strategies, the study found that 22.82% stated that cross-border community engagement reduces support for bandit economic activities along the border. On the challenges facing Track one diplomacy, 19.61% of the total respondents reasoned that non-involvement of local leadership was a challenge. The overall conclusion of the study was that despite the implementation of Track One Diplomacy strategies, including bilateral agreements and high-level negotiations, the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border has persisted unabated. The ongoing volatility, government negligence, and insufficient investment in infrastructure and security have undermined these diplomatic efforts. The resilience of the bandit economy highlights the urgent need for a more robust and multifaceted approach, incorporating both diplomatic and operational enhancements. Strengthening on-the-ground security measures, investing in regional development, and fostering deeper cross-border cooperation are crucial to effectively combat the bandit economy and ensure lasting stability in these volatile regions.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

AP	Administration Police
ASTU	Anti -Stock Theft Unit
GSU	General Service Unit
ISSAT	International Security Sector Advisory Team
KPR	Kenya Police Reservists
KDF	Kenya Defense Forces
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
PSC	Protracted Social Conflict
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNITAF	United Task Force

OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Bandit (s): The concept bandit is used in this study to refer individuals involved in criminals or illegal activities along the Lokitanyala border of Kenya and Uganda. These cross-border illegal activities include smuggling, illegal trade and other criminal enterprises along the borders of Kenya and Uganda.

Banditry: In this study, banditry involvement in criminals or illegal activities along the Lokitanyala border of Kenya and Uganda such cross-border illegal activities include smuggling, illegal trade and other criminal enterprises along the borders of Kenya and Uganda.

Bandit Economy: In the context of this study bandit economy refers to all incomes generated from illegal enterprises along the Lokitanyala border of Kenya and Uganda. These activities include but not limited to illegal production and distribution of goods and services, unlawful trading activities, all forms of trafficking, as well as other legal and illegal business related activities, which are majorly conducted by bandits living along the borders of Kenya and Uganda.

Combating: Combating in the context of this study refers to actions taken by the governments of Kenya and Uganda to reduce, Counter or deal with the menace of bandit economy at Lokitanyala border of Kenya and Uganda. It entails various counter-measures employed either by the individual governments or collectively by both Kenya and Ugandan governments to deal with the problem.

Diplomacy: In this study, diplomacy refers to all formal cross-border engagements between official representatives of the Kenyan Government and Official

representatives of the Ugandan Government aimed towards combating the bandit economy at the Lokitanyala border of Kenya and Uganda. These official engagement include but not limited to high-level meetings, bilateral agreements, joint security initiatives, and coordinated policy efforts between Kenya and Uganda..

Economy: In this study, economy refers all income generating activities which include but not limited to production and distribution of goods and services, trading activities, all forms of trafficking, as well as other legal and illegal business related activities conducted at Lokitanyala along the Kenya-Uganda border.

Kenya-Uganda Border: In this study Kenya-Uganda border refers to the International border between Kenya and Uganda covering Lokitanyala, Kenya in West Pokot County of Kenya and Lokitanyala, Uganda in the Moroto District in the Northern Region of Uganda

Security: In this study, 'security' refers to safeguarding and shielding individuals, assets, and resources from risks associated with the bandit economy. This entails undertaking security operations, providing safe havens, and curbing the occurrence of transnational crime.

Track One Diplomacy: In this study Track-one, diplomacy refers state actions characterized by direct communication between the governments of Kenya and Uganda through the utilization of government and the decision-making structures of the two states. Track one Diplomacy in this case therefore entails actions by official representatives Kenya and Uganda, which includes engaging in

interactions with counterparts from each of the states or state-like entities including the heads of the two states, officials from the government ministries and other governmental departments.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, justification of the study, scope of the study and ends with the chapter summary.

1.1 Background to the study

The bandit economy continues to be a widespread worldwide security issue today. In the United States, banditry persists unabated in Texas and Oklahoma, the leading cattle-producing states (Wolf et al., 2015). The circumstances are analogous in the United Kingdom (UK). In 2019, cattle valued at three million euros were stolen from farms in the UK (Hederson, 2020). Henderson (2020) said that extensive sheep thefts in the previous two years had resulted in a 19.4% increase in value since 2017, becoming rustling the most expensive crime for the UK agricultural industry. Azar (1990) asserts that the surge in banditry episodes in the UK has transformed the crime from a localized concern into a highly organized operation valued in the millions, as indicated by recent data. Despite the widespread existence of a bandit economy in the West, the issue is more acute in Africa owing to the proliferation of illicit small guns and light weapons (Omondi & Alusala, 2018). The International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT) asserts that the bandit economy is historically grounded in cultural and socio-economic aspects. Currently, this practice constitutes a significant criminal enterprise with substantial security ramifications and both direct and indirect impacts on the engaged entities (ISSAT, 2017). The bandit economy has resulted in several adverse consequences, including loss of life, population displacement, and property devastation. This has been

ascribed to the inadequacy of governmental institutions, frameworks, and processes (ISSAT, 2017)

In Africa, States are hesitant to engage in official negotiations (Track One Diplomacy) in such conflict due to the potential loss of their sovereignty or autonomy (Kemper, 2007). Moreover, in Africa, the bandit economy is a cross-border and transnational challenge that impacts regional security. In Nigeria, crime is a significant security concern, particularly in the Northern region. The bandit economy in Nigeria has transformed into a military criminal enterprise fueled by the spread of small arms and light weapons (ISSAT, 2017). Moreover, the government's reaction to the bandit economy has been sluggish and predominantly reactionary. The Nigerian Police Force initiated the Task Force on Cattle Rustling and Related Crimes. The task group was tasked with patrolling and collecting intelligence on anti-rustling and associated offenses. The objective was to examine and perhaps punish reported instances of such offenses. Nevertheless, the task group has been mostly dormant since its establishment (Olaniyan et al., 2016). This has thus raised several inquiries on the failure of track one diplomacy, thereby necessitating an examination of track two diplomacy.

Regionally, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda remain significant on the list of African nations encountering this crime (ISSAT, 2017). Moreover, the East Africa area lacks a legislative framework to address the situation. East African governments' responses to the bandit economy have thus far been ineffectual. The inability of security and judicial institutions to respond to the danger has resulted in the emergence of new

organized criminal cartels (Omondi, 2020). Regional nations have reacted in two primary manners: mostly employing indiscriminate force and promoting incentive disarmament measures. Nonetheless, neither of these methods has been especially effective. Indiscriminate violence heightened community animosity towards state security personnel, however the barter of cattle for weapons and ammunition produced a contrary impact, resulting in people obtaining additional weaponry (Gumbo et al., 2019). Track-one diplomacy has been employed transnationally to tackle both transnational and supranational concerns, including border conflicts, resource hoarding, livestock rustling, and human trafficking. In the context of Kenya and Uganda, particularly near the Lokitanyala border, track one diplomacy has been employed to address the bandit economy. This research mostly utilizes the concept of track-one diplomacy. This exemplifies the diplomacy employed by nations and international organizations. It is defined by explicit regulations, some legal and others derived from customary practice, to which all nations and international organizations consent. Track-one diplomacy relies on established operational processes and defined partnerships (Mwagiru 2000 (b): 123). This paper examines track-one diplomacy employed by Kenya and Uganda in tackling the bandit economy near the Lokitanyala border.

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The bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border is a significant security concern and the primary catalyst of instability in North Rift Kenya (Bunei 2017). The bandit economy has escalated, leading to fatalities among both armed bandits and security personnel. The bandit economy has evolved from a cultural practice among pastoralists in Northern Kenya into a multi-billion dollar commercial enterprise, orchestrated by unscrupulous

local, national, and international businessmen who conspire with government officials, politicians, and community leaders to arm raiders for lethal assaults aimed at the illicit meat trade (Gumba et al., 2019). The bandit economy has led to the displacement of individuals, the impoverishment of communities, and the disruption of children's education. This study aims to examine the influence of Track One Diplomacy in addressing the bandit economy along the Lokinyatala border between Kenya and Uganda.

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1.2 Statement of the Problem

Notably, the trade in livestock is a significant industry in East Africa, with a high demand for flesh in urban areas and a supply chain that is oriented toward exports across borders (Okoli, 2020). This has resulted in the rise of a heavily armed mercenary force, operated remotely by business individuals and influential figures within the political and military establishments from both factions, who have invested in and are profiting from the economic benefits of cattle rustling. These gangs have used and dominated the permeable territorial borders to transform cross-border livestock rustling in recent years. Although cattle are not illicit commodities akin to contraband that may trigger suspicion during transport, stolen cattle are typically moved in small quantities or already slaughtered, disguised as meat to obscure evidence of livestock, in contrast to conventional methods of transporting live animals.

Despite the deployment of security agencies by both Kenya and Uganda, bandit economy has continued to be practiced (Adipo, 2017). There has been inadequate

security responses put in place by both governments, thus the growing incidences of nefarious economic activities along the border have not only led to loss of human lives and property, but have also fueled inter-ethnic disputes and impacted negatively on the local economy. A number of studies have sought to analyze the persistence of the bandit economy incidents by looking at causes of bandit economy. These studies have recommended that government agencies address marginalization, proliferation of small arms, political interference and provided robust framework for disarmament demobilization and reintegration programmes in the bandit-stricken zone. In spite of these efforts, the menace keeps exacerbating. Thus, in almost all parts of the border, there exists some level of insecurity.

A raft of Track one diplomatic measures, through government agencies, have been put in place to militate against bandit economy across the Kenya-Uganda border. For instance, Kenya and Uganda have jointly deployed a contingent of security personnel from; the Kenya Police Reservists (KPR), General Service Unit (GSU), Administration Police (AP), Anti-Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) and, more recently, Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) as well as Uganda police forces. However, despite extensive acknowledgement by the two governments that in armed situations multiple variables inform security experiences (Drenski, 2009), cross-border bandit economy continues unabated.

While economic deprivation and political disenfranchisement of peripheral nomadic tribes are significant catalysts for social banditry, they necessitate the integration of contemporary methods of violence to effectively challenge and erode the state's policing capacity and traditional legitimacy. This study examined the role of Track One Diplomacy in addressing the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border.

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1.3 Research Objectives

This study investigated the contribution of Track one Diplomacy in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

i. Examine the Nature of Bandit Economy along Kenya-Uganda border
ii. Assess the Track one Diplomatic strategies for Combating Banditry along the Kenya-Uganda border
iii. Evaluate the challenges and opportunities of track one diplomacy in managing the bandit economy along the Uganda border

1.4 Research Questions

i. What is the nature of Bandit Economy along Kenya-Uganda border?
ii. Which Track one Diplomatic strategies are used in Combating Banditry along the Kenya-Uganda border?
iii. What are the challenges and opportunities of Track One Diplomacy in managing the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border?

1.5 Justification of the Study

This study was underpinned by two justifications, that is, academic and policy justifications.

1.5.1 Academic justification

Review of literature of prior research on the bandit economy has revealed certain gaps in the field, which reflect unclear effects and fail to explain how diplomacy can tackle problems emanating from the bandit economy. For instance, Mwanasha *et al.* (2022) primarily concentrated on the involvement of government institutions in mitigating cattle theft. Although their work informs on the government's actions, they do not extensively analyze the aspect of the bandit economy or its socio-economic and security repercussions. This issue is significant in omitting the knowledge of how these economic activities are rooted in the society due to banditry and its impact on the stability of the area.

Similarly, Henderson (2020) explored the emergence of groups of criminals that rob and kill under the pretext of making money. However, Henderson's study does not address these gangs with respect to the concept of a bandit economy. Rather than categorizing these groups as actors in a larger economic system fueled by banditry, the study isolates them as criminal entities. This narrow focus fails to capture the structural and coordinated character of banditry as an economic enterprise, most especially for the security and political stability of the region.

Furthermore, there is a scarcity of scholarship investigating the part played by small states in mitigating the detrimental effects of the bandit economy and the value addition of soft power resources in small-state diplomacy. The possibility of small states as credible and legitimate actors in diplomatic initiatives aimed at combating the bandit economy appears to be an untapped avenue of research. This gap is significant, especially in times when soft power and diplomacy are becoming dominant, especially in tackling

non-traditional security threats such as those from the bandit economy. In light of these gaps, the current study seeks to add further knowledge by investigating the role of Track one diplomacy in responding to the bandit economy along the Kenyan and Ugandan border. Consequently, this area has emerged as one of the focal areas in the fight against the vice given both its geopolitical and socio-economic characteristics. Through the identification of the diplomatic activities between the Kenyan and Uganda states, this study assessed how diplomacy negotiations, commitments and cooperative strategies can minimize the impact of the bandit economy.

The findings will be helpful for academicians and researchers focusing on the analysis of possible changes in the bandit economy for the use of armed conflict participants, as well as policymakers and practitioners analysing security and diplomacy field problems and challenges. As a result of analyzing the correlation between diplomacy and the bandit economy, this work will give an insight into how similar issues can be solved in other parts of the world.

1.5.2 Policy Justification

Nakalembe et al. (2017) assert that since the 1960s, underlying factors such as agricultural expansion initiatives and regulated grazing, stemming from land use policies and development programs, have progressively allocated significant portions of the region's land for mining, forestry, wildlife conservation, and mineral exploration (Rugadya & Kamusiime, 2013). Despite the legal land frameworks in Uganda and Kenya recognizing traditional customary mutual rights, the majority of development strategies in the region consistently overlook the grazing rights of pastoralists (Coldham, 2000; Mwebaza, 2015). CELEP (2018) indicates that since colonial times, various government

policies have perceived pastoralism as an inefficient land use, categorizing rangelands as wastelands. Most governments in East Africa have concentrated on modernizing pastoral systems to sedentarize pastoral populations and transition them to crop farming (Waiswa et al., 2019).

Significant policy proposals, including the implementation of advanced virtual technology for aerial surveillance of cattle rustlers' movements and activities, have been established (Bor et al., 2022). Nonetheless, explicit and effective regulations to mitigate the bandit economy remain absent. Aerial surveillance of cattle rustling might improve security operations and effectively regulate livestock rustling networks at local, national, and international levels. Consequently, the study aids in the formulation of viable security strategies designed to counteract the bandit economy directly. The study's conclusions may significantly inform many policies, including economic and social policies in the region examined. Ultimately, the study aimed to identify further avenues for future research on the bandit economy.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focused on the contribution of Track One Diplomacy in countering the bandit economy along the Kenya–Uganda border, examining both the opportunities and challenges inherent in applying diplomatic strategies in such a volatile context. The Kenya–Uganda frontier, particularly in North Western Kenya, has experienced persistent bandit economic activities marked by armed incursions, cattle rustling, and cross-border smuggling, which have remained inadequately addressed over the past decade. The

choice of this border—rather than the Kenya–Ethiopia, Kenya–Tanzania, or Kenya–Somalia frontiers—is scientifically grounded in the border's geostrategic and socio-political uniqueness. According to Mkutu (2008), the Kenya–Uganda borderlands are characterized by entrenched cattle warlordism and fluid ethnic alliances that sustain a complex informal economy of livestock and small arms trade. Furthermore, the relative diplomatic openness and institutional cooperation between Kenya and Uganda make the border a suitable case for evaluating the functionality of formal diplomatic interventions (Anderson & McKnight, 2014). Unlike the more militarized Kenya–Somalia border or the relatively less active Kenya–Tanzania frontier, the Kenya–Uganda axis presents a dynamic environment where Track One Diplomacy can be observed interacting with local and regional security structures. The periodization of this study spans from 1980 to 2024, capturing the evolution of the bandit economy and the corresponding diplomatic responses. Fieldwork was conducted between May and July 2024, aligning with a decade-long spike in bandit operations and allowing an in-depth assessment of diplomatic effectiveness in this particular border context.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides background information on track-one diplomacy and bandit economy. The problem statement highlights critical gaps the study sought to fill. The chapter also identifies the specific objectives of the corresponding research questions that guided the study. The next chapter provides a detailed analysis of the literature related to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature in reference to specific objectives of the study on track one diplomacy and bandit economy from global, regional and national perspectives. The chapter presents the literature from a critical point of view, by drawing different viewpoints on track one diplomacy and bandit economy. This chapter also presents the conceptual framework underpinned by two theories: protracted social conflict, social contract, power and neo-functionalism theories.

2.1. Nature of Banditry and Bandit Economy

In examining the nature and extent of bandit economy, it suffices to conceptualize the concept of bandit economy as influenced by track one diplomacy. This is demonstrated in the ensuing paragraphs.

2.1.1 Understanding the Bandit Economy

The word bandit economy derives from banditry, which refers to the illicit behavior of armed groups intimidating individuals and seizing their property. It is synonymous with the formation of gang factions that employ tiny and lightweight weaponry to perpetrate assaults on individuals for economic gain. In this context, a bandit economy may refer to a collection of illegal behaviors intentionally devised and executed for financial profit. Egwu (2016) characterized the bandit economy as the practice of stealing livestock from herders or raiding cattle from ranches, owing to the intricate nature of bandit operations. The bandit economy is prominently manifested in criminal activities such as cattle theft, which often entails the brutal slaughter of individuals in agrarian communities by alleged herdsmen, alongside retaliatory assaults from surviving victims. This issue has become a critical concern for national security (Uche & Iwuamadi, 2019). The phrase "bandit economy" pertains to rural communities and denotes a collective of rural outlaws engaged in unlawful actions, including village raids, kidnappings, and the pursuit of primitive wealth accumulation. Consequently, a bandit economy is coordinated by gangs that terrorize and dispossess local individuals or tourists of their valuable possessions, including trade, currency, livestock, camels, and sheep, among others. They function within and next to rural boundaries with the support of local collaborators, which in certain instances includes state officials assigned to ensure the safety and

security of the populace (Abdullahi, 2019). Abdullahi (2019) asserts that state operatives engaged in Track One diplomacy conspire with bandits to execute malevolent operations.

The actions of illegal migrants, smugglers, narcotics and human traffickers, and, more lately, Islamist groups pose significant threats to national and regional security in West Africa, raising severe concerns throughout the sub-region. The Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) has repeatedly caught and thwarted attempts to smuggle weaponry and ammunition into the nation. Border security with Niger, Chad, and Cameroon is ineffective, facilitating the ease of commodities smuggling (West African Network for Peacebuilding, 2013, 4). Nigeria's security authorities often document occurrences of arms smuggling, armed banditry, and human trafficking along the 773-kilometre (460-mile) Cotonou-Badagry Road. Maritime insecurity in West and Central Africa has facilitated the trafficking and illicit movement of drugs, people, and arms. Illicit, unauthorized, or undocumented migration is prevalent in West Africa, with Nigeria serving as a significant destination for labor migrants. Nigeria's robust economy renders it appealing to numerous West African migrants, particularly from less developed nations. Certainly, the issue of its permeable borders also exists. Nearly all border entrance sites in Nigeria facilitate drug trafficking, illegal migration, human trafficking, and the unlawful movement of armaments into the nation. Media reports have associated certain migrants from neighboring West African nations with civic unrest, urban and rural violence, theft, armed robbery, and overall insecurity of life and property. For instance, all land and maritime borders in Nigeria were sealed a few days prior to the

2015 national elections to deter the influx of illegal immigrants seeking to engage in the electoral process.

Human trafficking, child enslavement, and other transnational crimes are escalating across Africa. Nigeria's huge market readily entices smugglers and illegal drug traffickers. Nigeria and Benin are primary suppliers for the flourishing human trafficking industry in West Africa. Recently, West Africa has been notably highlighted in cocaine seizures announced by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration. Stephen Ellis asserts that West Africa is not only strategically located for commerce between South America and Europe, but it also possesses a political and social milieu that is mostly conducive to the drug traffic. Smuggling is broadly accepted, law enforcement is inadequate and ineffective, and officials are frequently paid or even participate in the drug trade themselves" (2009, 173).

Undoubtedly, hazards and challenges to peace and security in West Africa are directly or indirectly linked to the rapidly expanding illicit cross-border trade in narcotics and people trafficking. The unrestricted influx of guns into Nigeria has significantly contributed to both the escalation in the frequency of violent conflicts and their intensity. Nigeria constitutes around 70% of the illicit small guns in the West African sub-region (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, 2013, 4). The weaponry are procured from both West Africa and the global armaments supply, facilitated by collaboration between Nigerians and international entities. The majority of the seizures by the NCS occurred around the border with Benin. The nearness of some crisis zones in West and Central Africa to

Nigeria's land and maritime borders has exacerbated the illegal trafficking of small guns and light weapons. Illegal arms trafficking is prevalent in West Africa, including several multinational networks.

Data about cross-border crimes in West Africa, including people trafficking, drug trafficking, and livestock poaching, indicate that transnational social networks may significantly undermine state security. In Nigeria, political leaders and government officials, including law enforcement personnel, have said that migrants from other West African nations are responsible for different crimes. In Lagos State, criminal actions at various periods have been ascribed to the influx of migrant labor from adjacent nations. Additionally, in certain regions of Oyo and Osun states, a small number of migrants were reported to be engaged in illicit mining of solid minerals. Nationals from Guinea, Niger, Mali, and Senegal are involved in illicit enterprises in central Nigeria, particularly in Plateau, Nassarawa, and Taraba States, where unlawful mining of solid minerals and unauthorized foreign currency exchange transactions have proliferated. In the northeastern border area of Nigeria, incidents of livestock theft, encroachments on land rights by nomadic herders from adjacent nations, and violent crimes including armed robbery, vehicle theft, and smuggling are commonplace. Incidents of criminal violence in metropolitan areas like as Jalingo, Jimeta, Yola, Gashua, Dikwa, Mubi, Gembu, Damaturu, and Maiduguri are increasingly associated with the presence of immigrants in these locales. Initially, criminal actions perpetrated by migrants were most pronounced in border settlements. Recently, their operations have infiltrated the interior. The transnational nature of some West and Central African

languages and cultures, like Hausa and Fulbe in Northern Nigeria, Yoruba and Egun in South Western Nigeria, and Ibiobo and Calabari in South Eastern Nigeria, has exacerbated the issue of illegal migration.

A stakeholder is any individual, whether internal or external, at any level, who may influence or be influenced by an organization, strategy, or initiative. Stakeholders are defined as individuals or groups have the capacity to influence an entity or effort in various ways. Human security in East Africa is jeopardized by the bandit economy; nevertheless, the majority of the impacted nations have opted for national rather than regional strategies to address the problem. Pkalya et al. (2003) identify livestock raiding and resource-based conflicts as the primary manifestations in Turkana. In October 2013, 30,000 members of the Turkana people entered the Kotido, Moroto, and Kabong regions of Uganda to graze their livestock. The leaders of the Turkana County Government and members of the National and County assembly intervened to secure acceptance and protection for the communities in Uganda. This necessitates social and policy-oriented solutions, as well as the provision of services, particularly water, which is seen as supplementary assistance for pastoralists. During their contemplation of the obstacles confronting pastoralists, officials from Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan, and the Ethiopian Ateker Communities acknowledged the progress in peacebuilding and governance assistance despite the adversities of inadequate infrastructure, healthcare, education, insecurity, and hunger. They reaffirmed their dedication to peace and expressed the hope that disarmament will be included in cross-border commerce and infrastructure development.

The Turkana County Government, in its County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2013-2017, delineated its priorities in peacebuilding and conflict prevention by identifying and collaborating with local institutions to promote peace, enhance national stability, and devise conflict resolution strategies. This approach aims to facilitate peacebuilding processes and establish a broad coalition of peace actors to assist in resource mobilization and the implementation of collaborative peacebuilding initiatives. Vision 2030 and the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTP) 2013-17 identify significant difficulties and challenges impacting pastoralists that require resolution. The factors encompass low domestic savings, stagnant GDP and per capita income growth, elevated poverty and unemployment rates, high energy costs, restrictive business and investment regulations, pronounced regional development disparities, rapid population growth, expansion of informal settlements, and insecurity.

The Kenyan government has prioritized the cessation of drought emergencies, irrigation, and food security, using lessons from the first MTP accomplishments and obstacles. Drought is a nationwide issue, however its immediate effects are most pronounced in the ASALs. Between 2008 and 2011, drought-related damages and losses were substantial, estimated at US $12.1 billion, constituting 10.2% of GDP. The hazards associated with climate change have escalated, exacerbating difficulties caused by droughts and floods (MTP 2013 – 2017). This has been a significant factor in the bandit economy that has created a divide between the Pokot and Turkana populations. The Government emphasizes supplementary assistance for value enhancement in the production chain and

the establishment of marketing support systems for pastoralists and fisheries communities.

The issue of livestock theft presents considerable health challenges and is regarded as a notable threat to human security in East Africa. Consequently, EAPCCO established the "Protocol on the Prevention, Fighting and Eradication of Bandit Economy in Eastern Africa," along with the ISS and Civil Society organizations, to tackle the issue of bandit economy effectively. In August 2008, the Mifugo Project was initiated in Nairobi, involving five signatories: Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. This agreement was designed to formulate effective mechanisms aimed at discouraging and ultimately eradicating illegal cross-border activities, particularly those associated with the bandit economy. The Mifugo initiative and the subsequent adoption of the protocol signify a transformative shift in the pursuit of effective solutions to the challenges posed by the bandit economy.

Muriithi (2007) posits that peace building operates as a complex mechanism, engaging with issues across various stages. The focus lies in tackling the underlying systemic, psychological, and cultural discrepancies that are at the heart of the conflict, thereby supporting the frameworks for peacemaking and peacekeeping. At its fundamental level, peace building involves addressing the root causes of conflict and facilitating ongoing negotiations between opposing parties, while also seeking to mediate solutions whenever feasible (Murtin & Wacziarg, 2014). Peacebuilding encompasses the oversight of the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) process, in addition to the reconfiguration of the security framework. This involves advocating for social and

economic equity, alongside the establishment or reformation of democratic governance and the rule of law. The endeavors in question are fundamentally directed towards the reconstruction of nations ravaged by conflict, emphasizing reconciliation, the mobilization of resources, socioeconomic stabilization, and advancement (Murtin & Wacziarg, 2014). A nuanced comprehension of the distinctions among peacemaking, peacekeeping, and conflict prevention is essential.

Peacebuilding serves as a vital instrument for facilitating social transition and fostering reconciliation. This approach aims to eradicate violence and promote social justice (Sodipo, 2013). This approach aims to avert and address armed conflicts by means of activism, enhancing public consciousness, and implementing various programs. It involves strategies for enhancing individuals' abilities to address and mitigate the underlying factors contributing to violence and animosity (Onigu-Otite & Albert, 1999). Peacebuilding rests on the premise that true peace cannot be achieved or maintained through forceful means. It can be achieved solely through understanding (Ofuoku & Evwierhurhoma, 2018).

In his book, The Building State to Create Peace, Call (2008) posits that peacebuilding extends beyond the mere elimination of armed conflict; indeed, security can be achieved through the equilibrium or intimidation of power. Instead, it involves the creation of a constructive resolution, addressing the fundamental causes of conflict so that parties are not compelled to engage in violence to settle their disputes. A further elucidation in the realm of peace building, which logically follows the initial premise, is that the

technologies employed to facilitate the reconstruction of nations post-conflict ought to be similarly harnessed to help societies avert war from the outset.

Comprehensive response strategies, encompassing collaboration with stakeholders and impacted communities, dialogue, community governance, amnesty, reconciliation, and security reforms by the relevant State Governments, are essential for addressing the issue of banditry in the North-West. The 2016 amnesty policy implemented by the Katsina State Government, alongside the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) initiative of the Zamfara State Government, represents noteworthy endeavors. Conversely, these entities are devoid of a strong defense mechanism and alternative conflict resolution strategies that could have guaranteed security safeguards in the absence of an amnesty and a DDR framework. The preliminary favorable outcomes of the peace initiative persuaded numerous herders and bandits to relinquish their arms to the State Government in exchange for amnesty, while Zamfara State undertook an extensive campaign for the withdrawal and destruction of firearms in 2018, resulting in the obliteration of 6,000 smuggled weapons (UN, 2019).
As noted by Mkutu (2008), the primary reason for the conference's failure was the colonial government's absence of viable alternatives to cattle raiding and its lack of commitment to the development of African livestock. He contends that the colonial government exhibited strong opposition to the latter, driven by the anticipated competition it was believed to pose to the white settlers. The European settlers served as the colonial administrative collaborators in the generation of revenue for the colony. Consequently, the advancement of the African livestock sector, viewed as a means to

mitigate cattle raiding and the associated insecurity, was deemed by the colonial administration to be a “minor factor” within their broader development strategy. Indeed, they found solace in the existing state of affairs. Karugire (1980) posits that the second rationale was the employment of an administrative variant of chiefships, which functioned as fully realized village-based despots. The leaders were intended to assume the role of the council of elders in instances of stateless societies such as the Karamojong and the Pokot. In Uganda, for example, chiefships were established solely in communities that were unable to adopt the Kiganda model of political administration, which the British sought to implement throughout the protectorate (Karugure, 1980).

On numerous occasions, it was articulated that these pastoralists exhibited a reluctance to acquiesce to colonial governance. As a result, the colonial administrations in Kenya and Uganda instituted a series of discriminatory administrative regulations. The implementation of these laws led to West Pokot and Karamoja experiencing what Ogot (1968) refers to as the period of distinct development. The Pokot and Karamojong were consequently regarded with skepticism from the beginning, subsequently being marginalized to the outskirts of Kenya and Uganda.

The prevailing perspective suggests that the government's dedication to this final obligation has been insufficient, as evidenced by the inadequate staffing or even the shutdown of certain outposts. The initiatives for rapid response undertaken by governments are often perceived as inadequate, as they typically arrive after the fact and fail to comprehensively address the enduring security requirements of pastoral communities (USAID and FEWS NET 2005). Mwaura (2005) identifies several deficiencies that have marked prior governmental responses to insecurity in pastoral

regions of Kenya, including the following: The absence of response is notable; historically, there has been a lack of reaction to routine acts of killing and raiding. Inter-clan or inter-ethnic violence among pastoralists was often regarded as commonplace and permissible in earlier times. Nevertheless, the act of killing women and children was expressly forbidden. In contemporary society, various communities engage in indiscriminate acts of violence during their incursions. In numerous instances, law enforcement appears either reluctant or incapable of providing support to the communities or effectively holding the offenders accountable.

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The Firearms Act of 1970 in Uganda established stringent regulations regarding the registration of firearms and the licensing of gun owners. This legislation rendered the ownership of firearms illegal, with the exception granted to individuals who aligned themselves with the administration of Apollo Milton Obote. One year later, Army Chief of Staff Idi Amin Dada seized power in a coup d'état. Satya (2004) and Gabre (2009). The systematic terror inflicted by the Amin regime upon a populace armed with rudimentary weaponry, which stood in stark contrast to the lethal efficiency of the governmental machinery, culminated in widespread murder and devastation. By the year 1979, when Amin was ousted, it was reported that 30,000 of the 300,000 Ugandans who lost their lives belonged to the Pokot and Karamojong communities. In 1986, President Yoweri Museveni, having ascended to power through conflict, transformed his insurgent group, the National Resistance Army (NRA), into a national military force, subsequently designated as the Uganda Peoples' Defense Forces (UPDF). Due to apprehensions regarding insecurity in the communities adjacent to the Karamoja region, Museveni

initiated a novel voluntary security management program, receiving endorsement from the United Nations. President Museveni adopted a more assertive approach in the initiation of the security force within the region to guarantee stability. The U.N. Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) indicated that the operation would entail the application of 'police methods' (IRIN, 2002).
The Government of Kenya is fundamentally dedicated to ensuring safety by maintaining peace. Upon the issuance of its directive, the governing authority has fortified its approach with resolute and uncompromising strategies aimed at addressing the issue of illicit weaponry, particularly in the northern regions of Kenya. Satya (2004); and Gabre (2009). Over the past century, Kenya has undertaken more than 50 deactivation actions. During President Moi's extensive 24-year tenure, it is posited that the head of state requested over 20 neutralization operations specifically targeting the Pokot and Turkana communities in Kenya.

The concept behind Operation Dumisha Amani was to initiate a cooperative demilitarization initiative involving Uganda and Ethiopia. Initiatives involving transactions and joint ventures commenced in Uganda; however, they encountered obstacles due to national policy decisions made in Uganda and Kenya in the years 2006 and 2007, respectively. 2007 (Vries). The discussions remain in progress, with recent initiatives concentrating on collaborative demilitarization operations between Kenya and Ethiopia. The administration has undertaken another initiative to tackle security concerns through the establishment and deployment of members of the Kenya Police Reserve (KPRs). KPRs are regarded as essential by the community in which they are

implemented; however, their enrollment and management are perceived as deficient. Baque (2010) and Onyango (2010; 2013). KPRs are prudent officials associated with law enforcement, entrusted with the responsibility to address precarious safety situations as they arise. Notwithstanding their assumed honorable role, certain individuals have appropriated the minor firearms provided by the government, reportedly employing them for nefarious activities (Ndung‘u, 2010).

2.2 Track One Diplomatic Strategies for Combating Banditry

Track one Diplomacy includes the traditional meetings and discussions between governments or their representatives (Kreiman, 2016). Due to the necessity in a clear separation between the efforts, this study shall regard the official diplomatic efforts, through Track one diplomacy, as those conducted between government of one country and another, between their representatives or diplomats, or between officials and diplomats. Another Track one diplomacy can be the trade relations between the governments. In modern diplomatic conduct, governments invest time and effort in assisting private companies and businesses to expend to foreign markets. It can also be "preventive" – in which case the meetings refer to the prevention of escalation of a conflict or of the outbreak of a war, (and so is the "nuclear diplomacy" to prevent proliferation, such was the NPT from 1968) (UN Secretary-General "Agenda for Peace", 1992). Though originally intended for conflict resolution, today, many of the diplomatic meetings between heads of state refer to wide range of cooperation in times of peace as well. Such meetings are often accompanied by unofficial events.

Track one diplomacy is a term often used in history to describe the conduct of negotiation between rulers, aimed at conflict resolutions, arbitrations, mediations, negotiations and conferences. It is conducted both bilaterally and multilaterally. The difference between the official diplomacy and the non-official tracks is the participants: the official diplomacy is conducted between governments and government-representatives alone.

Often, a visit of a president of a country to meet with the president of another, carries a public diplomacy effect, and sparks cultural diplomacy inspiration, but the main core element of the visit is not a meeting between an elective and the entire public, but between the statesmen or diplomats themselves. With that pointed out, in many cases, such officials may take advantage of the situation and hold a public performance. So was the case with the recent visit of USA president Barack Obama to Cuba; in the negotiation process of re-establishing diplomatic ties, both an official discussion took place, and a speech to the people of Cuba. Representatives of government, diplomats of various ranks (ambassadors, attachés, consuls, and other members of the hierarchy), are often used as the main instrument of communication between governments.

When the Swedish government expressed dismay with the Israeli government actions, it was the Swedish ambassador who was called for a clarification meeting in Jerusalem. In that sense, the ambassador represents the G2G, or Government – to – Government relations. In some cases, countries are linked by direct G2G cooperation, and Israel and the Czech Republic are one of said cases.

Official diplomacy, within the framework of security management, is often referred to as "Track 1 diplomacy." Mapendare posits that the primary distinction between official diplomacy and its non-official counterpart lies in the formal engagement at the state-to-

state level. The protocol is obligatory for adherence by each state. It is regarded as "the foremost instrument for fostering peace within a state's foreign policy" (Mapendere, 2006).

Mapendere posits that the principal agents are those engaged in diplomatic endeavors; this includes diplomats, senior government officials, and heads of state. He elucidates that its primary objective is to exert influence over the configuration of political authority. Examples of multilateral actors engaged in official diplomacy include the United Nations, the Vatican, the European Union, the Arab League, the African Union, the Organization of American States, and fundamentally, any multi-governmental and supranational organization. The primary objectives of official diplomacy encompass productive negotiations and the resolution of conflicts, yet its application extends beyond mere instances of discord. The fundamental objectives of formal diplomacy revolve around the prevention of warfare and the mitigation of adverse circumstances, such as conflicts or disputes, which have historically defined the conventional applications of diplomatic engagement. In contemporary discourse, Mapendare elucidates that it is regarded merely as an instrument for enhancing diplomatic relations between nations. He identifies four primary advantages that official diplomacy possesses over its unofficial counterpart. Initially, the capacity to wield political power to shape the course of negotiations and their results is noteworthy, encompassing the potential threat of military force and deterrence, alongside the imposition of sanctions when a party contravenes an international treaty. The second aspect pertains to its ability to obtain both material and financial resources. Mapendare elucidates that these are employed as a means of leverage in the course of negotiations. The third aspect involves the utilization of intelligence

sources, which can provide profound insights into the interests of the parties engaged in negotiations. The final benefit of formal diplomacy he identifies is that the understanding possessed by the participants regarding both their own state's foreign policies and those of the opposing parties can be effectively utilized during negotiations. (Mepandare, 2006) The primary objectives of contemporary official diplomacy involve the establishment of diplomatic relations among nations and the preservation of those connections. In the context of a bilateral agreement, the interactions between representatives of both governments may serve as a platform for the formalization of treaties or the issuance of joint declarations, for example. During periods of estrangement among nations, such as the years spanning from 1928 to 2016 in the context of Cuba and the USA, the official meeting in 2016 represents a significant advancement toward the cultivation of future amicable relations. During periods of uncertainty, such gatherings may be convened to deliberate on the resolution of the insecurity, establish a cease-fire, or formulate principles that will underpin future relations. An illustrative instance of this can be found in the Oslo accords established between Israel and the P.L.O. in 1993. During periods of tranquility, such gatherings can function as a means to fortify relationships, devise collaborative strategies, establish alliances, conduct joint military exercises, and formalize agreements on economic matters, among other pursuits. In the context of multilateral cooperation or organization, the official aspect may encompass membership in a multi-governmental or supranational entity, engagement in conferences, the endorsement of joint agreements, resolutions, and declarations, as well as the support, signing, or sponsorship of regional or international initiatives. Additionally, it includes

active participation in committees established by the multinational organization to address specific issues (Kreiman, 2016).

In the pursuit of Track one Diplomacy, the American state undertook significant policy measures aimed at mitigating the bandit economy, despite its role as a catalyst in the escalation of the Second World War. The formulation of the McCarran Act and its effectiveness suggest that the American state adheres to the principles of the social contract, akin to the dynamics observed in a bandit economy. The legislation imposed substantial penalties on offenders, resulting in the recovery of numerous stolen livestock. A comparable situation unfolds in Scotland, where the theft of approximately 300 cattle prompted the state to classify the matter of banditry as a national emergency. This further illustrates that the Scottish government adheres to the principles of the social contract in its response to the phenomenon of bandit economy within the state. In numerous African states, the situation diverges significantly; it is frequently asserted that the phenomena of bandit economies and various organized crimes are intricately linked to political factors that contribute to their emergence and ongoing existence. Governments consistently exhibit a deficiency in vigor regarding their policies and overall efforts aimed at mitigating the bandit economy and other organized crimes. (Kuden, 2017). In the eastern part of Africa, particularly in Kenya, the bandit economy stands as the primary catalyst for conflicts among the Pokot, Maasai, Marakwet, and other pastoral communities. The bandit economy in West Pokot County encompasses the Turkana, Sabaot, Samburu, Marakwet, Sabiny, and Karamajong communities. It represents a lifestyle for pastoralists, wherein groups such as the ‘Morans’ orchestrate raids, serving

as a manifestation of their dominance. The organization of these raids typically involves careful planning, direction, and oversight by the esteemed members of the community. Typically, retaliatory actions are executed by the elders of the opposing community at strategically opportune moments, even though fatalities are often absent. Nevertheless, modern incursions have increasingly manifested with greater regularity and lethality. This can be ascribed to the rise in extreme climatic phenomena, notably droughts, alongside the proliferation of arms (Huho, 2012). Scholars notably connect the bandit economy to various factors, including cultural influences, the illicit spread of arms, food scarcity, climate change, territorial conflicts, insecurity, political challenges, unemployment, and economic incentives for survival, among others (Greiner, 2013; Okoli and Francis, 2014).

Greiner (2013), while akin to Huho (2012) in his examination of the bandit economy in Kenya, observes that livestock raiding among Northern Kenyan pastoralists has undergone significant transformation from its historical practices. The matter has been subjected to political discourse concerning assertions regarding administrative boundaries, conflicts over exclusive land access, and efforts to create or protect an ethnically uniform electoral constituency. The conflicts in question are intricately woven into the complex fabric of Kenya's political landscape concerning decentralization, necessitating an analysis that situates them within the broader spectrum of the nation's political evolution. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork conducted in East Pokot and its neighboring regions within Kenya's Central Rift Valley Province, this analysis illustrates how the bandit economy has emerged as a distinct form of violence, serving as a

calculated, perilous, and potent instrument of political influence. He continues by asserting that, in examining the dynamics of the bandit economy in Kenya, the connections between raiders and politicians frequently remain ambiguous; however, the violence in pastoralist regions is closely intertwined with recent political developments across the nation. The processes of democratization, notably the re-establishment of multi-partyism in 1992, the conclusion of the Moi regime in 2002, the post-election violence of 2007–2008, the current political administrative restructuring, and the ongoing land reforms have generated avenues for the contentious negotiation of territorial claims in the pastoralist regions of Kenya's arid North. The causes and triggers of the bandit economy in Kenya are noteworthy.

Okoli and Francis (2014) further note that the bandit economy is intricately linked to political struggles, as demonstrated in various regions of Africa. The events of 2013 reveal a tragic narrative, wherein numerous individuals lost their lives or sustained injuries due to a succession of extensive cattle raids executed by insurgents in the Jonglei region of South Sudan. For them, the acts of violence and the extensive bandit economy were viewed through a political lens. In a similar vein, the research conducted by Okoli and Atelhe (2014) indicates that the proliferation of a bandit economy in Northern Nigeria in recent years has occasionally been linked to the actions of the Boko Haram insurgent group. This analysis suggests that the perspectives of Greiner (2013), Okoli and Francis (2014), and Okoli and Atelhe (2014) exhibit notable similarities in their examination of the causes of bandit economy in relation to political dynamics and processes.

In Plateau State, the bandit economy that emerged around 2006 initially manifested as a conflict rooted in ethno-religious tensions. However, it has since evolved into a form of crime and violence that is neither religious nor ethnic in nature, with perpetrators drawn from various sects and groups within the state (Human Rights Watch report, 2004). As observed by Kwaja (2014) Various manifestations of violence associated with a bandit economy, rooted in criminal activities, have now become pervasive in the central region of Nigeria. The movement of livestock for financial profit serves as the principal motivation behind the assault on vulnerable communities. This constitutes an economically driven manifestation of criminality executed by illicit networks that operate outside the bounds of legality and formality. The emergence of a clandestine economy associated with banditry is progressively being driven by an atmosphere of insecurity and violence, which further exacerbates ethno-religious and communal conflicts in the central region of Nigeria, stemming from political and structural disparities. In recent years, the central region of Nigeria has emerged as a significant epicenter of various forms of violence and conflict, characterized by a surge in criminal activities and rural banditry that pose considerable challenges to the area. In the North Central region of Nigeria, the bandit economy emerges as a significant challenge affecting livelihoods. This phenomenon is intricately connected to the opportunities for sustenance and the detrimental effects of the bandit economy on the ongoing struggles for means of livelihood between farmers and herdsmen. Such dynamics are essential to understanding the broader political economy of Nigeria, particularly from an agricultural perspective. The crux of the issue resides in the reality that the land which farmers prioritize for food production and their economic sustenance is simultaneously essential for pastoralists who

rely on it for grazing their cattle. This land serves as a vital resource for their survival as well. Consequently, the contention surrounding access to and governance of land between pastoralists and crop farmers serves as the foundation for the violence and discord that arises between these two factions. The consequences have been profoundly detrimental, manifesting in a bandit economy, loss of life, displacement of both pastoralists and crop farmers, and widespread destruction of property in regions including Plateau, Benue, Nasarawa, Niger, and Taraba states. The interplay of these dynamic trends contributes to a cycle of conflict, the proliferation of illicit arms, and limited livelihood opportunities in the North Central region, collectively fostering a bandit economy within the area (Human Rights Watch report; 2004 and Kwaja, 2014).

The study reveals a multitude of factors contributing to the phenomenon of bandit economy. The causes may be delineated into four overarching categories. There exist cultural factors, ecological influences, economic conditions, as well as political and colonial precedents.

Ngaga (2012) posits that the cultural tradition of providing dowry prior to marriage significantly contributes to the emergence of a bandit economy. This factor has undeniably influenced the proliferation and manifestation of the bandit economy and conflict culture in the northern rift region of Kenya. This cultural practice has led the Pokots, the Marakwet, and the Maasai, among others, to perceive the bandit economy as a conventional aspect of existence. Among the Pokots in Kenya, there is a noteworthy practice known as ‘Sapana,’ which serves as a traditional rite of passage for males transitioning from adolescence to elderhood, and it has a significant impact on the bandit

economy. In the course of the ‘sapana’ ceremony, the individual engages in the act of spearing his favored bull, subsequently offering the meat to his companions and esteemed elders. Following this ritual, he is formally inducted into the elderhood club, thereby gaining the privilege to partake in community affairs as an elder. Individuals who have not partaken in the 'sapana' meal are excluded from discussions regarding community affairs. The cultural rite of ‘sapana’ compels young adults to obtain bulls through various means in order to gain respect within the community.

Women play a significant role in the proliferation of cattle raiding, as they commemorate successful raiders through song and employ mockery towards those who abstain from such endeavors. The esteem of women is often directed towards men who possess substantial herds of cattle, whereas those lacking such assets may be regarded as lacking valor and consequently receive diminished respect. The women consistently possessed songs tailored for each occasion when raids were executed successfully (Cheserek, Omondi and Odenyo, 2012). In a similar vein, the bandit economy in North America is perceived as a cultural phenomenon among Texan cowboys (Baker, 1945 and Derricourt, 1899).

Similarly, Manu, Andu, Tarla, and Agarih (2014) note that, historically, the bandit economy within pastoral communities in various regions is regarded as a cultural practice that is both sanctioned and regulated by the elders. This indicates that in East Africa, particularly among the herding communities in Kenya, Uganda, and Lesotho, cultural rites and practices significantly contribute to the prevalence of a bandit economy. Manu

et al. (2014) argue that the evolution of cultural practices over time has given rise to new trends, tendencies, and dynamics within the cultural raid, resulting in its commercialization and internationalization. This perspective stands in contrast to earlier scholars who dismissed the bandit economy as simply a cultural practice. It can be inferred that the bandit economy prevalent among the Pokot and Marakwet communities of Kenya is primarily linked to their cultural practices, traditions, customs, values, and beliefs (Manu et al, 2014; Cheserek et al; 2012, Ngaga, 2012). While various elements contribute to the bandit economy observed among the Pokot and Marakwet communities, scholars predominantly attribute its primary cause to the cultural and traditional practices of the Pokots and Marakwet. In contrast to the perspectives offered by Manu et al. (2014), Cheserek et al. (2012), and Ngaga (2012), who attribute the origins of the bandit economy to tradition and culture, other scholars contend that political factors, institutional frameworks, and colonial legacies play a more significant role in its emergence. McCabe (2004) posits that tribal-based politics significantly contributes to the bandit economy in Kenya, whereas Adano, W. Dietz, T. Witsenburg, K., and Zaal, F. (2012) note that inadequate institutional frameworks are among the factors leading to the emergence of a bandit economy in the region. Kwaja (2014), aligning with the perspectives of Adano et al. (2012) and McCabe (2004), observes that in Plateau State, a significant source of discord among ethno-religious groups pertains to the concept of 'indigenousness'. This notion implies that certain groups are afforded access to political power, resources, employment, and educational opportunities within state or local government areas (LGAs), while migrants from other regions face relative exclusion. It is evident that this matter pertains to constitutional principles that require

thorough examination and resolution.

It has been noted that these imbalanced institutional arrangements are both directly and indirectly perceived as contributing factors to the exacerbation of the bandit economy in Plateau State, similar to the situation in Kenya. Moreover, the escalation of armaments has exacerbated criminal activities, fueled a rise in the bandit economy, and intensified the enduring conflicts between pastoralists and agriculturalists in Plateau State. This illustrates how an imbalanced structural arrangement, alongside the politics of ethnicity and religion, contributes to the emergence of a bandit economy in Plateau State. Furthermore, it is observed that marginalization stems from distributive injustice within a nation.

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McCabe (2004) illustrates that the Kenyan government allocates its resources predominantly to already developed regions, neglecting to ensure equitable development in the Pokot districts, which warrant prioritized attention in budgetary considerations. This has led to the proliferation of poverty, despair, and a rise in criminal activity, thereby intensifying the characteristics of a bandit economy. As a result, the Pokot community finds itself entrenched in its traditional culture, lacking engagement with broader cultural interactions. This illustrates the imbalanced structural arrangements among policymakers in Kenya and their influence on the bandit economy among the Pokots. A similar situation is observed in Nigeria, particularly in Plateau State, where policymakers and policies frequently neglect to provide significant developmental attention to pastoralists regarding land tenure. This neglect exacerbates conflicts, leading to the emergence of a bandit economy (Kwaja, 2014; Ngaga, 2012). It has been noted that

a significant number of institutions within systems are not operating as effectively as one might expect them to. The agencies responsible for upholding law, order, and security within the state often find themselves insufficiently equipped to fulfill their roles. This inadequacy can result in a cycle of violence, injustice, and a growing mistrust of security personnel. Furthermore, the proliferation of arms and the inefficiencies in service, both politically and structurally, contribute to the emergence of a bandit economy and associated forms of violence.

This illustrates the ways in which the state systematically contributes to the emergence of a bandit economy, whether through direct or indirect mechanisms (Kwaja, 2014; Kaprom, 2013). Greiner (2013) observes that although the political aspects of inter-tribal violence can be largely understood, the connection between political leaders and the individuals who carry out the raids remains significantly ambiguous. Greiner (2013) notes that there is substantial evidence indicating that Kalenjin politicians in Kenya were actively engaged in the distribution of modern firearms to the Pokot during the mid-1990s. He further observes that in 1982, in certain instances, such as the rustling attacks against the IlChamus, the actions of the raiders were overtly incited by political figures. The pastoralist communities in Kenya and Uganda have clearly endured prolonged periods of marginalization, both politically and economically, from the era of colonization to the current state of independence. This phenomenon can be traced back to the onset of colonialism, during which numerous pastoralist communities exhibited a reluctance to embrace the new cultures and transformations introduced by colonial powers. As a result, these communities were marginalized and compelled to move to less

fertile areas, largely due to their profound cultural heritage and nomadic lifestyle, which hindered their access to the educational opportunities presented by colonial authorities.

The absence of formal education in western paradigms within pastoralist communities partially elucidates their limited engagement in the political governance of the nation during the period of independence and beyond. For an extended period, the pastoral communities have been marginalized by the Government, excluded from the central dynamics of the nation's socioeconomic and political spheres. Regions characterized by pastoralism exhibit significant underdevelopment, with infrastructure remaining inadequately established. The availability of educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and reliable telecommunication services is notably limited. Undoubtedly, the gap in economic and living conditions between the majority of pastoralists and the broader population is remarkably vast. The degree of marginalization has been distinctly demonstrated in a document produced by the Ministry of State for the Development of Northern Kenya. The further marginalization of pastoralist communities is intensified by the designation of these groups as "war-like," a label imposed by colonial powers (Kenya Human Rights Commission, 2010).

This phenomenon is regarded as a contributing factor to the emergence of a bandit economy in the region. One might argue that the political instrumentalization and marginalization, along with the delineation of administrative boundaries between the Pokot and Turkana grazing areas, serve as significant contributors to the bandit economy. This argument aligns with Ngaga's (2012) perspective on the political causes of the bandit economy in Kenya, yet it lacks significant differentiation, as the document from

the Kenya Human Rights Commission (2001) elaborates on and traces these political causes back to the colonial era's flawed political arrangements. Chepwarwa (2003) asserts that the advantageous arrangements among the Kenyan herders prior to colonialism were, nonetheless, disrupted by colonial authorities. The influence of colonial policy on the dynamics between the Turkana and Pokot serves to amplify pre-existing animosities and fosters increased rivalry for resources within regions adjacent to the administrative borders. This configuration fosters a bandit economy among the Maasai and other pastoral communities in Kenya. Cheserek and colleagues (2012) observed that inadequate leadership has significantly contributed to the prevalence of a bandit economy in Kenya. The persistent inadequacy in leadership stands as a significant factor contributing to the bandit economy in Nigeria, particularly in Northern Nigeria, with specific reference to Plateau State, as corroborated by Kwaja (2014). In his discourse, he regarded the state's policies and structural arrangements as significant contributors to the bandit economy in Plateau State, the focus of the study. While the bandit economy among East African pastoral ethnic groups is often regarded as a cultural practice, it also embodies an underlying economic motive within their tradition of cattle raiding. In asserting the economic factor as a primary cause of the bandit economy, it is noted that over time, the cultural practice associated with this phenomenon has evolved, giving rise to new trends, tendencies, and dynamics. This evolution has resulted in the commercialization and internationalization of the practice, which stands in contrast to the perspectives of earlier scholars who regarded the bandit economy as simply a cultural practice (Manu, et al., 2014).

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The motivations behind bandit economies have shifted away from cultural and traditional influences; instead, the primary impetus now lies in the pursuit of commercial advantages, among other factors, guiding the actions of cattle rustlers. To further reinforce the notion that economic advantages serve as the driving forces behind the bandit economy. Schilling et al. (2012) and Dzimba & Matooane (2005) note that in Cameroon, the bandit economy does not constitute a cultural practice or tradition in the North West Region, in contrast to the circumstances observed in the Horn of Africa, including Kenya, Uganda, Lesotho, and Somalia. In these regions, there exists a pervasive prevalence of inter-tribal or inter-community conflicts; consequently, the bandit economy in the North West Region of Cameroon is engaged in solely as a commercial endeavor and for personal profit. It is important to note that the bandit economy is not solely perpetrated by unemployed or impoverished individuals; rather, it also involves well-organized groups that possess substantial financial resources and asset backing. These collectives frequently possess sufficient financial resources to transport animals utilizing trucks and trailers.

The bandit economy is further facilitated by the simplicity of trading stolen livestock (Dzimba, et al, 2005; Manu et al, 2014). Consequently, stolen animals are sold without requisite documentation to individuals for prompt utilization in communal festivities and funerals, as well as to butchers at significantly reduced prices. Kwaja (2014) reinforces this notion by asserting that the commercialization of the bandit economy is primarily attributable to the presence of a functional market that effectively connects demand with supply. He further asserts that in Northern Nigeria, the bandit economy and its perpetrators partake in these activities due to the economic incentives and the market

value associated with cattle. This supports the assertion made by Schilling (2012), as well as Dzimba and Matooane (2005), that in the North West region of Cameroon, the bandit economy is primarily motivated by economic benefits, in contrast to the Horn of Africa, where such activities were historically attributed to cultural and traditional factors prior to the 1990s.

In their analyses, Krätli and Swift (2003), along with Buchanan-Smith and Lind (2005), identify a multitude of factors and motivations underlying the phenomenon of bandit economy, with the predominant factor being the commercialization of such activities. Their assertion posits that the economic significance of cattle incites the phenomenon of banditry within the economy. This further substantiates the notion that individuals involved in the bandit economy are not solely characterized by unemployment or poverty; rather, they are motivated by the commercial advantages associated with it, as articulated by Schilling et al. (2012) and Dzimba et al. (2005). In this context, the bandit economy may be regarded as an illicit commercial enterprise, akin to drug trafficking, human exploitation, and the sex trade in certain regions of the world. In this context, it is crucial to note that the emergence of a bandit economy in Nigeria has been propelled by a criminal pursuit of economic gain within a milieu that largely tolerates unlawful activities. The commercial motivations and benefits associated with the bandit economy position it as a quintessential illustration of organized crime, akin to drug cartels and syndicates, which present global challenges necessitating a concerted international response for effective mitigation.

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Cheserek, et al (2012) observed that there exist already made illegal market arrangements among the Pokot and Marakwet communities accounting for 23%. The commercialization of rustled cattle pertains to the availability of a market or immediate financial exchange for such cattle. Individuals of questionable ethics, possessing strong connections to political figures and high-ranking government officials, have been reported to orchestrate and oversee a bandit economy for personal profit and influence. They acquire unlawfully obtained livestock at reduced costs and subsequently realize substantial profits by marketing them in prominent urban centers and global markets. The activities suggest that raiding has evolved into a means of sustenance for those possessing firearms, as well as a method for the politically influential to amass rapid wealth. Cheserek presents the bandit economy as a systematically organized illegal economic enterprise, characterized by its deliberate intent and strategic marketing within the Horn of Africa. This phenomenon is not only characteristic of the Lokinyatala village but also mirrors the situation observed in North West Cameroon and Northern Nigeria.

2.3 Challenges and Opportunities of Track One Diplomacy in managing bandit economy

The fundamental objectives of official diplomacy revolve around the prevention of war and the mitigation of adverse situations, including conflicts or disputes, which represent the conventional applications of diplomatic engagement. As noted by Wolf et al. (2015a), the bandit economy continues to represent a significant and widespread global security

challenge in contemporary society. In the United States, for instance, the bandit economy persists without interruption in Texas and Oklahoma, the leading states in cattle production (Wolf et al., 2015). The circumstances in the United Kingdom are similarly aligned. In 2019, for instance, livestock valued at three million euros was pilfered from farms in the UK (Hederson, 2020). Furthermore, Henderson (2020) posited that the significant increase in large-scale sheep thefts over the past two years has resulted in a 19.4% rise in value since 2017, rendering rustling the most financially detrimental crime for the UK farming sector. As noted by Azar (1990), the rise in sheep rustling incidents in the UK has elevated the crime from a localized concern to a sophisticated operation valued in the millions, as indicated by recent data. Despite the widespread existence of a bandit economy in the West, the issue is notably more acute in Africa, primarily attributed to the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons (Omondi & Alusala, 2018).

The International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT) posits that the bandit economy has its historical foundations in cultural and socio-economic influences. Recently, this practice has evolved into a significant criminal enterprise, carrying substantial security ramifications and both direct and indirect consequences for the involved parties (ISSAT, 2017). The bandit economy has engendered a multitude of adverse consequences, encompassing the loss of human lives, the displacement of populations, and the destruction of property (Osamba, 2000). The ramifications of livestock theft on marginalized communities are profound, stripping individuals of their means of sustenance and exacerbating poverty by hindering progress. The phenomenon of a bandit economy in Africa presents a complex cross-border and transnational challenge that

significantly impacts regional security within the continent. In Nigeria, the prevalence of crime constitutes a significant security concern, particularly in the Northern region. The bandit economy in Nigeria has transformed into a militarized form of criminal enterprise, driven by the widespread availability of small arms and light weapons (ISSAT, 2017).

Moreover, the government's approach to the bandit economy has been characterized by a sluggish and predominantly reactive stance. One initiative encompassed the Nigerian Police Force, which established the Task Force on Cattle Rustling and Associated Crime. The task force undertook the responsibilities of surveillance and the collection of intelligence concerning anti-rustling activities and associated criminal offenses. The purpose was also to examine and potentially initiate legal action regarding reported instances of such offenses. Nevertheless, the task force has exhibited a notable lack of activity since its inception (Olaniyan et al., 2016)

In 2019, a militia from Chad perpetrated the tragic killing of seven individuals and absconded with approximately 500 cattle in the West Darfur region of neighboring Sudan. In a span of one month, over 50 individuals lost their lives, and a staggering 10,850 livestock, including cattle, sheep, and goats, were taken during merely three distinct confrontations between the Misseriya of Sudan and the Dinka of South Sudan (Gumba, 2018). The Karamoja region, encompassing parts of Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Sudan, has been embroiled in a tumultuous bandit economy for many years, thereby traversing national borders (Gumba, 2018). South Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda remain significant on the roster of African nations grappling with this issue (ISSAT, 2017). Moreover, the East Africa region currently lacks a legal framework to

address the crisis at hand. The measures implemented by East African nations in response to cattle rustling have, to date, proven to be largely ineffective. The inability of security and justice systems to evolve in response to emerging threats has resulted in the establishment of new organized crime cartels (Omondi, 2020).

The nations within the region predominantly reacted through two principal approaches: the application of largely indiscriminate force and the promotion of incentivized disarmament initiatives. Nonetheless, neither of these methodologies yielded significant success. The pervasive nature of violence has exacerbated community animosity towards state security forces, whereas the transactional exchange of livestock for firearms and ammunition has conversely led to an increase in civilian armament. (Gumbo et al., 2019) In Uganda, for instance, authorities successfully retrieved 400 head of cattle that had been pilfered by the Turkana rustlers from Kenya. In 2019, the Turkana engaged in heightened raids, resulting in the loss of several lives and the theft of thousands of cattle heads. (Omondi, 2020). In Kibish, located in Northern Turkana, Kenya, which shares borders with Uganda, Ethiopia, and South Sudan, forming the "Ilemi triangle," communities engage in conflict with one another, often without any intervention from the respective governments. This region is marked by a significant flow of small arms, predominantly crossing through the border between Uganda and South Sudan. (NTV Kenya, 2019).

In Kenya, the bandit economy persists as a critical security challenge and serves as the primary catalyst for insecurity in North Rift Kenya (Bunei 2017). The proliferation of bandit economies has led to an increase in fatalities among both cattle rustlers and

security personnel. The bandit economy has transcended its origins as a cultural practice among pastoralists in Northern Kenya, evolving into a multi-billion dollar commercial enterprise orchestrated by unscrupulous businessmen. These individuals collaborate with government officials, politicians, and community leaders, equipping raiders to execute lethal assaults. (Gumbo et al., 2019). The emergence of a bandit economy has led to the displacement of individuals, the exacerbation of poverty, and significant interruptions in the education of children. In regions such as Baragoi and Samburu, where the tragic loss of forty-two security officers occurred in 2012, the local populace continues to engage in violent conflicts driven by the dynamics of a bandit economy. (NTV Kenya, 2019). Notwithstanding the presence of security agencies in the region, the bandit economy persists without restraint. In light of this context, this study will assess the challenges and opportunities presented by track-one diplomacy in addressing the bandit economy.

The primary functions and responsibilities of each state include, among other considerations, the safeguarding of life (security) and the protection of the property of its citizens. This reflects the natural liberty that humanity once experienced in the state of nature, as articulated by Rousseau, which is a direct result of the social contract that individuals entered into with the state (government, community, leviathan, sovereign) (Appadorai, 2004; Dunmoye, 2014; Unobe, 2014). This aligns with the mechanical conception of the state, often referred to as the mechanical theory of the state. A limited number of states have managed to adhere to the stipulations of the social contract, whereas numerous others have not. Consequently, many citizens have repeatedly suffered the loss of their lives and properties throughout history and continue to do so today.

In those states diligently striving to uphold the principles of the social contract between humanity and governance, policies and political mechanisms are profoundly oriented towards safeguarding the lives and properties of the entire populace. The rationale lies in the fact that any policy, in both its formulation and execution, that undermines the safeguarding of the lives and properties of citizens fundamentally challenges the social contract, thereby posing a threat to the very existence of the state. The mechanical conception of the state, devoid of the social contract, or any alterations to the social contract, inherently poses a latent challenge to the very existence of the state. The bandit economy has posed significant challenges to governance, economic stability, national security, and social cohesion in numerous nations both historically and in contemporary contexts. The bandit economy, regarded as a significant threat to the political and socio-economic equilibrium of numerous nations, has persistently demanded the attention of policymakers worldwide, both historically and in contemporary discourse.

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The escalating intensity of the bandit economy can be largely attributed to the growing proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria, as many civilians now have access to sophisticated weaponry (Egbuta, 2018). General Abdulsalam Abubakar, the former military head of state, recently asserted that approximately 6 million arms and ammunition are circulating throughout the country. The origins of these armaments encompass military stockpiles appropriated or captured by insurgents in Libya and the Sahelian States, including Mali, as well as weaponry transported abroad through West African ports, in addition to artisanal firearms that present significant challenges for authorities in terms of interception and regulation (Centre for Democracy and

Development, 2022). The presence of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) has facilitated a scenario wherein nonconventional or non-state actors can acquire weaponry, at times exceeding the oversight of state authorities. The accessibility of these weapons to criminals and terrorists at relatively low prices facilitates their use in unlawful activities such as banditry and kidnapping in Northwestern Nigeria. Kenya and Uganda have a protracted history of contending with the insecurity posed by cattle rustling challenges among pastoral communities, a situation exacerbated by the proliferation of illicit and illegal Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Thus, as observed by Mutinda (2016), both nations have implemented a range of strategies, including the Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme (2001-2011) in Uganda and Operation Dumisha Amani (2005) in Kenya, aimed at eliminating illegal arms from the region.

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The geographical attributes of Northwestern Nigeria, coupled with governmental indifference, have facilitated the proliferation of crime and victimization across numerous rural locales and forested regions. Okolie and Lanshie (2018) posited that the Nigerian government's lackadaisical approach to managing its territorial regions has exacerbated insecurity by fostering an environment characterized as a 'ungoverned haven,' which is conducive to criminal activities. The forestlands of Northwest Nigeria are extensive, formidable, perilous, and significantly lacking in adequate law enforcement (Okoli & Ugwu, 2019; Abdulyakeen 2020). Individuals operating within the underbelly of society exploit the criminal prospects afforded by these landscapes (Abdullahi & Ismail, 2021). The porous nature of borders in numerous West African nations has resulted in a rise in

various criminal activities. The interstate boundary presents a significant obstacle that safeguards armed bandits. Jumare & Surma (2015) noted that in Birni Gwari, the border forest connecting Kaduna State, Katsina State, and Zamfara State functioned as both an escape route and a conduit for the migration of bandits into the local government area whenever they chose to do so. Moreover, in Nigeria, the prevailing challenge of general insecurity has been exacerbated by conflicts that are largely avoidable and have emerged as a frequent concern in recent times. This situation has grown increasingly concerning, particularly as the underprivileged sectors of the Nigerian population struggle more and more to stave off starvation. Resources that might have been allocated to modernizing the agricultural sector, developing industries, and constructing infrastructure to generate employment have instead been expended on the budget for combating insecurity and rehabilitating displaced and injured citizens.

It is reasonable to assert that the prevailing climate of widespread insecurity is exacerbated by poverty, rendering the issue of national security increasingly intricate for the government and necessitating significant allocations within the national budget towards security measures (Achumba, Ighomereho & Akpor-Robaro, 2019). Every region has been afflicted by the brutal reality of conflict, although the frequency and severity of such occurrences have varied throughout the nation. The present circumstances are exacerbated by factors such as globalization, natural calamities, the spread of weaponry and light arms, corruption, and a disregard for executive authority, among others. The actions of bandits have a direct impact on the seven states of north-western Nigeria:

Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara, and are rapidly extending to regions in the north-central area, notably Niger State. Recent findings suggest a growing connection between bandits and terrorists in Nigeria's northwest, characterized by shared recruitment strategies and the collaborative use of logistics and weaponry. This relationship is further facilitated by the region's geographical advantages for executing attacks and a comparable understanding of the political economy surrounding 'kidnap for ransom,' which serves to finance their illicit activities. Estimates suggest that the population of bandits is approximately 50,000, distributed among numerous gangs that vary in size from 10 fighters to more than a thousand.

In light of ongoing security issues, West Pokot continues to be one of the rare regions in Kenya that experiences intermittent volatility and poses risks for individuals who are not of the Pokot community. This has conveyed unclear messages to the community, suggesting that they ought to prioritize their own security measures. This has reinforced their conviction that the government has failed to address this fundamental necessity (Kiflemarian, 2002). The longstanding neglect of security has resulted in the Kenya-Uganda border remaining porous, thereby exemplifying the prevalence of sporadic bandit activities in the region. Furthermore, this particular scenario has been sustained for an extended period due to the arrival of small and light weaponry, which the Pokot have consistently employed for illicit activities (Magaga and Ogalo, 2012). The Pokot held the belief that the Moi administration (1979-2002) would provide them with relief. This was based on the premise that they were not merely his unwavering political allies, but were integral members of the Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana, and Samburu (KAMATUSA) ruling elite. Nevertheless, an increasing unease began to surface among their ranks, indicating

that they were not reaping comparable benefits to the other ethnic groups within the KAMATUSA conglomeration (Magaga and Ogalo 2012). From the perspective of the Pokot, it appears that the Tugen and Keiyo derived greater advantages from this regime. Their discontent stemmed not from the regime's inability to deliver infrastructural advancements, but rather from its failure to restore their land, which had been appropriated by white settlers in Trans-Nzoia and subsequently acquired by individuals outside the Pokot community.

The Karamoja Amendment Act of 1964 underwent amendments through Cap 314 Act 13 of 1970 (Section 241) and was later reiterated by the Special Regions Act (Cap 306) as documented in the Revised Laws of Uganda (Republic of Uganda, 2006). Moreover, the Firearms Ordinance of 1965, which served to limit gun ownership, was subsequently supplanted by the Firearms Act of 1970. This legislation established it as a criminal act for any individual to hold a firearm without the requisite license. According to the provisions of this Act, any individual found in violation was subject to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 10 years (Security Report Republic of Uganda, 2006). The stringent enforcement of Amin's decrees rendered the Karamojong vulnerable, thereby subjecting them to deadly assaults from the Pokot, who, at that juncture, were re-equipping themselves with firearms sourced from Ethiopia and Sudan (Kamenju, 2003). Although small arms laws were present in Kenya, their enforcement lacked the rigor demonstrated by the Ugandan government in relation to the Karamojong. In an effort to safeguard themselves against their principal adversaries, the Pokots, the Karamojong engaged in the creation of their own firearms, referred to as ngamatidai

(Mkutu, 2003 and Markakis, 2004). The procurement of substantial or unprecedented volumes of weaponry among pastoral civilians was observed in 1979. This occurred subsequent to the effective ousting of Amin from authority by the Tanzanian military (Mamdani, 1996). The advanced firearms, primarily G3 automatic rifles and AK-47s, were stationed in the garrison of Moroto, which Amin had previously deployed against the Karamojong. In April 1979, as Kampala succumbed to the advances of Tanzanian forces, the inadequately compensated soldiers of Amin deserted their barracks, retreating to the surrounding villages. The Karamojong, particularly the Matheniko and Tepeth groups, launched an assault on the barracks, seizing all the accessible weaponry for their own use. The Jie conducted raids on the lesser armory located in Kotido (The East African Standard, Editorial team 27th May 1979). This new reality has significantly deteriorated the security landscape along the Kenya – Uganda border. From the very beginning, a significant portion of the pastoral communities among the Pokot and Karamojong were equipped with advanced firearms.

The Karamojong, having been deprived for more than 18 years of the means to wield firearms, found themselves presented with an opportunity to exact retribution upon their neighbors. According to Mkutu (2003), this situation conferred a distinct advantage to the Karamojong in relation to their neighbors, as the Pokot had been deprived of nearly all their cattle within a mere 137 months. In a similar vein, an elder recounted that in 1980, a prolonged conflict ensued between the Karamojong and the formidable Pokot in Churchor, adjacent to the Kanyangareng river. The central issue at hand was the aspiration of each faction to exert authority over the river and its adjacent pastureland in

the wake of the persistent drought affecting Kenya and Uganda. The Karamojong were defeated in this conflict by the Pokot, who subsequently obtained substantial quantities of G3 and AK-47 rifles from the vanquished (Mkutu, 2001).

2.4 Summary of Research gaps

The following research gaps emerged from the reviewed literature in examining the role of Track one Diplomacy in managing the bandit economy along the Kenya–Uganda border: First, although there is some existing awareness of Track one diplomatic tactics used in this region, little has been done to review the efficiency and flexibility of Track one efforts in combating the problems caused by the bandit economy. The current literature features limited information on the various strategies and particular forms of diplomacy that may have been used in this regard or might be used in the future, which makes it impossible to determine the best practices for the same.

Secondly, the study examined the nature and intensity of the bandit economy in the Kenya-Uganda border region, and the literature does not offer a comprehensive investigation on the topic. Moreover, few studies that identify the economic structures, participants, and socio-political systems supporting this Illegal economy have not been conducted along the border. It also highlights the lack of such understanding when practice and social interventions are being developed.

Furthermore, there is not enough research on the prospects and hurdles of using Track One Diplomacy to address the driving forces behind the bandit economy. Although some

research mentions the challenges of diplomacy and lack of coordination, more works do not emphasize the existing opportunities that could be capitalized on to improve diplomatic processes. This is why there was a need to conduct an assessment of both the challenges and opportunities that existed within this diplomatic context.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was underpinned by two key theories: the power theory and the illegal enterprise theory. Power theory helps to understand how actors possess power and enforce it primarily in interstate relations. Applying the illegal enterprise theory allowed the researcher to identify the aspects of the bandit economy, such as the organization and funding of illicit operations. In an integrated manner, these theories provided a framework for looking at the involvement of Track One Diplomacy in dealing with the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border.

2.4.1 Power theory

This study employed the principles of soft power theory, which is a component of the broader power theory framework. Consequently, Weber (1947) articulated power as the likelihood of an individual within a social dynamic to assert their own will in the face of opposition. Dahl (1957) suggested referring to the entities involved in the dynamics of power as actors. The designation of actor encompasses a broad spectrum, potentially signifying individuals, collectives, roles, offices, governments, nation-states, or other forms of human assemblages. Arendt (1970) articulated that power should not be viewed as an individual possession; instead, she contended that it is a collective attribute,

persisting only as long as the group maintains its cohesion. Morgenthau (1954) notes that international politics, akin to all forms of politics, constitutes a contest for power, and regardless of the ultimate objectives of international relations, the pursuit of power remains the immediate goal. All states endeavor to enhance their power; international politics can be understood and examined as a contest among autonomous entities striving for supremacy over one another. The variation among states lies less in their objectives and more in their respective capacities to attain goals that are predominantly common. Waltz posits that every state functions as an independent, self-governing, and formally equivalent political entity that must ultimately rely on its own resources to achieve its objectives. In chaotic environments, each unit's motivations are to ensure its own survival, as reliance on others is fundamentally unreliable (Waltz, 1979).

Waltz notes that the dynamics of power among states are evident whenever “two or more states coexist” within an anarchic framework, lacking a higher authority to assist those in decline or to restrict any state from employing the means it deems necessary to achieve its objectives (Waltz, 1979). A state must consistently regard its comparative strength in the pursuit of political authority. The influence of others, particularly when it is substantial, consistently poses a danger rather than offering a remedy. States that lack strength may find themselves compelled to make educated guesses, placing their hopes on an early alignment with the eventual victor to secure their survival and safeguard certain essential interests (Donnelly, 2000). The assertion posits that when two powers confront one another, as exemplified by Kenya and Uganda, each represents the singular

genuine threat to the security of the other; thus, enmity is inevitable unless the bandit economy is effectively managed. Each entity, regardless of its preferences or inclinations, must engage in a careful equilibrium of power in relation to the others. John Herz posits that the nature of international anarchy guarantees the prominence of power struggles, even in the absence of overtly aggressive elements or comparable influences (Herz, 1976).

This research concentrated on the efficacy of political power in tackling the bandit economy. Political power encompasses the capacity of individuals to exert influence over others through both direct and indirect mechanisms. Conversely, some academics emphasize that numerous significant international results cannot be sufficiently elucidated through the lens of power alone, and are more effectively comprehended through the frameworks of democracy, liberal principles, and economic interdependence (Moravcsik, 1997). However, the inquiry at hand is whether democracy can serve as a comprehensive solution for a bandit economy. This investigation sought to ascertain this information. Although it holds significance, power theory fails to consider whether the state permits the existence of illegal enterprises within a bandit economy. Consequently, the rationale behind the unlawful components will be examined in the following sections.

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2.4.2 The Illegal Enterprise Theory

The Illegal Enterprise Theory is a widely recognized framework in the study of transnational organized crime, offering a compelling explanation for why individuals and groups engage in structured illicit economic activities. Initially introduced by Donald Cressey (1969), the theory was later advanced by leading proponents Dwight C. Smith Jr.

and Joseph L. Albini. Cressey argued that organized crime is rooted in rational decision-making, where individuals perceive illegal business as a viable economic opportunity, particularly in contexts of limited state control. Smith (1975) expanded on this by framing organized crime as an enterprise that functions similarly to legal businesses—identifying profit, risk management, and market opportunity as the driving forces behind criminal behavior. Albini (1971) further enriched the theory by emphasizing that these enterprises are often decentralized and opportunistic, consisting of fluid networks rather than rigid hierarchies, formed around mutual benefit and transactional efficiency.

Contemporary scholars such as Knepper (2022) and Aziani, Berlusconi, and Giommoni (2021) reinforce the notion that criminal actors involved in illicit economies are motivated by financial gain and operate using principles of supply and demand. They argue that the illegal enterprise mirrors legal market behavior, particularly in areas like smuggling, extortion, or meat trafficking, where actors organize logistics, labor, and distribution to maximize revenue. For example, along the Kenya–Uganda border, bandit groups engage in systematic livestock theft and illicit trade that resemble the planning and execution of formal business operations. Despite the risks posed by law enforcement or border regulations, these actors make calculated decisions to continue these activities, weighing the potential profits against legal consequences (Knepper, 2022; Aziani *et al.,* 2021).

The theory's key strength lies in its economic framing of organized crime, which allows for meaningful comparisons between illegal and legal enterprises (Smith, 1975). It provides a rationalist lens that enables scholars and policymakers to analyze criminal

markets not merely as chaotic violence but as organized, strategic responses to economic opportunities. It is particularly effective in explaining the adaptability and resilience of criminal networks in unstable or under-governed regions (Albini, 1971). However, the theory has significant limitations. It often downplays the centrality of violence, intimidation, and coercion, which are essential components of many organized crime groups (Venkatesh, 2006). Additionally, by focusing primarily on economic incentives, the theory may overlook deeper cultural, historical, and political dimensions of criminality, such as marginalization, ethnic tensions, or the role of state complicity (Gambetta, 1993). It also under-theorizes the impact of corruption and elite patronage, which frequently sustain illegal networks across national borders.

Despite these limitations, the Illegal Enterprise Theory is highly relevant to this study, which investigates the bandit economy along the Kenya–Uganda border. The region has witnessed sustained cattle rustling, illicit arms trade, and cross-border smuggling—activities that are not random but exhibit organizational coherence and economic rationality (Osamba, 2000). The theory enables a deeper understanding of how such bandit networks function as informal enterprises that exploit border fluidity, weak governance, and regional market demand. By interpreting these activities as structured economic systems rather than mere criminal acts, the theory informs how Track One Diplomacy must respond—not only with security enforcement but also through strategies that address the economic structures and incentives that perpetuate these networks. In doing so, the theory aligns with this study's objective to explore how state-level diplomatic interventions can engage with and counter the rational, profit-driven foundations of the bandit economy along the Kenya–Uganda frontier.

2.5 Conceptual Model

Conceptual model demonstrates a relationship between independent variable and dependent variable. In this study the independent variable is Track one Diplomacy whereas the dependent variable is bandit economy along challenges and opportunities arising from the employment of Track-one Diplomacy in combating bandit economy along Lokinyatala, Kenya-Uganda border. This is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

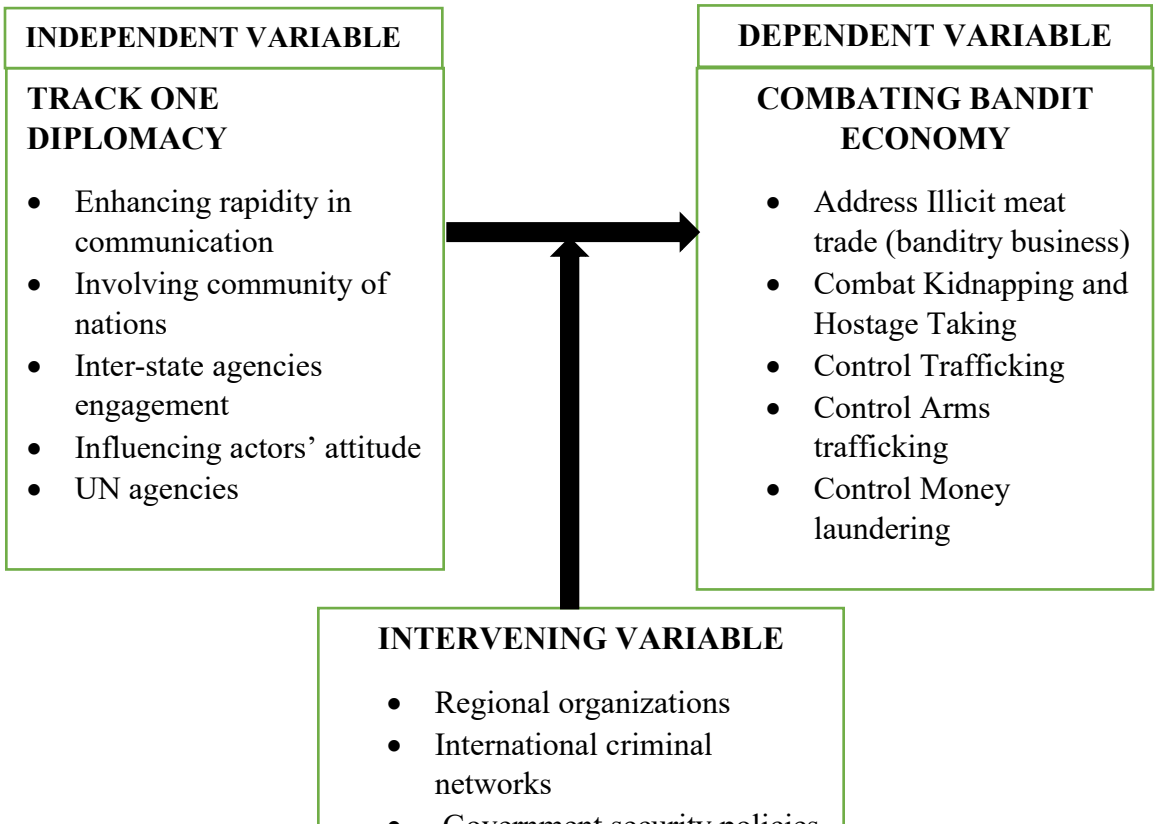

Figure 2.1.: Conceptual Model Showing the Relationship between Independent variable and Dependent variable

Source: Researcher, 2023

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter endeavored to show the gaps that the study filled. A thematic review of the literature was done to answer the specific objectives from the global, African continental, and transnational points of view. The next chapter provides the research methodology that the study adopted.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an illustration on research design, study area, sampling technique and size, data collection methods, data analysis, ethical consideration and limitations of the study. It ends with a chapter summary.

3.1 Research Design

A research design constitutes the systematic framework guiding the identification of research participants and the methodology employed for gathering information from them. The researcher outlines the intended interactions with the participants, aiming to derive conclusions pertinent to the research question (Welman et al., 2005). The research was carried out employing a descriptive survey research design. According to Orodho (2003), descriptive research is characterized as a method for gathering information through interviews or the distribution of questionnaires to a sample population, aimed at understanding their attitudes, opinions, and habits regarding a range of educational or social issues.

3.2 Study Area

Lokitanyala, Kenya, is a settlement located in West Pokot County, straddling the international border with Lokitanyala, Uganda. This settlement lies approximately 40 kilometers southwest of Lorengippi in neighboring Turkana County, and is strategically positioned along one of the most porous and historically insecure border points between Kenya and Uganda. The area has, over the years, emerged as a hotspot for transboundary banditry, livestock rustling, and illicit trade, making it a significant node in the broader

regional bandit economy. The choice of Lokitanyala as the study area is scientifically justified by the concentration and intensity of organized criminal activities in this locality, which surpass those observed in most other settlements along the border. Osamba (2000) and Mkutu (2008) both identify West Pokot and adjacent cross-border settlements as central to the evolution of cattle warlordism and smuggling networks in the region.

West Pokot County, where Lokitanyala is situated, spans an area of approximately 9,169.4 square kilometers and has a population of 621,241 as per the 2019 census. It borders Uganda to the west and includes a series of marginalized and under-policed borderlands that have historically lacked adequate state presence. The selection of Lokitanyala is further informed by its unique geographical position, which facilitates both legal and illegal cross-border movement, and by local reports indicating repeated instances of armed raids, informal livestock markets, and coordinated smuggling operations. These patterns make Lokitanyala not only a representative site of the wider bandit economy but also a critical area for examining the relevance and impact of Track One Diplomacy in countering such transnational security threats. Field observations, security reports, and oral testimonies consistently identify Lokitanyala as an epicenter of bandit economy activities, making it the most appropriate and empirically grounded choice for this study.

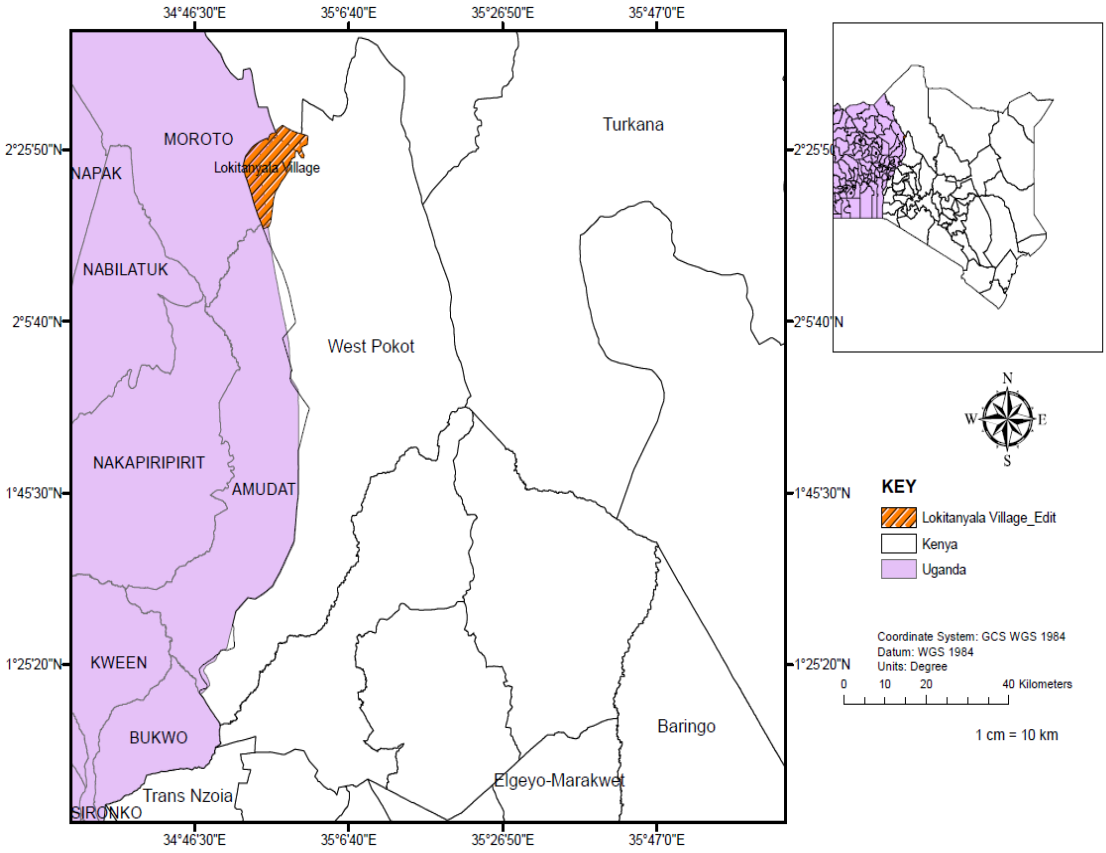

Figure 3.1: Map of Lokitanyala Border of West Pokot County, Kenya and Moroto District, Uganda

Source: GIS Expert, 2024

Lokitanyala, Kenya serves as an important border crossing between Kenya and Uganda. The suboptimal condition of the roadways on the Ugandan side necessitates that vehicles frequently traverse into Kenya before re-entering Uganda when journeying between different towns within Uganda. The economy of West Pokot County is fundamentally propelled by agricultural practices and the rearing of livestock. The primary crops

cultivated in the region encompass maize, a fundamental staple predominantly found in West Pokot Sub-County, alongside finger millet, coffee, beans, onions, sweet potatoes, green grams, peas, mangoes, oranges, bananas, potatoes, and pyrethrum. The latter two are predominantly cultivated in the South Pokot sub-county.

In Kenya, the prevalence of banditry and cattle rustling, often referred to as raids, has emerged as a standard practice for the predatory exploitation of resources (Mkutu, 2006). This phenomenon is increasingly prevalent in northwest Kenya and manifests in various ways. Historically, banditry within pastoral communities was regarded as a culturally sanctioned practice, overseen and endorsed by the elders. In light of recent discussions, there exists considerable concern regarding the bandit problem. The Lokitanyala border represents a region along the Kenya-Uganda frontier that has been historically marked by insecurity, particularly stemming from challenges related to cattle rustling among pastoral communities, exacerbated by the proliferation of illegal small arms and light weapons. As observed by Mutinda (2016), the two nations have implemented a range of strategies, including the Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme (2001-2011) in Uganda and Operation Dumisha Amani (2005) in Kenya, aimed at eliminating illegal arms from the region.

The extent of marginalization in West Pokot has resulted in roads being in a lamentable condition, while educational institutions and health facilities have either suffered vandalism or have been shuttered entirely. Chiefs' camps are absent, and the distance between police stations or posts is considerable. The longstanding oversight in security has resulted in the Kenya-Uganda border maintaining a porous nature, thereby

exemplifying the prevalence of intermittent bandit activities in the region. Furthermore, this particular scenario has been sustained by the arrival of small and lightweight weaponry, which the Pokot have historically employed for illicit activities (Magaga & Ogalo, 2012).

As a result, the two communities engaged in a vigorous contest over the limited resources in the regions surrounding Lokitanyala and Kanyangareng since the inception of the boundary delineation. In a similar vein, research conducted by Barber (1968) and Onyango (2010) substantiated that the two tribes, namely the Pokot and Karamojong, grounded their assertions of entitlement to the contested territory on distinct criteria. For the Karamojong, the region has historically belonged to them, whereas the Pokot base their claims on a narrative of past ownership rather than current realities. The years following the establishment of the boundary witnessed each group asserting claims not only over their designated territories but also extending their reach to areas that previously did not belong to them, as a strategy to mitigate the challenges posed by resource scarcity.

In the sub-counties of Pokot Central and North, zebu cattle have traditionally been raised for meat production, whereas in West Pokot and Pokot South sub-counties, there is a growing trend towards the rearing of dairy breeds, notably Ayrshire and Friesian, for milk production.

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3.3 Study Population

A study population is described as a collective collection of persons, institutions, or objects sharing common features that are of interest to a researcher (Rafeedal, 2020).

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define a research population as the whole set of persons, events, or objects that have common observable traits. Benerjee and Chaudhury (2010) assert that research populations can be delineated by geographic location, age, and sex, along with further definitions of traits and variables including occupation, religion, and ethnic group. The research population comprised 10,000 individuals. The study population comprised households along the Lokitanyala border of Kenya and Uganda, along with key informants selected from various institutions, including officials from the Ministries of Interior and Coordination (Kenya and Uganda), Deputy County/Sub-County Commissioners, Chiefs/Sub-Chiefs, and other stakeholders such as political leaders, religious leaders, state security officers, NCIC officials, youth/warlords, and civil society representatives, totaling 10,000 individuals.

3.4 Sampling techniques and Sample Size Determination

A sample constitutes a diminutive segment that epitomizes a designated population of interest. Sampling procedures denote the methodology employed to select a specific number of respondents, thereby creating a representation of a defined population. The function of sampling is to enable the researcher to examine specific individuals to formulate generalizations and conclusions applicable to the broader population. The selection of the sample is deemed suitable, as evidenced by Cresswell (2007), who asserts that in qualitative research, the researcher intentionally chooses individuals and locations that can yield the requisite information. The sample size was meticulously derived from a diverse array of households, alongside key informants chosen from a range of institutions.

3.4.1 Sampling of Household Heads

According to the Uganda National Population and Housing Census 2014 of 2014 the population of Lokitanyala in Moroto District of Uganda stood at 422,441(Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017). On the other, end the population of West Pokot County stands at 621,241 (KNBS, 2019). In this regard, the total population for the two sub-regions of Kenya and Uganda stands at 1,043,682. Since the population for the regions of Kenya and Uganda is above 10,000, the researcher applied Fisher's formula to determine the sample size for the study. Therefore, the desired sample population was determined using Fisher's formula for sample size determination (cited in Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999:43). The formula is stated thus:

$$n=\frac{z^2pq}{d^2}$$

Where n=desired sample size (the target population is greater than 10,000).

z=the standard normal deviate at the confidence level of 95% is 1.96.

p=the proportion of the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured is set at 50%

q=1-p (probability of non-success)

d=level of statistical significance set at 0.05

$$n=\frac{(1.96)^2*0.5*(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

n=384

Stratified proportionate sampling used to determine the number of households sampled in Lokitanyala of Moroto District Uganda and Lokitanyala, West Pokot County, Kenya. Table 3.1 indicates that number of household heads sampled in the two areas.

Table 3. 1: Stratified Sampling for Household Heads

Population	Total Population	Sample Size
Lokitanyala, Moroto Uganda	422,441	155
Lokitanyala, West Pokot Kenya	621,241	229
Total	**1,043,682**	**384**

Source: Researcher, 2023

3.4.2 Sampling for Key Informants and Focus Group Discussions

In this study, the sample population comprised of key informants at different levels of Track one Diplomacy and other stakeholders who provided information on peace in their locality. At the same time there were questionnaires and FGDs administered. Ranter, (2017) define a sample as a subject of a specific population. It is also referred to as a representative sample, as noted in Pratt *et al.,* (2005). The process of sampling involves the selection of a group of individuals or elements from a target population. The group sample can then stand for the whole population.

The sample size was drawn from various key informants selected from various institutions as follows: including: Officials from Ministry of Interior and coordination; Deputy County/Sub-County Commissioners, Chiefs/Sub-Chiefs, and other stakeholders such Political leaders, religious leaders, state Security Officers, NCIC officials, Youth/ warriors, and officials from Civil societies as well as custom officials from Uganda. The target population is summarized in Table 3.2.

Table 3. 2: Categories of target population in the borderline of Lokinyatala, Kenya

Population	Sample size	Sampling Technique	Data collection Instrument
Deputy County/Sub- County Commissioners	2	Purposive	Interview
NCIC officials,	2	Purposive	Interview
Chiefs/Sub- Chiefs	4	Purposive	Interview
Political leaders (Kenya and Uganda)	8	Purposive	Interview
Religious leaders	5	Purposive	Interview
State Security Officers	10	Convenience	Interview
Youth/ warriors-former bandits	10	Snow-balling	Interview
Council of Elders	21	Purposive	FGD

Source: Researcher, 2024

Table 3. 3: Categories of Target Population in The Borderline of Lokinyatala, Uganda

Population	**Sample size**	**Sampling Technique**	**Data collection Instrument**
Local government officers	5	Purposive	Interview
Security officers	5	Purposive	Interview
Traders and business owners	10*2= 20	Purposive	FGD
Former bandit gang members	5	Snow-balling	Interview
Political leaders	5	Purposive	Interview
Religious leaders	5	Purposive	Interview
NGO personnel	5	Convenience	Interview
Victims of banditry	5	Snow-balling	Interview
Custom officials	5	Purposive	Interview

Source: Researcher, 2024

The fundamental concern regarding sample size pertains to the presence of errors or biases; when the sample size is insufficient, determining what constitutes an adequate size can often be perplexing. Taherdoost (2016) posits that the critical factor in determining sample size is not merely the proportion of the research population that is included, but rather the absolute size of the selected sample in relation to the intricacies of the population, the objectives of the researcher, and the types of statistical methods employed in data analysis. A substantial sample size mitigates bias; however, while larger sample sizes diminish sampling error, this reduction occurs at a diminishing rate. Consequently, achieving an appropriate equilibrium between the samples and the population is of paramount significance.

3.6 Data Collection Techniques

The research utilized a combination of primary and secondary data sources. To acquire the necessary data for the study, the subsequent data collection methods were employed. Patten (2001) posits that data collection methods serve as the mechanisms through which researchers acquire the necessary information from respondents. This research employed a combination of questionnaire surveys and interviews. Questionnaire surveys require less time and afford respondents the liberty to respond in a manner that aligns with their personal comfort. The research additionally employed interviews as a method for data collection, as they provide the opportunity to delve deeper for comprehensive insights (Vaus, 2001).

3.6.1. Questionnaire Survey

The collection of data was achieved by engaging respondents through the utilization of self-administered questionnaires. As noted by Guppy and Gray (2008), the success of surveys is contingent upon meticulously implemented data collection methods. The authors emphasized that when conducting a questionnaire survey, it is imperative for the researcher to guarantee that both self-administered and guided questionnaires are comprehensible to the respondent and concise in nature. Nardi (2006) posits that questionnaires ought to be both succinct and thorough. Pilot questionnaires were administered to ascertain the clarity and conciseness of the questions, identify any design shortcomings, and evaluate whether they were structured in a manner that aligns with the research questions (Remenyi et al, 1998). The research utilized a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires.

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3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The qualitative approach employed involves a focus group discussion. A focus group discussion serves as a method for gathering data that engages with the complexities of human social interaction regarding a specific topic. Guided by the moderator (researcher) in a relaxed environment, the focus group discussion enables participants to contemplate the subject matter in relation to their personal experiences and their residency in the area. Two focus group discussions comprising 10 participants each were carried out among the elders along the Lokinyatala border. The informal nature of the interaction facilitated a more profound exploration of the research questions than what could be gleaned from a survey (Folch-Lyon and Trost, 1981). The amalgamation of methodologies served as a

tactical endeavor to enhance accuracy and procure comprehensive elucidations regarding the impact of Track One diplomacy on the mitigation of banditry within the Lokinyatala region, situated along the Kenya-Uganda border. Plate 3.1 presents the researcher Facilitating a focus group discussion in Lokitanyala, Kenya

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Plate 3. 1: Focus Group Discussion at Lokitanyala in West Pokot County, Kenya

Source: Field Data, 2024

3.6.3 Interview Sschedule

A structured interview schedule was employed to facilitate the systematic collection of data from purposefully selected local leaders, including village chiefs, pastoralist men, representatives from cross-border committees, security administrators, and non-government officials, who constituted the key informants. Interviews serve as effective methods for data collection, allowing the research assistant to elucidate a question or concept (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Gillham (2005) and Okoth (2012) align with the observations made by Kombo & Tromp (2006), noting that the efficacy of interviews is derived from the simultaneous presence of both the interviewee and the researcher during the inquiry, which facilitates the clarification of questions. The responses provided by the participants exhibit a higher degree of accuracy when juxtaposed with methods that lack this interactive component. Easter by Smith et al. (2002) assert that while interviews serve as a valuable technique for collecting qualitative data, one must not overlook the intricacies involved in both the collection and analysis of this method. Interviews may be conducted in two distinct manners: structured, wherein the researcher poses a predetermined set of questions essential for addressing the research inquiry, and unstructured, which provides greater flexibility and permits the interviewee's opinions and thoughts to flow more freely (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2002). The investigator conducted interviews with local administrative leaders, encompassing security personnel along the Kenya-Uganda border. Additionally, individuals from local non-governmental organizations active in the region, as well as community elders, were interviewed.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

This section explains the validity and reliability of research instruments. Validity and reliability are key attributes of research. Together, they determine whether the research findings should be accepted. Nobel & Smith (2015) argue that in the broadest context, these terms apply to both qualitative and quantitative research.

3.7.1 Validity

The concept of validity pertains to the degree to which research instruments accurately assess the constructs they are designed to evaluate (Marshall and Gretchen, 1999). The investigator employed the evaluative insights of the supervisors and additional reviewers to substantiate the validity of the instruments. An assessment was conducted to determine the pertinence of each element within the research instruments in relation to the established objectives. The evaluators assessed each item as either pertinent or not pertinent. The determination of validity was conducted through the application of the Content Validity Index (C.V.I). The C.V.I is calculated by taking the number of items deemed relevant by both judges and dividing it by the total number of items present in the questionnaire, as illustrated below. CVI represents the quantity of items assessed as pertinent. Aggregate count of items. The instruments that produced a CVI exceeding 0.7 fall within the established parameters of acceptance. Moreover, the instruments underwent thorough discussion with the supervisor and experts, followed by a pre-test involving a segment of the study sample respondents to ascertain both construct and content validity.

3.7.2 Reliability

To ascertain the reliability of quantitative data, the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for Likert-Type Scales was employed. Cronbach's alpha, as delineated in the realm of statistics, serves as a coefficient of reliability (Marshall and Gretchen, 1999). This is frequently employed as an indicator of the internal consistency or reliability of a psychometric test score for a group of examinees. The instrument underwent a preliminary assessment involving 10 respondents from the broader population, distinct from the sample size, to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's Coefficient of Alpha is defined as follows: n represents the number of questions; the variance of scores pertains to each individual question; and the total variance refers to the overall scores on the entire test, excluding percentages. Furthermore, that is equal to p multiplied by the quantity of one minus p. Let p represent the proportion of the class that responds accurately; this value ranges from 0 to 0.25. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, with a threshold of 0.70 or higher, was deemed acceptable for the instrument following the pilot study. As noted by Sekaran (2003), it is essential for an instrument to achieve a reliability of 0.70 or greater, based on a significant sample, prior to its application. The execution of the test yielded a result of 0.7, which is deemed to be reliable.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The investigator secured a letter of introduction from the Faculty of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, along with a permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher subsequently reached out to the selected respondents in the West-Pokot Sub-counties in

anticipation of the forthcoming survey. A formal letter was composed, requesting their voluntary participation in the research endeavor. Quantitative data was obtained through the use of questionnaires and Document Analysis Guides, whereas Qualitative data was amassed via interview schedules and observation guides. The data from interviews and focus group discussions were meticulously recorded using a tape recorder, complemented by detailed field notes, followed by a thorough transcription of the information gathered. The researcher, aided by four research assistants, conducted random outreach to respondents within the designated sub-counties. The two techniques illuminate meanings and enhance the authenticity and reliability of data. The methodologies presented are substantiated by the findings of MacLean et al. (2004), who contend that they significantly improve the fidelity and precision of information capture.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

The researcher initiated the analysis of data immediately upon the conclusion of data collection and convened analytical discussions with research assistants to articulate preliminary thoughts and provisional concepts regarding the data. This methodology has the potential to uncover aspects that may have been neglected during the interviews, encouraging the researcher to allocate time to explore these elements in future discussions. The examination of data entailed the calculation of specific indices or metrics, as well as an exploration of the patterns or relationships that may exist among the various data groups. The analysis of quantitative data was conducted utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0, which facilitated the generation of descriptive statistics represented through frequencies and percentages.

Sarantakos (2007) posits that SPSS is a widely utilized program that provides robust, efficient, and dependable statistical analysis for quantitative data. The findings were conveyed through charts, graphs, and tables.

The qualitative data gathered from interviews underwent analysis via narrative reports employing thematic techniques. The data underwent transcription and was systematically organized into themes aligned with the research objectives and variables. The themes and categories were subsequently reviewed, classified, tabulated, and recombined to derive insights pertinent to the study's objectives and research inquiries. This methodology allowed the investigator to examine, validate, and extract interpretations pertinent to the study's aims and research inquiries, facilitating broader conclusions.

The data underwent triangulation and was corroborated with additional studies. O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) assert that triangulation serves as a technique for validating data by examining it through various sources in order to identify patterns within the research findings. The triangulation technique serves as a means to mitigate the limitations and inefficiencies inherent in relying solely on a single method, and it is applicable to both quantitative and qualitative validation (Yin, 2008).

3.10 Limitations of the Study

Due to the sensitivity of the issue at hand, it is envisaged that some respondents might not be willing to give information to strangers during the oral interviews. The researcher overcame this, by using two research assistants trusted by the respondents. The study also was hindered by some respondents failing to complete the questionnaires. However, this

problem was overcome by using other data collection instruments like interviews. There was the likelihood that respondents would withhold information on account of confidentiality. This was countered by giving the respondents a written assurance that the data collected would only be used for research purposes. The researcher also assured the respondents that upon request, the respondents would be provided with feedback on the data collected.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues in research pertain to the moral principles and regulations that must govern the research process. The researcher utilized the study proposal approval letter from the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies at MMUST to get a research permit from the National Commission of Science and Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Inter-ethnic disputes and cultural stereotypes are delicate matters affecting the coexistence of many ethnic groups. Anonymity was maintained to reduce the likelihood of potential victimization of those providing information that may challenge the perspectives of others. Furthermore, the agreement of each responder was obtained before to engagement to ensure they did not feel compelled. The researcher articulated the study's goal, as recommended by Creswell (2009), by ensuring participants that their information would be handled privately and utilized solely for academic purposes. All participants were shown due civility and respect.

Chapter 3.12 Summary

This chapter has addressed the following topics: research design, study area, study population, sampling procedures and sample size, and data collecting instruments,

including questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. Furthermore, it clarifies the study's limits and addresses the ethical issues that will be observed during the research process. The subsequent chapter delineates the results and comments about the Nature of the Bandit Economy along the Kenya-Uganda border.

CHAPTER FOUR

NATURE OF BANDIT ECONOMY ALONG KENYA-UGANDA BORDER

This chapter presents findings on the nature of bandit economy along Kenya-Uganda border. The bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border is a pervasive issue that undermines regional stability and economic development. This bandit economy is characterized by activities such as cattle rustling, smuggling, and organized crime, which thrive in the border's remote and poorly governed areas. Understanding the nature of the bandit economy is crucial for formulating effective interventions. It ends with a chapter summary.

4.1 Questionnaire Response Rate

The study was conducted in Lokitanyala Border of Kenya and Uganda through self-administered structured questionnaires. The total sample size for Household heads was 384. Therefore, the researcher administered 384 questionnaires out of which 311 were returned, representing an 80.98% return rate. According to Saldivar, (2012), person-person surveys with a response rate of 80-85% are considered good and sufficiently informative in a study. Therefore, based on this, the questionnaire return rate of 80.98% is sufficiently representative and can be used for generalizations and to deduce findings and conclusions for the current study. Table 4.1 shows the questionnaire return rate.

Table 4. 1 Response Rate

Response Rate	Questionnaires administered	Questionnaires returned
	384	311
	100%	80.98%

Source: Field Data ,2024

4.1 Goods traded across the Kenya-Uganda Border

The study sought to examine the nature of the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. Thus, it examined the types of goods commonly traded across the border. Out of 311 respondents, 167(53.69%) reasoned that livestock, including cattle, camels, goats, and sheep, were widespread trade along the border 23(7.39%) respondents were neutral, and 121(38.9%) stated that such a trade was not expected. Further, 163(52.4%) respondents averred that mean was very common to trade, 21(6.75%) were neutral in their response, and 127(40.8%) stated that it was not common to trade along the border. Additionally, 165(53.1%) respondents stated that food products such as maize, beans, bananas, and groundnuts were commonly traded along the border,17(5.45%) were neutral and 129(41.47%) stated that such a trade was not common. For sugar, sugar products, and small arms,161(51.765%) respondents uniformly reasoned that they were very common goods traded along the border,17(5.45%) were neutral and 133(42.77%) stated that these goods were not commonly traded along the border. The results are illustrated in Figure 4.1.

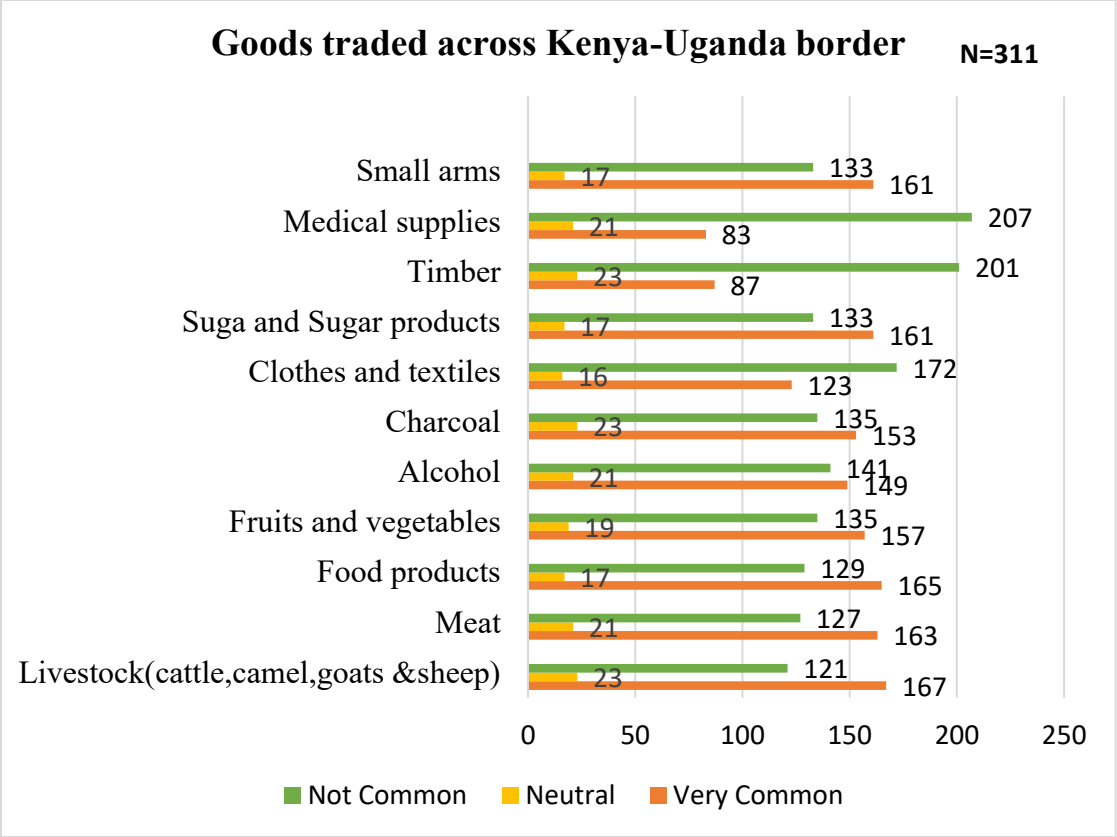

Figure 4. 1 Goods traded across the Kenya-Uganda border

Source: Field Data, 2024

The study examined the nature of the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border, focusing on the types of goods commonly traded. The findings highlight significant categories of goods and their perceived prevalence among the respondents. Livestock, including cattle, camels, goats, and sheep, were identified as very common trade items by 167 respondents (53.69%). The prominence of livestock trade can be attributed to the pastoralist lifestyle predominant in the border regions, where livestock is a key economic asset. The cross-border movement of livestock is facilitated by the nomadic practices and grazing needs of pastoral communities. However, 121 respondents (38.9%) stated that such trade was not common, possibly reflecting regional variations or different economic focuses within the border areas.

Meat trade was also seen as very common by 163 respondents (52.4%). This aligns with the high prevalence of livestock trading, as meat products are a natural extension of livestock commerce. The demand for fresh meat in local markets supports this view. Conversely, 127 respondents (40.8%) did not consider the meat trade common, which indicated limited market infrastructure or differing local dietary practices. Food products such as maize, beans, bananas, and groundnuts were noted as commonly traded by 165 respondents (53.1%). The agricultural productivity of the border regions and the necessity for food security drive this trade. Staples like maize and beans are essential for local diets, and their cross-border trade ensures a steady supply. However, 129 respondents (41.47%) disagreed, possibly due to seasonal variations in crop yields or alternative local food sources.

Sugar, sugar products, and small arms were considered very common by 161 respondents (51.77%). The trade of sugar and its products was due to its high demand and profitability. Small arms trade, though alarming, is a reality in conflict-prone areas where security is a major concern. The substantial number of respondents (133, or 42.77%) who did not see these items as commonly traded reflected regional security differences or varying levels of law enforcement. The neutral responses (ranging from 5.45% to 7.39%) suggest a lack of strong opinion or knowledge about these trades among some respondents, highlighting the need for more targeted awareness and data collection to understand the nuances of cross-border trade comprehensively. The study's findings on the nature of the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border are corroborated by various scholarly works that provide insights into cross-border trade dynamics, especially in regions affected by informal and illicit economies.

Firstly, the prominence of livestock trade, as identified by 53.69% of respondents, is well-documented in the literature. Livestock trading is a central economic activity in many East African border regions due to the pastoralist cultures prevalent in these areas. Little (2001) highlights the importance of livestock markets in East African borderlands, noting that cross-border livestock trade is facilitated by nomadic herding practices and the demand for livestock in regional markets. The disagreement from 38.9% of respondents who stated that livestock trade is not common was attributed to specific local variations or differing economic activities within certain border communities. The trade in meat, perceived as very common by 52.4% of respondents, is a logical extension of the livestock trade. As per Aklilu and Catley (2010), the commercialization of livestock products, including meat, is prevalent in pastoral regions, driven by market demand and the economic value of meat. The significant number of respondents (40.8%) who did not consider meat trade common may reflect inadequate processing and market facilities in some areas, which can limit the scale of meat trade.

Food products like maize, beans, bananas, and groundnuts were reported as commonly traded by 53.1% of respondents. This finding aligns with studies on agricultural trade in East Africa. According to Asfaw, Shiferaw, Simtowe, and Lipper (2012), cross-border trade in staple foods is crucial for food security and economic stability in the region. Agricultural products are essential commodities that support livelihoods and sustain local economies. The 41.47% of respondents who did not find food trade common may indicate regional self-sufficiency in food production or different agricultural practices across the border. The trade of sugar, sugar products, and small arms, highlighted by 51.77% of respondents, reflects both legal and illicit economic activities. Sugar trade is

significant due to its high demand and profitability, as discussed by Ferris and Robbins (2004). They note that sugar is a valuable commodity in East African markets, often involved in both formal and informal trade networks. The mention of small arms trade points to security concerns and conflict dynamics in the region. Schomerus (2010) explores the proliferation of small arms in East Africa, linking it to cross-border smuggling and regional insecurity. The 42.77% of respondents who did not see these goods as commonly traded reflected areas with better law enforcement or different security conditions.

In support of the foregoing findings one of the traders affirmed that:

> In our region, livestock trade has always been a cornerstone of our economy. We deal in cattle, goats, and sheep, The pastoral lifestyle here means livestock is more than just a trade commodity; it's essential for our livelihood. Meat trade naturally follows from livestock trading. Fresh meat is in high demand locally. We've observed how harmonized laws and increased border security have impacted these trades, making transactions smoother but also tightening controls. However, some traders still find it difficult to adjust to the new regulations, which affects the consistency of meat supply to markets.

Further, another business owner argued that:

> Food products like maize and beans are crucial for our local trade. Our border area is agriculturally rich, which supports this trade. However, seasonal variations can sometimes disrupt the supply. Similarly, sugar trade is significant due to its profitability and high demand. We have seen both legal and informal channels for sugar distribution. The harmonization of regulations has helped regulate these trades, but it has also made it harder for informal traders to operate. This dual nature of trade—formal and informal—reflects the complexity of managing cross-border economic activities in our region.

Neutral responses (ranging from 5.45% to 7.39%) suggest a segment of respondents with either limited knowledge or indifference to these trades. This highlights the complexity of

gathering comprehensive data in regions with diverse economic activities and varying levels of awareness among the population. While many scholars support the findings of the study, some present alternative perspectives. For example, Little (2005) argues that informal cross-border trade, while significant, is often underreported due to its clandestine nature. This explained the varying perceptions among respondents about the commonality of different trades. Similarly, Raballand and Mjekiqi (2010) suggest that formal trade data often fails to capture the full extent of informal activities, leading to discrepancies in perceived trade volumes. The researcher, argues that the study's findings on the common goods traded across the Kenya-Uganda border are largely corroborated by scholarly works, which emphasize the importance of livestock, meat, food products, sugar, and small arms in the regional economy. The differing perceptions among respondents reflect the complex and multifaceted nature of cross-border trade, influenced by local economic conditions, security dynamics, and the interplay between formal and informal trade networks.

4.2 Means of transporting goods across the Kenya-Uganda border

The study sought to assess which means of transporting goods across the Kenya-Uganda border was the most common. Out of 311, the study found out that 111(35.69%) affirmed that the use of lorries or long trucks was the commonest means of transport aiding bandit economy 42(13.5%) said that pick-ups were used to transport goods 73(23.47%) said that motorcycles were commonly used 216(6.75%) argued that bicycles were used 41(13.18%) reasoned that animals such as donkeys were used to aid bandit economy across Kenya-Uganda border. Additionally, 23(7.39%) said that people on foot were used to transport goods across the border. The results are illustrated in Figure 4.2

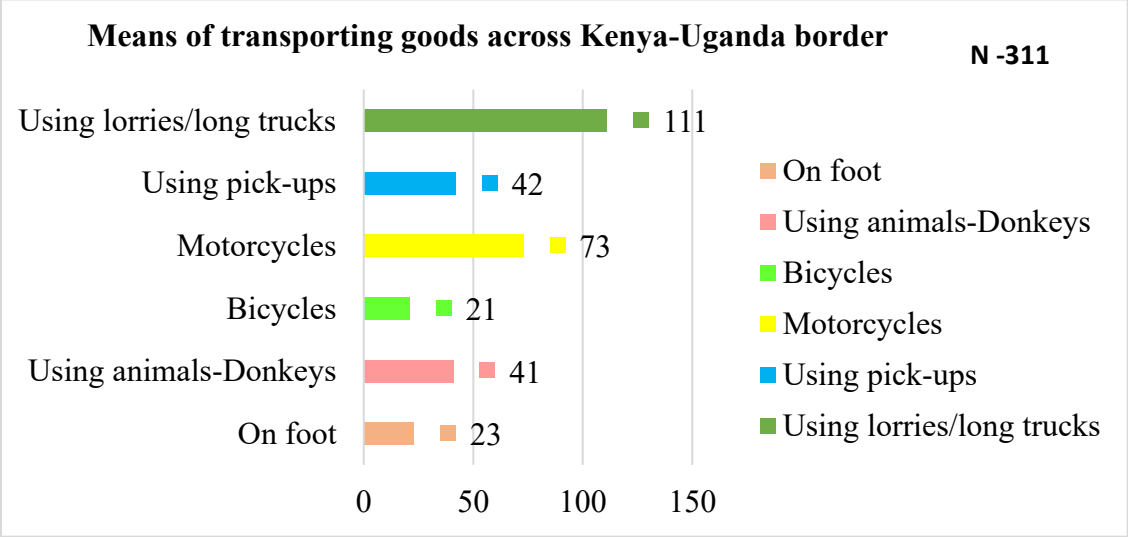

Figure 4. 2 Means of transporting goods across the Kenya-Uganda border

Source: Field Data,2024

The study aimed to determine the most common means of transporting goods across the Kenya-Uganda border, specifically within the context of the bandit economy. The findings revealed diverse transportation methods, with lorries or long trucks being the most prevalent, as affirmed by 111 respondents (35.69%). The use of lorries or long trucks was preferred due to their large capacity, allowing for the transportation of significant quantities of goods in a single trip. This efficiency makes them ideal for sustaining the bandit economy, where quick and bulk movement of goods can be critical. In contrast, 42 respondents (13.5%) indicated that pick-up trucks are commonly used. Pick-up trucks offer a balance between speed and capacity, making them versatile for various terrains and conditions prevalent in the border regions. They can navigate rougher roads better than larger trucks and still carry a considerable load, making them suitable for quicker, smaller-scale transportation needs. Motorcycles were identified by

73 respondents (23.47%) as a common means of transport. Motorcycles are highly valued for their maneuverability and ability to traverse challenging and narrow paths where larger vehicles cannot go. This makes them particularly useful in evading detection and swiftly transporting goods through less monitored routes. Interestingly, 216 respondents (6.75%) mentioned bicycles as a mode of transport. Bicycles, while limited in capacity, offer stealth and the ability to navigate through off-road paths, which may be advantageous for avoiding security checkpoints.

In support of the foregoing, one of the respondents argued that:

> Lorries or long trucks are indispensable for our trade along the Kenya-Uganda border. They're preferred by most of us. The large capacity allows us to transport significant quantities of goods in one trip, which is crucial for sustaining our operations. However, motorcycles are also vital, especially for accessing difficult terrains. They're agile and can navigate narrow paths where trucks can't go. We rely on motorcycles for their ability to evade checkpoints and swiftly move goods. This versatility in transport methods helps us maintain a steady flow of trade despite the challenges (KII with business owner at Lokinyatala border, Kenya-Uganda 23/6/2024).

Additionally, 41 respondents (13.18%) highlighted the use of animals such as donkeys. Animals can traverse difficult terrains and do not require fuel, making them a cost-effective option in regions where motor vehicles struggled to penetrate. Their ability to carry goods over long distances in varied terrains makes them a reliable choice for some. Lastly, 23 respondents (7.39%) noted that goods are transported by people on foot. This method, though labor-intensive and low capacity, allows for the utmost discretion, essential for avoiding detection in highly monitored areas. It also enables access to paths and regions inaccessible to vehicles or even animals.

Overall, the study illustrates a varied and adaptive approach to transportation within the bandit economy, influenced by factors such as capacity, terrain, cost, and the need for discretion. Each method serves a unique purpose in maintaining the flow of goods across the border, reflecting the complexity and resourcefulness inherent in such illicit activities. The findings of the study on the most common means of transporting goods across the Kenya-Uganda border align with and are corroborated by various scholarly works on transportation logistics, border trade, and illicit economies. The preference for lorries or long trucks, pick-ups, motorcycles, bicycles, animals, and people on foot as means of transport reflects a complex interplay of efficiency, terrain adaptability, and the need for discretion in the context of the bandit economy.

Firstly, the predominance of lorries or long trucks, as identified by 35.69% of the respondents, is supported by studies on regional trade and logistics. According to Luvai and Mitullah (2018), the East African region, including the Kenya-Uganda border, relies heavily on road transport for the movement of goods due to the extensive road networks and the capacity of trucks to handle large volumes. This is consistent with the study's findings that trucks are commonly used for their efficiency in bulk transportation, which is crucial for sustaining the bandit economy.

In contrast, pick-up trucks, mentioned by 13.5% of respondents, offer flexibility and speed, as highlighted by Porter (2016), who notes that smaller vehicles are often used in cross-border trade for their ability to navigate rough terrains and quicker transit times. This aligns with the study's observation that pick-up trucks balance capacity and maneuverability, making them suitable for varied border conditions. Motorcycles, cited by 23.47% of respondents, are another critical mode of transport, especially in regions

with poor infrastructure. As Charman and Piper (2012) discuss, motorcycles are highly valued in informal economies for their ability to access remote areas and their lower operational costs. This corroborates the study's finding that motorcycles are favored for their agility and ability to evade detection.

The use of bicycles, noted by 6.75% of respondents, is less common but still significant. Studies by Banjo, Gordon, and Riverson (2012) emphasize the role of bicycles in rural and peri-urban transport due to their affordability and ease of maintenance. Bicycles provide a discreet means of transporting smaller quantities of goods, particularly in areas where motorized vehicles are impractical. The utilization of animals such as donkeys, as mentioned by 13.18% of respondents, aligns with research by Starkey (2010), who highlights the importance of animal transport in rural economies. Animals can traverse difficult terrains and do not require fuel, making them a reliable option for transporting goods in remote border regions. This reflects the study's findings on animal transport's cost-effectiveness and terrain adaptability.

To support the antecedent finings one of the traders asserted that:

> We use a variety of transport methods here, depending on the goods and the terrain. Bicycles, though limited in capacity, are still useful. They're a low-cost option and perfect for navigating off-road paths. For larger and more rugged loads, we turn to animals like donkeys. We also rely on donkeys. Donkeys are reliable for their ability to traverse tough terrains and don't require fuel, making them ideal for regions where motor vehicles can't reach. Each method, from bicycles to donkeys, offers unique advantages for transporting goods discreetly and effectively across the border (KII with business owner at Lokinyatala border, Kenya-Uganda 23/6/2024)

Lastly, the use of people on foot, reported by 7.39% of respondents, is consistent with observations by Nordstrom (2007) on the role of human porters in bandit economy networks. Porters can navigate paths inaccessible to vehicles and provide a high level of discretion, crucial for smuggling operations. This supports the study's conclusion that foot transport, despite its low capacity, offers significant advantages in avoiding detection. While these findings are largely supported by existing literature, some scholars present differing views. For example, Raballand et al. (2012) argue that the efficiency of road transport can be compromised by poor infrastructure and corruption at border points, suggesting that reliance on trucks may not always be optimal. This contrasts with the study's indication of trucks as the predominant mode of transport.

Similarly, Jedwab and Moradi (2016) highlight the potential of rail transport in East Africa, which is not mentioned in the study. They argue that investments in rail infrastructure significantly altered the dynamics of cross-border trade, potentially reducing the reliance on road transport. This presents an alternative perspective to the study's focus on road-based transportation methods. The study's findings on the common means of transporting goods across the Kenya-Uganda border are largely corroborated by scholarly works on regional trade and illicit economies. The preference for lorries, pick-ups, motorcycles, bicycles, animals, and foot transport reflects practical considerations of capacity, terrain adaptability, and discretion. While some scholars propose alternative perspectives, such as the potential role of rail transport, the study provides a comprehensive overview of the current transportation dynamics within the bandit economy.

The Illegal Enterprise Theory posits that criminal organizations operate similarly to legitimate businesses, optimizing their activities for efficiency and profit. In the context of transporting goods across the Kenya-Uganda border, this theory explains how smuggling networks exploit weak regulatory frameworks and corrupt officials to facilitate their operations. These enterprises utilize sophisticated logistics to move contraband, such as narcotics, firearms, and counterfeit products, through clandestine routes. Bribery and collusion with local authorities are common to evade detection. The theory also highlights the adaptability of these networks, which continuously modify their methods in response to law enforcement efforts. For instance, smugglers used hidden compartments in vehicles, employ local knowledge to navigate remote paths, or leverage technology for real-time communication and coordination. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing targeted interventions to disrupt illegal activities and secure the border, ensuring legitimate trade and regional security.

4.3 Tactics used to move goods across the border

The study also sought to examine the tactics used to move goods along the border. Out of 311 respondents, 81(26.0%) stated that concealment of goods in vehicles and cargoes was tactic used by traders, 21(6.75%) reasoned that local residents were used in moving goods across customary border points,121 (38.91%) argued that bribery of officials was a common tactic used to move goods across the border, 70(22.51%) argued that use of alternative routes away from the customary border point was a tactic used to move goods across the border and 18(5.78%) stated that non-concealment of goods due to lack of enforcement was a tactic employed to move goods across Kenya-Uganda border. The results are illustrated in the figure 4.3.

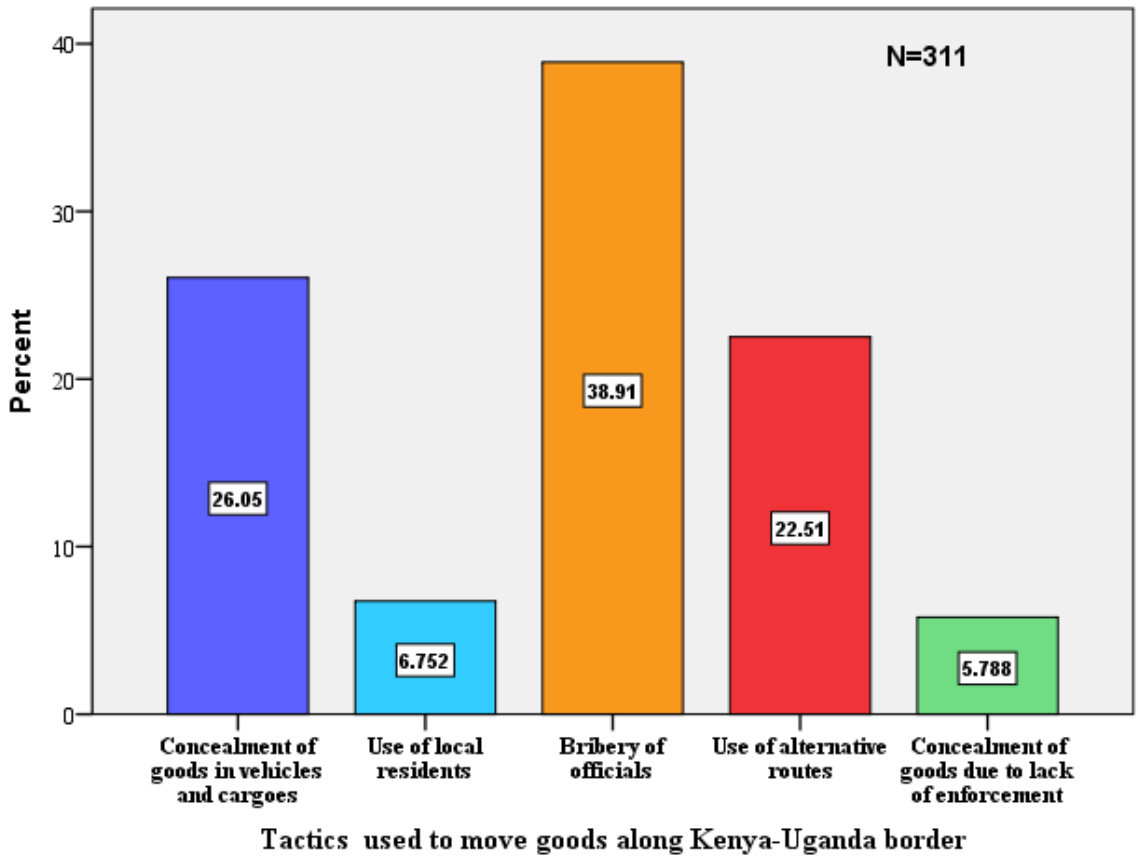

Figure 4. 3 Tactics used to move goods across the border

Source: Field Data,2024

The study investigated the tactics employed to move goods across the Kenya-Uganda border, revealing a range of methods used by traders to navigate the challenges of cross-border transport. A significant portion of respondents, 81 (26.0%), stated that the concealment of goods in vehicles and cargo was a common tactic. This method is frequently used to avoid detection by authorities and is effective due to the ability to hide goods within legitimate shipments. As highlighted by Nordstrom (2007), concealment is

a typical strategy in smuggling operations globally, allowing traders to move illicit goods under the guise of legal trade.

Local residents being used to move goods across customary border points was cited by 21 respondents (6.75%). This tactic leverages the local knowledge and community ties of residents, who are familiar with the terrain and border patrol patterns. According to Titeca and Kimanuka (2012), local intermediaries play a crucial role in informal cross-border trade in East Africa, utilizing their understanding of local customs and networks to facilitate the movement of goods. Bribery of officials was argued by 121 respondents (38.91%) to be a prevalent tactic. This aligns with numerous studies on corruption at border points in developing countries. Bribery ensures the smooth passage of goods by bypassing regulatory checks and avoiding potential confiscation. Raballand and Mjekiqi (2010) discuss how corruption at border points undermines formal trade systems and facilitates the illegal movement of goods, making it a common practice in regions with weak enforcement mechanisms.

The use of alternative routes away from customary border points was mentioned by 70 respondents (22.51%). These routes, often less monitored, provide traders with safer passage for their goods. Little (2005) notes that informal trade routes are critical for cross-border commerce in East Africa, as they help traders avoid official scrutiny and reduce the risk of interception. Lastly, 18 respondents (5.78%) stated that non-concealment of goods due to lack of enforcement was a tactic employed. In areas where enforcement is weak or absent, traders can openly move goods without fear of intervention. This lack of enforcement was due to limited resources or the overwhelming scale of trade activities, which border officials cannot fully monitor. As

Ferris and Robbins (2004) indicate, weak governance and enforcement gaps create opportunities for unregulated trade.

These findings illustrate the diverse strategies traders use to navigate the complexities of cross-border trade, reflecting the broader challenges of governance, enforcement, and local dynamics in border regions. The study's findings that concealment of goods in vehicles and cargoes is a common tactic used by traders along the Kenya-Uganda border are well-supported by existing scholarly research on smuggling and informal trade practices in border regions. Concealment as a tactic in smuggling is a well-documented phenomenon globally. Nordstrom (2007) discusses how smuggling networks often employ sophisticated methods to hide illicit goods within legitimate shipments, blending illegal activities with regular trade to evade detection. This strategy is particularly effective in regions with high volumes of cross-border trade, where authorities face challenges in thoroughly inspecting all cargo. The Kenya-Uganda border, being a significant trade route in East Africa, presents an ideal scenario for such practices.

In the context of East Africa, concealment within vehicles and cargo is prevalent due to the region's extensive road networks and the prominence of road transport for moving goods. Titeca and Kimanuka (2012) highlight that traders frequently use trucks and other vehicles to transport both legal and illegal goods, taking advantage of the high traffic and sometimes limited inspection capacities at border points. This aligns with the study's finding that 26.0% of respondents identified concealment in vehicles and cargo as a common tactic.

Scholars such as Little (2005) and Raballand and Mjekiqi (2010) also support the notion that concealment is a widespread strategy in regions with porous borders and weak enforcement mechanisms. Little (2005) points out that the reliance on informal trade routes and tactics like concealment is driven by the need to avoid regulatory hurdles and the potential for confiscation. Raballand and Mjekiqi (2010) further discuss how corruption and limited resources at border points exacerbate the challenges of effective monitoring, making concealment an attractive option for traders looking to bypass formal controls.

However, not all scholars fully agree with the emphasis on concealment. For instance, Raballand et al. (2012) suggest that while concealment is indeed a tactic used by smugglers, its prevalence may sometimes be overstated. They argue that improvements in infrastructure and governance can mitigate the need for such practices by enhancing the efficiency and reliability of formal trade channels. This perspective highlights the potential for policy interventions to reduce reliance on smuggling tactics by strengthening border management and inspection processes. Another critical viewpoint comes from Ferris and Robbins (2004), who emphasize the role of systemic corruption in facilitating concealment and other smuggling practices. They argue that without addressing the underlying issues of corruption and weak governance, efforts to combat smuggling through improved enforcement alone may be insufficient. This aligns with the study's implication that concealment is not merely a matter of evading detection but is also deeply intertwined with broader structural challenges.

The study's findings that concealment of goods in vehicles and cargoes is a common tactic used by traders along the Kenya-Uganda border are corroborated by a substantial body of scholarly work. Researchers such as Nordstrom, Titeca, Kimanuka, Little, and Raballand provide evidence that concealment is a prevalent strategy due to the region's trade dynamics, weak enforcement, and corruption. While some scholars argue for the potential of policy reforms to reduce reliance on such tactics, the consensus underscores the complexity and entrenched nature of smuggling practices in border regions. This multi-faceted issue requires comprehensive approaches that address both the immediate tactics used by traders and the broader systemic factors that enable these practices. The study's findings that bribery of officials is a common tactic used by traders along the Kenya-Uganda border are strongly supported by existing scholarly research. This practice is widespread in many developing regions, particularly in areas where governance and enforcement mechanisms are weak.

Raballand and Mjekiqi (2010) emphasize the prevalence of corruption at border points in developing countries. They argue that bribery is a systematic issue that undermines formal trade systems and facilitates the illegal movement of goods. In regions like the Kenya-Uganda border, where regulatory oversight is often limited, bribery becomes a practical solution for traders seeking to expedite their activities and avoid bureaucratic hurdles. This aligns with the study’s finding that 38.91% of respondents identified bribery as a common tactic.

The role of corruption in cross-border trade is further explored by Ferris and Robbins (2004), who highlight how bribery perpetuates informal economies. They note that in East Africa, corruption at border points is not only a means to bypass regulatory checks

but also a significant factor in the persistence of informal trade networks. By paying off officials, traders can move goods more efficiently and with less risk of interception, thereby sustaining the bandit economy. Additionally, Titeca and Kimanuka (2012) provide evidence of the entrenched nature of corruption in East African trade. They discuss how border officials often exploit their positions to solicit bribes, creating an environment where bribery is normalized and expected. This systemic corruption is a significant barrier to effective border management and a primary reason why traders resort to bribery.

However, some scholars offer a more nuanced perspective. Raballand et al. (2012) suggest that while bribery is indeed prevalent, its impact could be mitigated through targeted policy interventions. They argue that improving infrastructure, increasing transparency, and enhancing the capacity of border agencies can reduce the reliance on corrupt practices. This perspective highlights the potential for reforms to address the root causes of bribery, rather than merely treating its symptoms. Little (2005) also acknowledges the role of bribery but emphasizes the broader context of informal trade. He argues that bribery is one of many tactics used by traders to navigate a complex and often hostile trading environment. According to Little, addressing bribery requires a comprehensive approach that considers the economic and social factors driving informal trade, including poverty, lack of access to formal markets, and the need for livelihood security.

The study's findings that bribery of officials is a common tactic used by traders along the Kenya-Uganda border are well-supported by scholarly research. Scholars such as Raballand, Ferris, Robbins, and Titeca agree on the prevalence and impact of bribery in

facilitating cross-border trade. While some researchers, like Raballand et al. and Little, advocate for broader policy interventions to address the underlying issues, there is a consensus that bribery is a significant challenge in border management. This issue underscores the need for comprehensive reforms that strengthen governance, enhance transparency, and address the economic drivers of informal trade.

4.4 Motivating factors for the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border

There are several motivating factors for the bandit economy. Thus the study sought to assess the motivating factors for individuals participating in the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. Out of 311 respondents 61(19.6%) stated that individuals participated for economic necessity, 51(1.39%) stated that individuals participated for lack of employment opportunities, 97(31.19%) stated that traditional customary practices were a major factor motivating individuals to participate in bandit economy. Besides,61(19.%) reasoned that profits involved in the bandit economy were a motivating factor for individuals,21(6.75%) stated that negligence of law enforcement at the border point was a motivating factor and 20(6.43%) reasoned that availability of cheap commodities was a factor motivating individuals to participate in bandit economy. The results are illustrated in figure 4.4 .

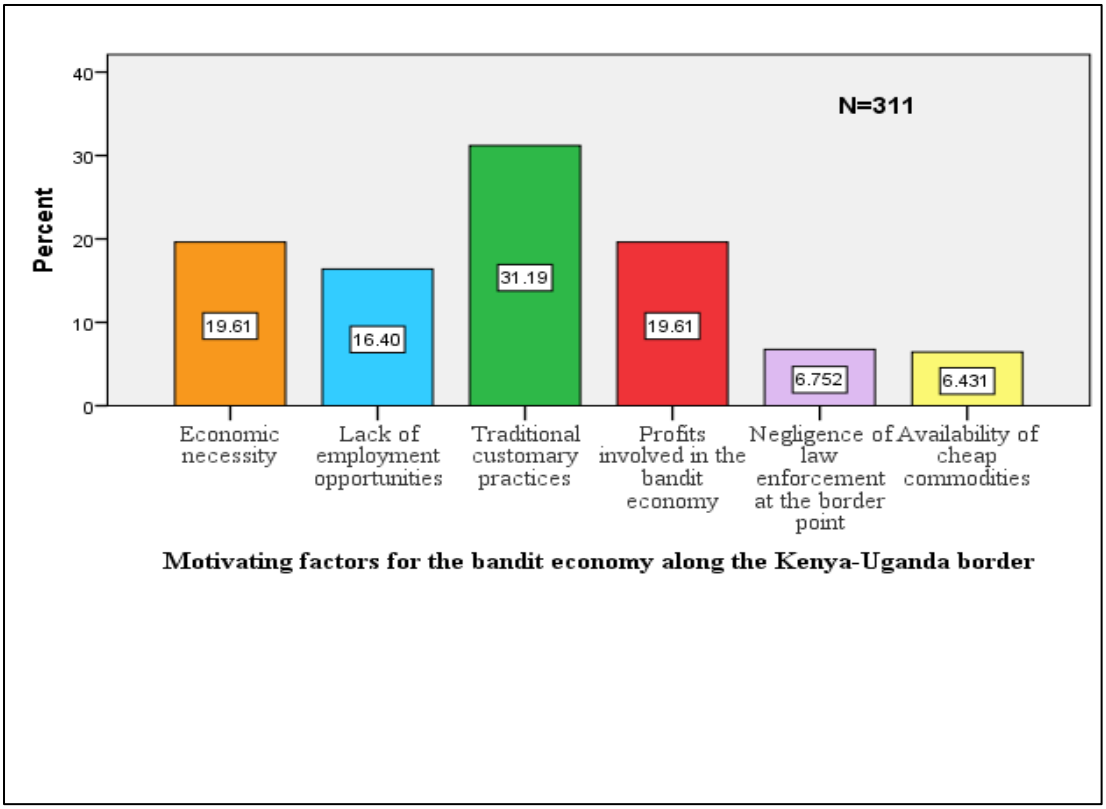

Figure 4. 4 Motivating factors for the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border

Source: Field Data,2024

The study's findings highlight several motivating factors for individuals participating in the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. Each factor reflects the complex socio-economic dynamics in the region, shedding light on the underlying reasons why people engage in these activities. Firstly, economic necessity was identified by 61 respondents (19.6%) as a primary motivator. This response underscores the dire economic conditions that drive individuals to seek alternative means of livelihood. In regions where poverty is rampant and formal employment opportunities are scarce, engaging in the bandit economy can be a survival strategy. As Nordstrom (2007) points out, economic desperation often pushes individuals into informal and illegal economies as a means of subsistence.

Lack of employment opportunities was cited by 51 respondents (16.39%). This factor is closely linked to economic necessity but emphasizes the structural issue of unemployment. In many developing regions, including parts of East Africa, the formal job market cannot absorb the growing workforce, leading many to seek income through informal channels. According to Ferris and Robbins (2004), high unemployment rates correlate strongly with increased participation in informal economies, including smuggling and other illicit activities.

Traditional customary practices were noted by 97 respondents (31.19%) as a significant motivator. This finding highlights the cultural dimensions of the bandit economy. In some communities, smuggling and cross-border trade are long-standing practices embedded in local customs and traditions. Titeca and Kimanuka (2012) discuss how cultural practices and social norms can legitimize informal trade, making it an accepted and even respected activity within certain communities.Profits involved in the bandit economy were a motivating factor for 61 respondents (19.6%). The potential for high financial returns from bandit economy is a powerful incentive. Engaging in the bandit economy can be significantly more lucrative than formal employment, especially in regions with weak enforcement. Raballand and Mjekiqi (2010) highlight how the profitability of smuggling operations attracts individuals seeking quick and substantial earnings.

Negligence of law enforcement at the border point was mentioned by 21 respondents (6.75%). This factor points to the role of weak governance and corruption in facilitating the bandit economy. When law enforcement is lax or corrupt, it creates an environment where illicit activities can flourish with minimal risk. According to Little (2005), the

effectiveness of border control is crucial in curbing smuggling, and negligence or corruption severely undermines these efforts. Lastly, the availability of cheap commodities was a motivating factor for 20 respondents (6.43%). This reflects the economic logic driving the bandit economy: the ability to procure goods at lower costs across the border and sell them at a higher price locally. This price disparity creates an incentive for cross-border trade, as individuals seek to capitalize on the profit margins. Ferris and Robbins (2004) note that price differentials across borders are a significant driver of informal trade, as traders exploit these economic opportunities.

The study identifies multiple factors motivating participation in the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. Economic necessity, unemployment, cultural practices, profitability, weak law enforcement, and the availability of cheap commodities all play roles in driving individuals to engage in these activities. Each factor reflects broader socio-economic challenges and highlights the need for comprehensive policy interventions to address the root causes of the bandit economy.

4.5 Awareness of the legal and economic consequences of the bandit economy

The study also assessed whether participants were aware of the legal and economic consequences of bandit economy activities along the Kenya-Uganda border. Out of 311 respondents,39(12.54%) stated that they were fully aware of both legal and economic consequences of a bandit economy,121(38.91%) were somewhat aware and 151(48.55%) were not aware at all.The results are illustrated in Figure 4.5.

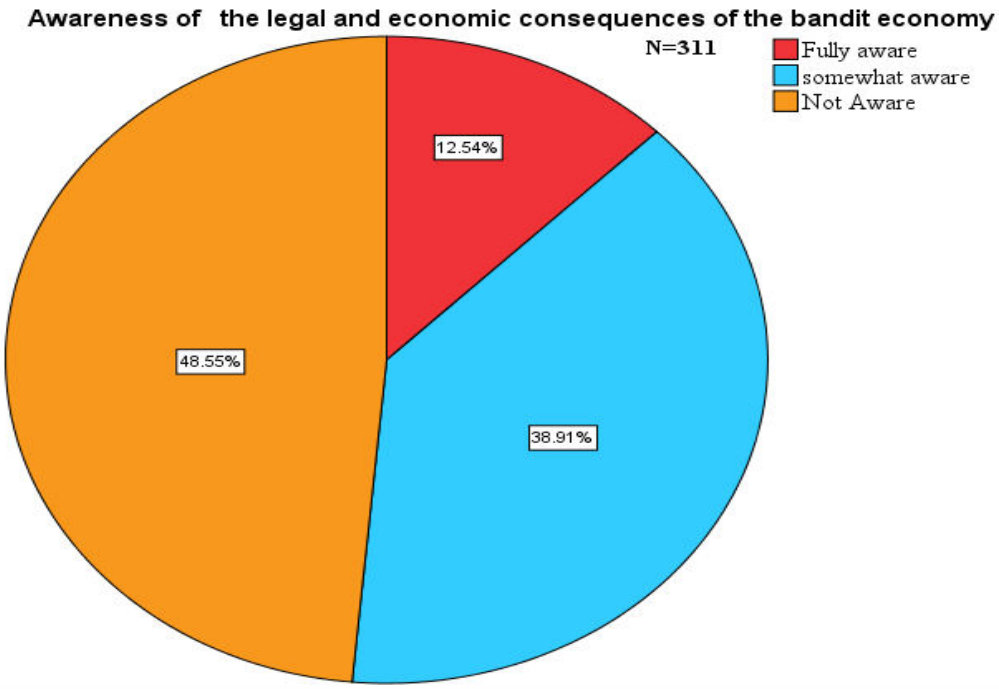

Figure 4. 5 Awareness of the legal and economic consequences of the bandit economy

Source: Field Data, 2024

The study assessed participants' awareness of the legal and economic consequences of engaging in the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border, revealing varied levels of understanding among the respondents. Firstly, 39 respondents (12.54%) stated that they were fully aware of both the legal and economic consequences. This awareness can be attributed to several factors, including prior experiences with law enforcement, education, or exposure to information campaigns. Individuals who are fully aware understood the risks of arrest, fines, and imprisonment associated with illegal activities, as well as the broader economic impacts such as market destabilization and loss of legitimate trade opportunities. Their knowledge came from direct encounters with the legal system or educational initiatives highlighting the dangers of the bandit economy.

Secondly, 121 respondents (38.91%) indicated that they were somewhat aware of the consequences. These participants had a basic understanding of the potential legal ramifications, such as being aware that smuggling is illegal but not fully grasping the severity of the penalties or the likelihood of enforcement. They had a limited understanding of the economic consequences, perhaps knowing that illegal trade can affect market prices but not comprehending the full extent of its impact on local economies. This partial awareness stemmed from occasional encounters with law enforcement or hearing about legal actions taken against others without experiencing them firsthand. Lastly, 151 respondents (48.55%) reported that they were not aware of the consequences at all. This significant lack of awareness can be attributed to several factors, including low levels of education, lack of access to information, and possibly the normalization of the bandit economy within their communities. In regions where informal trade is prevalent and culturally accepted, individuals may not recognize the legal risks or the broader economic implications of their activities. The absence of effective information dissemination and law enforcement in these areas further contributes to this ignorance. Without adequate education and enforcement, many people remain unaware of the consequences, continuing to engage in the bandit economy without understanding the potential repercussions.

The researcher argues that the study reveals a spectrum of awareness levels among participants regarding the legal and economic consequences of the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. While a small portion is fully informed, a larger group has only partial knowledge, and nearly half are completely unaware. These findings

underscore the need for targeted education and enforcement efforts to increase awareness and mitigate the negative impacts of the bandit economy.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has critically examined the nature of bandit economy along Kenya-Uganda border. It has explored the various goods traded, means of transporting the goods, tactics used by smugglers as well as the motivating factors for bandit economy. The next chapter presents the findings and discussions on Track One Diplomatic strategies Used in Combating Bandit Economy along Kenya-Uganda Border.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRACK ONE DIPLOMATIC STRATEGIES USED IN COMBATING THE BANDIT ECONOMY ALONG KENYA-UGANDA BORDER

This chapter presents findings on track one diplomatic strategies employed to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. It has delved into the awareness of diplomatic efforts to combat bandit economy, diplomatic strategies such as joint border patrols, bilateral agreements, information sharing, cross-border community engagement, as well as joint public awareness. It ends with a chapter summary.

5.1 Awareness of diplomatic efforts to combat bandit economy

The study examined whether there was awareness with regard to diplomatic efforts to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. The study found out that, out of 311 respondents, 112(36.02%) respondents acknowledged that there were efforts to combat the bandit economy, however, on the contrary, 199 (63.98%) of the respondents were not aware whether there were diplomatic efforts put in place to combat the bandit economy. The results are illustrated in Figure 5.1.

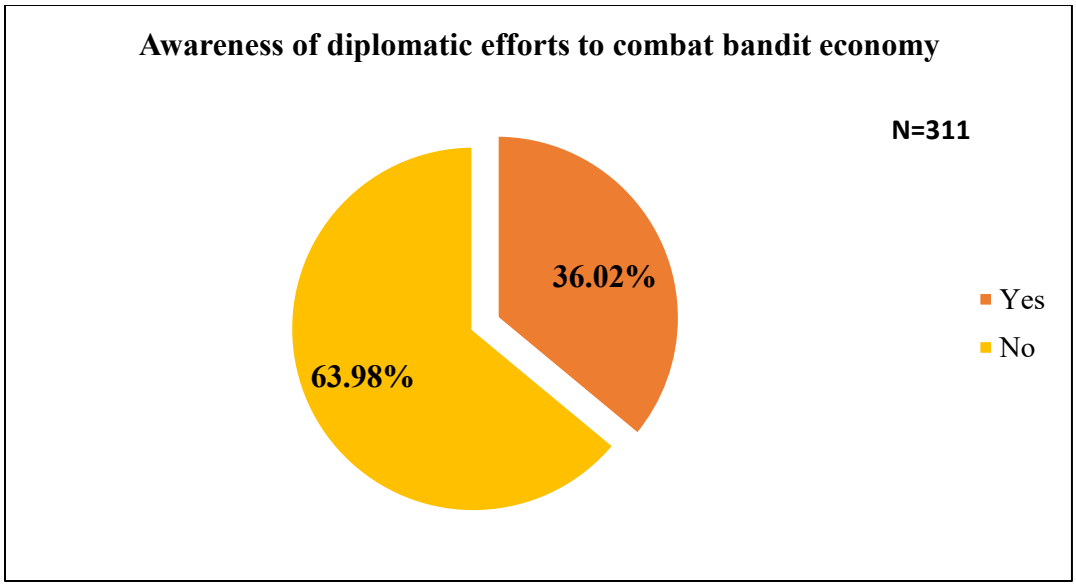

Figure 5. 1 Awareness of diplomatic efforts to combat bandit economy

Source: Field Data, 2024

The study's examination of awareness regarding diplomatic efforts to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border reveals a significant disparity in respondent knowledge. Out of 311 participants, 112 (36.02%) acknowledged diplomatic efforts to address the bandit economy, while 199 (63.98%) were unaware of such initiatives. This disparity is consistent with findings in other studies highlighting the uneven distribution of information in conflict-prone areas, where access to reliable news and government communications is often limited (Gleditsch, 2007; Risse, 2013).

Among the 112 respondents who were aware of diplomatic efforts, several factors may contribute to their knowledge. These individuals likely had exposure to information through government announcements, media coverage, or community outreach programs highlighting cross-border cooperation between Kenya and Uganda. This aligns with the argument by Smith (2011) that awareness is often higher among those with access to multiple information sources, particularly in regions where formal communication

channels are supplemented by local initiatives. Furthermore, awareness stemming from involvement in or observation of joint initiatives, such as regional security meetings or bilateral agreements to curb illegal activities, supports the idea that participation in diplomatic activities enhances knowledge (Keohane & Nye, 1998). These respondents may have also received information from local officials or organizations involved in monitoring or addressing the bandit economy, making them more informed about the diplomatic efforts in place (Anderson, 2014).

In contrast, the 199 respondents (63.98%) who were unaware of diplomatic efforts reflected various issues. Many individuals in this group did not have access to comprehensive information regarding international or regional initiatives to tackle the bandit economy, echoing Risse's (2013) findings on the challenges of disseminating information in areas with limited infrastructure. In regions where local engagement with national or international policies is limited, people may remain unaware of broader diplomatic efforts. This is further compounded by the argument that the visibility and effectiveness of such initiatives are often insufficient, leading to limited public awareness (Mearsheimer, 2001). The lack of effective communication or dissemination of information about these efforts can contribute to widespread ignorance, as posited by Nye (2004) in his analysis of soft power and public diplomacy. Moreover, in areas where informal economies are deeply entrenched, the impact of diplomatic measures may not be immediately visible to local populations, leading to a disconnect between policy actions and grassroots awareness (Vigh, 2006).

The findings underscore a significant gap in awareness regarding diplomatic efforts to combat the bandit economy. While a substantial minority of respondents are informed about these efforts, the majority remains unaware, highlighting the need for improved communication strategies and community engagement to enhance the visibility and impact of diplomatic initiatives. This aligns with broader scholarly calls for more inclusive and transparent diplomatic practices in regions facing complex security challenges (Zartman, 2008).

5.2 Diplomatic strategies employed to combat bandit economy and trade activities along the Kenya-Uganda border

Diplomatic strategies to combat the bandit economy and trade activities along the Kenya-Uganda border are crucial in addressing cross-border bandit economy and enhancing regional stability. These strategies often involve collaborative efforts between national governments, regional organizations, and international bodies to strengthen border security, streamline trade regulations, and promote economic development. By fostering cooperation and implementing comprehensive policies, diplomatic initiatives aim to mitigate the adverse effects of the bandit economy and support lawful economic activities in the region. However, this study found out that, out of 311 respondents 58(18.64%) stated that joint border patrols were a strategy adopted to combat bandit economy 57(18.33%) stated that bilateral agreements as a result of negotiations were another strategy employed 21(6.75%) reasoned that information sharing and intelligence exchange on economic activities was a strategy employed 71(22.82%) stated that cross border community engagement to reduce support for bandit economic activities along the border, 21(6.75%) stated that cross-border trade facilitation through establishment of

legal trade routes, additionally, 22 (7.07%) stated that harmonization of laws to combat bandit economy was a strategy employed and 61(6.43%) reasoned that joint public awareness campaigns were used to combat bandit economy along the border. The results are illustrated in figure 5.2.

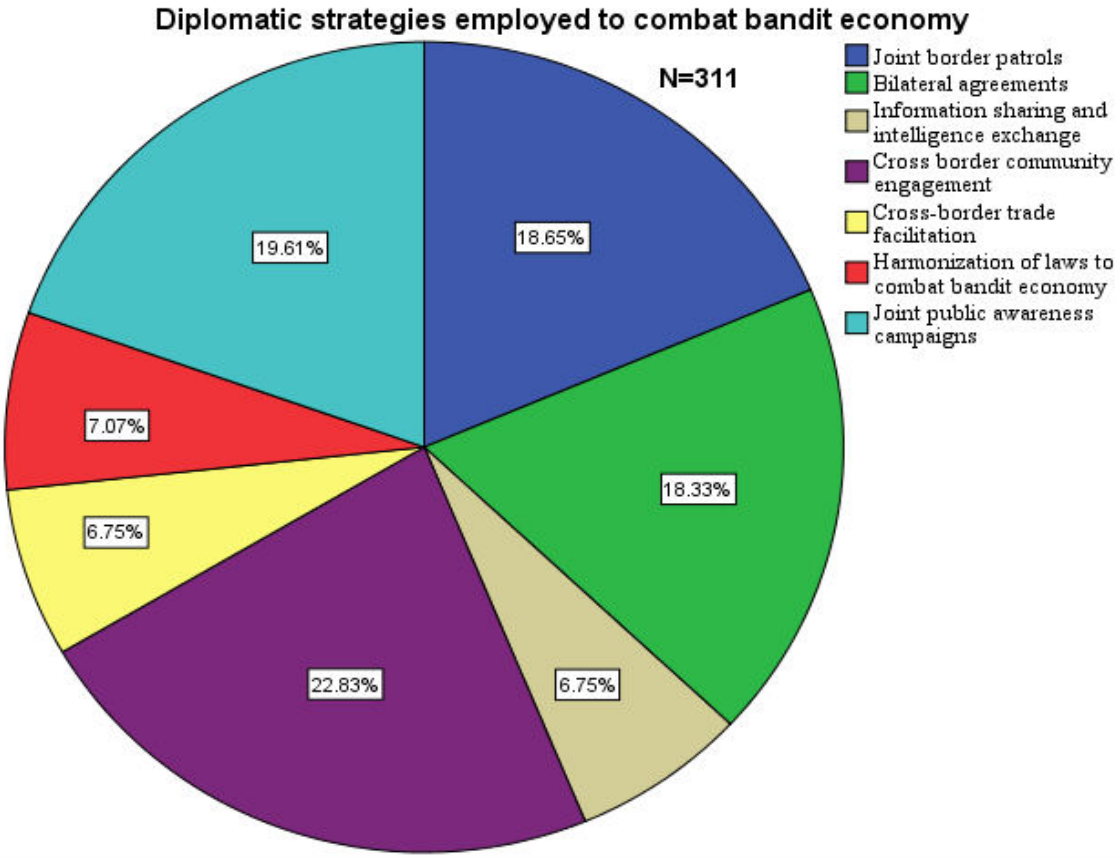

Figure 5. 2 Diplomatic Strategies Employed to Combat Bandit Economy

Source: Field Data, 2024

The study findings on the strategies employed to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border highlight a multifaceted approach, encompassing various efforts aimed at addressing this complex issue. The identification of joint border patrols by 58

respondents (18.64%) aligns with existing literature emphasizing the importance of coordinated security efforts in mitigating cross-border criminal activities. Such joint patrols have been recognized as effective in enhancing border security by pooling resources and information, thereby increasing the capacity to detect and intercept illegal activities (Chifu, 2017; Shaw, 2015). This strategy also aligns with the principles of cooperative security, where neighboring states collaborate to address shared threats (Buzan & Wæver, 2003).

Bilateral agreements, cited by 57 respondents (18.33%), are another key strategy, reflecting the role of formal diplomatic negotiations in strengthening border management. As noted by Okumu and Ikelegbe (2010), such agreements provide a framework for cooperation between states, facilitating joint efforts to tackle transnational challenges like the bandit economy. These agreements often streamline cross-border operations and establish clear guidelines for managing border activities, enhancing mutual accountability and reducing opportunities for illegal trade (Sutton, 2013).

Information sharing and intelligence exchange, mentioned by 21 respondents (6.75%), is crucial for effective border security. The importance of this strategy is supported by studies that highlight how timely and accurate intelligence can significantly enhance the ability of states to respond to threats, thereby improving the overall effectiveness of border operations (Menkhaus, 2007; Clunan & Trinkunas, 2010). This approach is integral to modern security practices, where information networks play a critical role in combating transnational crime (Pérouse de Montclos, 2009).

Cross-border community engagement, identified by 71 respondents (22.82%), emerges as a critical strategy in combating the bandit economy. This approach is supported by the work of Soderbaum and Taylor (2008), who argue that engaging local communities helps to build trust and fosters local cooperation, essential for addressing the root causes of banditry. By involving community members in security efforts, authorities can create grassroots networks that assist in monitoring and reporting suspicious activities, thereby enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of anti-banditry initiatives (Githinji, 2014).

The establishment of legal trade routes, mentioned by 21 respondents (6.75%), is another strategy aimed at reducing reliance on illegal routes. This approach is consistent with findings by Snyder and Duran-Martinez (2009), who emphasize that providing formal economic opportunities can diminish the appeal of bandit economy, thereby supporting legitimate economic growth. Legal trade routes not only facilitate regulated commerce but also serve as a deterrent to those who might otherwise engage in illegal activities (Matsiko, 2015).

The harmonization of laws, noted by 22 respondents (7.07%), plays a crucial role in creating consistency in regulations and enforcement practices across borders. This strategy is crucial for closing loopholes and reducing discrepancies that can be exploited by those engaged in the bandit economy (Niemann, 2013). Harmonizing legal frameworks between Kenya and Uganda ensures that both countries present a united front against cross-border crime, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement (Buzan & Wæver, 2003).

Lastly, joint public awareness campaigns, cited by 20 respondents (6.43%), aim to educate the public about the negative impacts of the bandit economy and encourage lawful behavior. Such campaigns are vital in fostering a culture of compliance and support for official economic activities, as highlighted by the works of Muggah (2012) and Moser (2009). By raising awareness of the consequences of illegal trade, these campaigns contribute to reducing public tolerance for banditry and promoting sustainable development in the region. The study reveals a diverse array of strategies employed to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. Each strategy addresses different aspects of the problem, from enhanced security measures and formal agreements to community engagement and legal reforms, reflecting a comprehensive approach to tackling this complex issue.

5.2.1 Joint Border patrols

The study found out that ,joint patrols enhance the ability to detect and intercept illegal activities, such as smuggling and unauthorized trade. The study's findings that joint border patrols are a strategy employed to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border align with existing scholarly research, which highlights the effectiveness and challenges of such collaborative security measures. Joint border patrols, involving coordinated efforts between neighboring countries, are widely recognized as a crucial strategy in managing and mitigating cross-border illicit activities.

Several scholars support the notion that joint border patrols enhance security and reduce illegal activities. For instance, Karanja and Njeri (2017) emphasize that collaborative border security measures between Kenya and Uganda can significantly improve

monitoring and control over smuggling and other bandit economy activities. They argue that joint patrols enable the pooling of resources, sharing of intelligence, and coordination of responses, leading to more effective enforcement of border regulations. This collaboration not only enhances surveillance but also increases the deterrent effect against potential bandits, making it a practical approach to curbing illegal activities.

Similarly, Titeca and Kimanuka (2012) discuss the benefits of joint border operations in the East African region. They highlight how cross-border cooperation, including joint patrols, strengthens the ability of security forces to address regional security challenges, such as the bandit economy. By working together, countries can address the transnational nature of smuggling and other illegal activities, which often exploit gaps in individual national security efforts. The scholars suggest that such joint efforts help bridge operational gaps and foster a more integrated approach to border security.

In support of the foregoing, KII averred that :

> The significance of joint border operations within the East African region, particularly in combating the pervasive bandit economy cannot be overemphasized.Cross-border cooperation, such as joint patrols between neighboring countries like Kenya and Uganda, significantly enhances the capacity of security forces to tackle regional security challenges. By coordinating their efforts, these nations are better equipped to address the transnational nature of smuggling and other illicit activities that thrive on the weaknesses of isolated national security measures. This collaboration, they argue, is essential for bridging operational gaps and establishing a more cohesive and effective approach to border security in the region (Interview with KII at Lokinyattala, Kenya-Uganda border 13/6/2024).

Further, they argued that:

> Joint border operations in East Africa represent a critical strategy for addressing the complex security issues posed by the bandit economy. It is important to underscore the importance of cross-border cooperation, including coordinated patrols and shared intelligence, in strengthening the overall security framework of the region. By pooling resources and expertise, these operations help to mitigate the vulnerabilities inherent in solitary national security initiatives, promoting a more integrated and resilient approach to managing border security across East Africa (Interview with KII at Lokinyattala, Kenya-Uganda border 13/6/2024).

However, some scholarly work provides a more critical view of joint border patrols. Raballand and Mjekiqi (2010) argue that while joint patrols are beneficial, their effectiveness can be limited by several factors, including inconsistent commitment from participating countries and logistical challenges. They point out that successful implementation requires coordination, sustained political will, and adequate resources. Without these, joint patrols may struggle to achieve their intended outcomes and often face challenges in maintaining operational consistency and effectiveness. From the perspective of the Illegal Enterprise Theory—which views criminal actors as rational decision-makers responding to weak governance and enforcement—these limitations are especially significant (Smith, 1975; Albini, 1971). When state responses such as joint patrols are fragmented or poorly resourced, illegal enterprises are more likely to persist, exploiting the gaps and inconsistencies in enforcement mechanisms across national borders.

Moreover, Ferris and Robbins (2004) highlight that while joint border patrols can enhance security, they are not a panacea for all issues related to the bandit economy. They caution that such measures must be integrated into a broader strategy that includes community engagement, economic development, and legal reforms. This observation

complements the Illegal Enterprise Theory's recognition that criminal economies thrive not only because of weak enforcement but also because they fill socio-economic voids in marginalized regions. Focusing solely on security responses without altering the broader opportunity structures that sustain illegal activity may yield only short-term gains.

The researcher therefore argues that the study's findings on joint border patrols are well-supported by scholarly research that underscores the benefits of collaborative security measures in enhancing border control and reducing illicit activities. Scholars like Karanja and Njeri, and Titeca and Kimanuka, affirm the effectiveness of joint patrols in improving cross-border security. However, the critical perspectives of Raballand and Mjekiqi, and Ferris and Robbins, echo a key insight of the Illegal Enterprise Theory: security strategies must be comprehensive and sustained to disrupt the economic logic that underpins bandit economies. Effective implementation of joint patrols requires not only coordination and commitment but also integration with long-term development initiatives and reforms that address the root causes of criminal enterprise in border regions.

5.2.2 Bilateral agreements

The study's findings that bilateral agreements, resulting from negotiations, are a strategy employed to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border are supported by substantial scholarly work. These agreements are pivotal in managing cross-border issues and fostering regional cooperation. Scholars widely acknowledge the importance of bilateral agreements in enhancing border security and combating the bandit economy. For example, Odhiambo (2014) argues that bilateral agreements between neighboring

countries can significantly improve border management and reduce illegal activities. He highlights how such agreements establish frameworks for cooperation, mutual assistance, and information sharing, which are crucial in addressing cross-border challenges like smuggling and banditry. By formalizing cooperation, these agreements help align the efforts of different countries and provide a structured approach to managing shared security concerns.

Similarly, Titeca and Kimanuka (2012) emphasize the role of bilateral agreements in the East African context. They note that negotiations leading to formal agreements, such as the 2013 MOU on Cross-Border Cooperation between Kenya and Uganda, have facilitated enhanced coordination in combating the bandit economy. This agreement, signed by representatives from both governments, including the Kenyan Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government and Uganda's Ministry of Internal Affairs, has been pivotal in harmonizing border policies, sharing intelligence, and jointly implementing security measures. Such collaborative frameworks are crucial for addressing the transnational nature of the bandit economy, which often exploits inconsistencies between national regulations. The scholars argue that these agreements provide a structured approach to managing the challenges posed by cross-border crime, ensuring that both countries can mount a more effective and unified response to illicit activities. Additionally, the 2015 Joint Border Security Initiative further solidified this cooperation, focusing on the establishment of joint task forces and regular security meetings to monitor and assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies.

On the other hand, one of the respondents argued that:

> While bilateral agreements are beneficial, their success depends on the commitment and implementation by the involved parties. It is important to point out that negotiations and agreements can sometimes result in ambitious plans that fail to materialize due to lack of political will, resource constraints, or inconsistent enforcement. These factors can undermine the effectiveness of bilateral agreements, making it challenging to achieve the intended outcomes (Interview with security officer at Lokinyattala border,Kenya-Uganda,14/6/2024)

In support of the prevenient assertion, Raballand and Mjekiqi (2010) argue that while bilateral agreements are important, they should not be seen as a standalone solution. They emphasize that effective border management requires a comprehensive approach that includes not only bilateral agreements but also local engagement, economic development, and law enforcement reforms. From the perspective of the Illegal Enterprise Theory—which views criminal actors as rational agents operating in response to regulatory vacuums and economic incentives (Smith, 1975; Albini, 1971)—this argument is particularly relevant. Bilateral agreements, though essential for establishing legal frameworks for cooperation, may not fully alter the opportunity structures that enable the bandit economy to flourish. Without addressing the informal networks, local grievances, and weak enforcement mechanisms that illegal enterprises exploit, such agreements risk remaining symbolic or ineffective.

The study's findings that bilateral agreements, as products of diplomatic negotiations, contribute to combating the bandit economy are well-supported by scholarly work. Researchers such as Odhiambo and Titeca and Kimanuka affirm that these agreements enhance cross-border cooperation and promote shared security objectives. However, the critical perspectives offered by Raballand and Mjekiqi, and Ferris and Robbins, underscore the structural limitations of relying solely on diplomatic instruments. From

the standpoint of the Illegal Enterprise Theory, lasting disruption of the bandit economy requires not only legal alignment but also a coordinated, multi-layered strategy that includes community-based intelligence, market regulation, and development-oriented interventions. Successful implementation of bilateral agreements thus depends on sustained political will, integration with broader socio-economic policies, and the capacity to enforce commitments in regions historically characterized by informal economies and weak state presence.

5.2.3 Information sharing and intelligence exchange on economic activities

The study's findings that information sharing and intelligence exchange on economic activities are strategic tools used to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya–Uganda border align with a substantial body of scholarly research. Scholars widely acknowledge the critical role of intelligence cooperation in addressing cross-border illicit networks, particularly in fragile borderlands where state control is limited and informal economies are pervasive. Vines et al. (2013) assert that timely and accurate intelligence exchange is essential for detecting, intercepting, and dismantling transnational criminal activities, including smuggling and economic crimes. By enhancing situational awareness and improving coordination between security agencies, such exchanges help in preempting illegal operations and disrupting the logistical chains that sustain the bandit economy.

These insights can be effectively contextualized through the lens of the Illegal Enterprise Theory, which conceptualizes the bandit economy as an organized, profit-oriented structure operating in spaces of weak state oversight (Smith, 1975; Albini, 1971). From this perspective, criminal actors behave as rational agents who exploit information gaps,

institutional weaknesses, and jurisdictional discontinuities to sustain their operations. Intelligence sharing directly undermines this rational strategy by closing informational loopholes and reducing the operational flexibility that illegal enterprises depend on. When border authorities coordinate their efforts and share intelligence on movement patterns, financial flows, and market structures, they disrupt the predictability and secrecy that make the bandit economy viable.

Andersen and Håland (2015) also emphasize the importance of integrated regional security frameworks built upon consistent cross-border intelligence exchange. Their research shows that such cooperation enhances the operational efficiency of law enforcement and enables countries to collectively respond to shared threats like the bandit economy. Within the framework of Illegal Enterprise Theory, this suggests that regional intelligence cooperation raises the "costs of doing business" for criminal networks, forcing them to adapt or dissolve under increased surveillance and enforcement pressure. By acting as an informal market disincentive, coordinated intelligence weakens the attractiveness and sustainability of illegal operations.

Nevertheless, some scholars urge caution regarding the presumed efficacy of information sharing mechanisms. Bøås and Jennings (2008) argue that intelligence exchange is often hindered by mistrust, incompatible data standards, and uneven technological capacities. These factors may prevent actionable intelligence from flowing smoothly or being utilized effectively. This critique is consistent with limitations in the Illegal Enterprise Theory, which tends to focus heavily on economic rationality while underplaying institutional and political constraints on law enforcement and governance capacity. If the

state actors involved in intelligence exchange lack the will or infrastructure to act upon shared information, then the benefits of coordination may remain largely theoretical.

Similarly, Schimmelfennig (2014) highlights that in contexts of weak institutional capacity or poor political will, even robust information sharing may not translate into meaningful disruption of criminal activity. The disconnection between intelligence and enforcement—whether due to lack of personnel, logistical support, or political alignment—can severely undermine the effectiveness of cross-border security strategies. From the standpoint of Illegal Enterprise Theory, this means that unless enforcement systems match the sophistication and coordination of criminal actors, rational bandits will continue to find ways to operate, evade detection, or exploit bureaucratic fragmentation.

In conclusion, the study's findings are well-supported by literature that emphasizes the role of intelligence exchange in strengthening border security and undermining the bandit economy. The Illegal Enterprise Theory provides a compelling analytical framework for understanding how information sharing alters the economic logic of criminal enterprises—by increasing risks, reducing market opacity, and strengthening the state's strategic response. Nonetheless, practical limitations such as institutional mistrust, technological constraints, and weak enforcement capacity must be addressed to ensure that information sharing translates into effective action against illicit economic networks.

5.2.4 Cross-border Community Engagement

The study's findings that cross-border community engagement is a strategy used to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border are consistent with existing scholarly research that highlights the importance of local involvement in managing and

mitigating illicit activities. Cross-border community engagement encompasses efforts to involve local populations in border security and economic development, aiming to reduce support for bandit activities and foster cooperation between neighbouring communities.

In light of the foregoing view, a focus group discussion with the council of elders revealed that:

> Elder 1: Our communities have long been on the front lines of banditry and smuggling due to our proximity to the border. Engaging local populations in border security has proven to be an effective strategy. By involving our people, we can leverage their intimate knowledge of the land and local dynamics to better monitor and report suspicious activities (FGD with council of elders, Lokinyattala, Kenya-Uganda border 14/6/2024)
>
> Elder 2: Indeed. Cross-border community engagement helps build trust between the security forces and the communities. Locals are more likely to cooperate with authorities when they are included in these efforts. This cooperation reduces the community's support for bandit activities and increases the chances of identifying and apprehending those involved in illegal activities(FGD with council of elders, Lokinyattala, Kenya-Uganda border 14/6/2024)

In support of the antecedent views, Huggins (2010) emphasizes the role of community involvement in enhancing border security and reducing illegal activities. Huggins argues that engaging local communities helps build trust and encourages them to cooperate with security forces, which is crucial for identifying and reporting illicit activities. By integrating local knowledge and perspectives, security measures become more effective and responsive to the specific challenges communities face along the border. This approach improves security and addresses the socio-economic factors that contribute to banditry.

Further, the discussants argued that:

> Elder 3: Community involvement doesn't just stop at reporting crimes. It also includes participating in economic development initiatives. People with legitimate economic opportunities are less likely to turn to banditry for survival. Engaging in local development projects alongside security efforts ensures a comprehensive approach to combating the bandit economy (FGD with council of elders, Lokinyattala, Kenya-Uganda border 14/6/2024).
>
> Elder 4: However, these engagement strategies mustn't be just top-down directives. They need to be developed with input from local communities to ensure they are culturally appropriate and address each area's specific needs and challenges. Our involvement can help tailor these strategies to be more effective.

Similarly, Titeca and Kimanuka (2012) highlight the benefits of community engagement in the East African context, noting that cross-border cooperation involving local communities can significantly contribute to managing the bandit economy. Their research shows that when communities are actively involved in border management, they tend to support and adhere to security measures. This engagement not only builds trust but also reduces the appeal of illicit activities by offering alternative economic opportunities and fostering a shared sense of responsibility for local security. This finding corresponds with the central tenets of the Illegal Enterprise Theory, which views participants in criminal networks as rational actors who pursue profit in environments where formal governance and regulation are weak (Smith, 1975; Albini, 1971). In such contexts, illegal enterprises emerge to fill market gaps left by the state, particularly in peripheral or borderland regions. By engaging communities and offering legitimate economic alternatives, these initiatives effectively disrupt the cost–benefit logic that sustains the bandit economy.

However, some scholars offer more cautious perspectives on the effectiveness of community engagement. Bøås (2015) argues that while such strategies are useful, their success is often contingent on the level of trust between communities and the state. In areas where historical grievances or prolonged marginalization have eroded this trust, community engagement efforts may struggle to gain traction. This critique reveals a limitation within the Illegal Enterprise Theory itself, which emphasizes economic rationality but often underplays the influence of non-economic variables such as social legitimacy, political relationships, and collective memory. In situations where state actors are viewed as predatory or unreliable, communities may continue to support or tolerate illegal enterprises, not solely out of economic interest but due to perceived security, loyalty, or survival.

Furthermore, Mwaura (2017) raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of community-based interventions. While initial engagement may yield promising results, enduring success requires continued investment, integration into wider development frameworks, and consistency in policy support. Without such sustained commitment, there is a risk that communities will revert to or continue facilitating illegal enterprise structures, particularly if those structures are more reliable in providing income or protection. This underscores another core insight of the Illegal Enterprise Theory: illegal economies are not inherently chaotic or disorganized but can become entrenched systems that mimic formal businesses—offering stability, income, and even governance in the absence of effective state structures (Knepper, 2022; Aziani et al., 2021). Therefore, combating the bandit economy requires more than policing; it necessitates structurally

altering the economic logic that makes illegal enterprise a rational and attractive choice for many in cross-border regions like Lokitanyala.

5.2.5 Economic development initiatives

The study's findings that economic development initiatives are employed to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya–Uganda border align with a substantial body of scholarly work, which underscores the critical role of development in curbing cross-border illicit activities and enhancing regional stability. These initiatives aim to provide alternative livelihoods, reduce poverty, and improve infrastructure—factors that can significantly mitigate the appeal of illegal economic activities. The underlying logic mirrors that of the Illegal Enterprise Theory, which posits that criminal actors are rational individuals who respond to incentives in the economic environment (Smith, 1975; Albini, 1971). By introducing legitimate sources of income and expanding access to public services, economic development initiatives directly challenge the profit-driven rationale that sustains the bandit economy.

Several scholars emphasize this economic logic. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) argue that economic development reduces the incentives for engaging in illegal activities by offering better livelihood options. According to their analysis, growth and job creation undercut the economic allure of banditry, providing rational alternatives within the formal economy. In alignment with the Illegal Enterprise Theory, this suggests that when individuals are offered more secure and stable income sources through development, they are less likely to participate in high-risk, illegal enterprises that depend on state absence and underdevelopment. Similarly, Schmidt and O'Loughlin (2013) find that development

programs—particularly infrastructure investment and vocational training—lower community support for illicit economies. These initiatives shift the local economic calculus away from informal, high-risk activities and toward state-aligned, lawful participation, thus undermining the structural base of illegal enterprise.

However, the relationship between development and security is not always straightforward. Scholars such as Muggah (2014) present a more cautious interpretation, noting that while development can be a powerful tool for stability, it must be carefully integrated with context-specific security strategies. The Illegal Enterprise Theory supports this view to the extent that illegal economies are not simply the result of poverty, but of rational responses to weak state capacity, limited access to services, and regulatory voids. Muggah cautions that if development programs are not targeted to the local socio-economic and security dynamics that sustain the bandit economy, they may have limited or even counterproductive effects. In this regard, development must not only offer alternatives but must compete effectively with the profitability and reliability of illegal enterprises.

De Waal (2015) deepens this critique by arguing that poorly designed development initiatives can exacerbate existing grievances or reproduce local inequalities if not anchored in effective governance and conflict resolution mechanisms. His concerns resonate with one of the theoretical limitations of the Illegal Enterprise Theory—its tendency to emphasize economic rationality while underestimating the political and social dimensions of organized criminal behavior. Even where development improves livelihoods, if governance systems remain weak or exclusionary, communities may continue to see illegal networks as more legitimate or accessible sources of stability and

support. Thus, development alone cannot dismantle the bandit economy without also addressing governance gaps, institutional trust, and long-term political inclusion.

The study's findings are therefore well supported by the Illegal Enterprise Theory, which provides a useful analytical lens for understanding how economic interventions can shift the incentives that drive participation in cross-border banditry. While development initiatives offer a rational and necessary counter to the appeal of illegal economies, their success ultimately depends on how effectively they alter the opportunity structures that make banditry a viable economic choice. This reinforces the broader conclusion that combating the bandit economy requires not only policing and diplomacy, but also sustained, well-targeted development efforts that transform both the material and institutional foundations on which illegal enterprises thrive.

5.2.6 Cross-border trade facilitation

The study's findings that cross-border trade facilitation—particularly through the establishment of legal trade routes—is used as a strategy to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya–Uganda border are well-supported by scholarly research. Establishing formal trade routes aims to create structured and regulated pathways for commerce, which helps to reduce opportunities for illicit activities and enhance regional economic integration. Scholarly literature affirms the effectiveness of these formal channels in not only promoting economic development but also in stabilizing insecure borderlands. For instance, Dijkstra and Poelman (2013) emphasize that legal trade routes are critical in managing cross-border trade by minimizing smuggling and other forms of illegal exchange. By introducing clarity, transparency, and accountability into cross-border

commerce, these routes help to curtail informal markets that thrive on unregulated movement and secrecy.

These findings resonate strongly with the principles of the Illegal Enterprise Theory, which conceptualizes criminal activity—such as the bandit economy—as a rational response to unregulated economic spaces (Smith, 1975; Albini, 1971). In the absence of formal economic infrastructure, borderland communities often resort to illegal enterprises that mimic the organizational structure and market functions of legitimate businesses. Establishing legal trade routes disrupts this dynamic by replacing informal, high-risk channels with state-supported, low-risk alternatives. Through this lens, the facilitation of legal trade routes directly challenges the economic logic that sustains the bandit economy, making lawful engagement more attractive than illegal enterprise.

Similarly, Ager and Araujo (2016) note that legal trade routes enhance both economic stability and border security by ensuring that the flow of goods is monitored and controlled. Their findings indicate that the formalization of cross-border commerce reduces reliance on informal and unregulated crossings, which are often exploited by bandits and smugglers. From an Illegal Enterprise Theory standpoint, this shift diminishes the profitability and feasibility of criminal operations by increasing transaction costs and reducing access to vulnerable, unsupervised spaces. In other words, as legitimate trade becomes more accessible and efficient, the cost–benefit structure of illegal enterprise becomes less appealing.

However, critical perspectives point out that while legal trade routes offer substantial benefits, they are not without limitations. Bessler and Sarmiento (2017) caution that the

success of these trade routes depends on the capacity of states to enforce trade regulations and maintain adequate infrastructure. Without strong enforcement mechanisms and reliable physical infrastructure, legal routes may be ineffective in deterring smuggling and banditry. The Illegal Enterprise Theory supports this concern, as criminal actors are seen to adapt rationally to institutional weaknesses. When enforcement is poor or infrastructure is lacking, illegal enterprises are more likely to persist, even in the presence of formal trade alternatives.

Moreover, Kabeer (2015) argues that legal trade facilitation must be part of a broader, multi-dimensional strategy that addresses underlying socio-economic drivers of banditry. Formalizing trade routes may reduce illicit activity in the short term, but without improving local livelihoods, addressing poverty, and ensuring equitable access to economic opportunities, the structural appeal of the bandit economy may remain intact. This critique highlights a known limitation of the Illegal Enterprise Theory: while it effectively explains the profit-driven logic of criminal enterprises, it sometimes overlooks the deeper social and historical contexts—such as marginalization and systemic underdevelopment—that inform community participation in illicit economies.

In conclusion, the study's findings on cross-border trade facilitation through legal trade routes align with the Illegal Enterprise Theory's premise that rational economic actors respond to available opportunities and constraints. Legal trade routes work by reconfiguring the economic environment to favor lawful enterprise over illegal activity. However, as scholarly critiques reveal, these strategies must be complemented by strong governance, effective enforcement, and broader social and economic reforms to address the full spectrum of factors sustaining the bandit economy. A holistic and integrated

approach is essential for ensuring that the introduction of legal trade routes leads to lasting reductions in cross-border crime and greater regional stability.

5.2.7 Harmonization of the laws to combat bandit economy

The study's findings that harmonization of laws is a strategy employed to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border align with a significant body of scholarly work that underscores the importance of legal coherence in managing cross-border economic activities and addressing the bandit economy. Harmonizing laws involves aligning regulations and legal frameworks across borders to create a more integrated and effective approach to addressing shared challenges.

Scholarly research supports the notion that harmonization of laws can play a crucial role in combating the bandit economy. For example, Radaelli (2005) argues that legal harmonization facilitates better cooperation and coordination between countries, particularly in managing cross-border issues like smuggling and other illegal economic activities. By standardizing regulations and procedures, countries can create a unified approach to enforcement and reduce the opportunities for bandits to exploit legal discrepancies between jurisdictions. Radaelli's work highlights that harmonization helps to streamline legal processes, making it more difficult for illicit actors to evade detection and prosecution.

In light of the foregoing, former bandit gang members argued that :

> In the past, we exploited the gaps between the laws in Kenya and Uganda to facilitate our activities. The inconsistencies in regulations made it easier for us to operate without facing severe repercussions. For instance, we could move goods across the border where the enforcement was lax, or the

> penalties were less severe. However, when both countries started aligning their laws, the dynamics significantly changed. The harmonization of legal frameworks made it much harder for us to find loopholes. With stricter and more consistent regulations on both sides, the risks of getting caught increased. This shift forced many of us to rethink our activities and look for less risky avenues. The coordinated legal approach between Kenya and Uganda is a key factor in disrupting bandit operations, as it reduces the exploitation of regulatory weaknesses (KII with former bandit gang member,23/6/2024 along Lokinyattala,Kenya-Uganda border)

Further one of the administrative officer from Uganda stated that:

> When Kenya and Uganda began working on harmonizing their laws, it had a noticeable impact on our operations. Before the harmonization, the differences in border regulations allowed us to evade detection and penalties more easily. Each side had its own set of rules, and we used this to our advantage, knowing that enforcement was patchy at best. However, as both countries aligned their legal frameworks and enforcement practices, we faced greater challenges. The consistency in laws meant that our smuggling routes and illegal trade practices became more difficult to sustain. The legal changes forced many of us to abandon our old methods or risk harsher penalties. This shift has made it clear that a unified legal approach is crucial in tackling cross-border crimes effectively. It not only addresses the immediate issues but also creates a more challenging environment for those engaged in banditry (KII with administrative officer at Kenya-Uganda border)

In support of the foregoing, Kletzer and McCallum (2014) discuss the benefits of legal harmonization in their study on regional trade agreements. They note that when countries harmonize their laws, they improve regulatory consistency and reduce trade barriers. This consistency not only facilitates legitimate trade but also helps in combating illegal activities by closing loopholes and eliminating discrepancies that bandits can exploit. Their research emphasizes that effective legal harmonization requires active collaboration and agreement among neighbouring countries to ensure that all parties are aligned in their regulatory approaches. However, some scholars offer a more critical perspective on the harmonization of laws. Brenton and Sheehan (2007) argue that while harmonizing laws

can be beneficial, it is often challenging due to differences in legal traditions, enforcement capacities, and political will among countries. They suggest that the harmonisation process can be complex and may require significant negotiation and compromise. Brenton and Sheehan highlight that without addressing these challenges, the benefits of harmonization may be limited, and the intended outcomes may not fully materialize.

Moreover, Tietze (2016) raises concerns about the limitations of legal harmonization in addressing cross-border issues. Tietze argues that harmonization alone may not be sufficient to tackle the bandit economy unless it is accompanied by effective implementation and enforcement mechanisms. He emphasizes that even with harmonized laws, the success of combating illicit activities depends on the ability of countries to enforce regulations consistently and address the underlying socio-economic factors driving the bandit economy. Tietze's research highlights that legal harmonization should be integrated into a broader strategy that includes enforcement, economic development, and regional cooperation.

The findings of the study revealed that that harmonization of laws is used to combat the bandit economy are supported by scholarly research that underscores its role in improving cross-border cooperation and regulatory consistency. Researchers like Radaelli ,Kletzer and McCallum affirm the benefits of legal harmonization in addressing shared challenges and reducing opportunities for illicit activities. However, critical perspectives from Brenton,Sheehan, and Tietze highlight the challenges and limitations of harmonization, emphasizing the need for effective implementation and integration with broader strategies. Successful harmonization of laws requires addressing these

challenges and ensuring that legal frameworks are complemented by robust enforcement and comprehensive regional approaches.

5.2.8 Joint Public Awareness

The study's finding that joint public awareness campaigns are employed to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya–Uganda border is well-supported by scholarship stressing the value of public education and community engagement in curbing illicit markets. Such campaigns aim to inform residents about the risks and consequences of bandit activities, encourage reporting, and build a shared commitment to border security. Bamberger et al. (2016) show that clear messaging and multi-channel information drives can raise vigilance and cooperation with law-enforcement, empowering communities to act as the first line of defense. Likewise, Bursik and Grasmick (1993) find that when people understand the broader impact of illegal trade and the importance of reporting suspicious behavior, collective efficacy rises and the social fabric for resisting banditry strengthens.

These observations align closely with the Illegal Enterprise Theory, which treats criminal networks as rational enterprises that rely on local complicity, secrecy, and a favorable cost-benefit calculus (Smith 1975; Albini 1971). By equipping community members with knowledge about how banditry operates and why it threatens their own security and livelihoods, public-awareness campaigns increase the perceived risks and social costs of colluding with or tolerating illicit enterprises. In effect, they narrow the "information asymmetry" on which illegal markets thrive, raising the transaction costs for bandit groups and weakening their recruitment base. From the theory's vantage point, the

campaigns thus reshape the economic logic underpinning the bandit economy: when the probability of detection rises and informal support erodes, illegal enterprises become less profitable and more precarious.

Critiques, however, caution against viewing awareness in isolation. Galtung (2002) argues that public education must dovetail with enforcement, economic opportunities, and social services to address the deeper structural drivers of banditry; otherwise, shifts in attitude may not translate into lasting behavioral change. Van Dijk (2007) similarly notes that sustained relevance and adaptive messaging are essential: without ongoing support, campaigns risk fading as communities confront new pressures and narratives propagated by bandit networks. These concerns echo a limitation of the Illegal Enterprise Theory itself—its emphasis on rational choice can understate the social grievances, identity dynamics, and governance gaps that often underpin community tolerance of illegal enterprise.

In sum, joint public-awareness campaigns, when integrated into a broader strategy that includes strong enforcement, economic development, and continuous adaptation, effectively leverage the insights of the Illegal Enterprise Theory. They diminish the informational and social advantages that make the bandit economy a rational option, while reinforcing community incentives to side with lawful trade and collective security over illicit gain.

5.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has assessed the track one diplomatic strategies employed to combat bandit economy along Kenya-Uganda border. The researcher has argued that there are several

strategies employed including but not limited to joint border patrols, bilateral agreements, information sharing, cross-border community engagement, harmonization of laws to combat bandit economy as well as joint public awareness. The next chapter presents the findings on Challenges and Opportunities for Track One Diplomacy in Combating Bandit Economy Along Kenya-Uganda Border.

CHAPTER SIX

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRACK ONE DIPLOMACY IN COMBATING BANDIT ECONOMY ALONG KENYA-UGANDA BORDER

This chapter presents the challenges and opportunities for track-one diplomacy in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. It ends with a chapter summary.

6.1 Challenges Facing Track One Diplomacy

Track One Diplomacy faces several challenges, including political resistance, conflicting national interests, and the complexity of international negotiations. These obstacles hinder progress and effectiveness, impacting efforts to resolve conflicts and foster cooperation between nations. However, this study found that out of 311 respondents 57(18.32%) reasoned that volatility of the regions across the border points was a challenge facing track one diplomacy in combating bandit economy, 49(15.76%) stated that government negligence on the high potential of economic activities along the border points was a challenge 16(19.61%) reasoned that non-involvement of local leadership was a challenge 23(7.39%) argued that lack of data on actual cross-border trade volumes

was a challenge, 24(7.72%) reasoned that reliance on track one diplomatic strategy was a challenge, 57(18.32%) reasoned that corruption among implementing officials was a common challenge, 21(6.75%) averred that difficult terrain compounded activities initiated by Track one to combat bandit economy along the border and 19(6.10%) stated that unwillingness of governments to commit resources along the border was a challenge facing Track one diplomacy. The results are illustrated in figure 6.1.

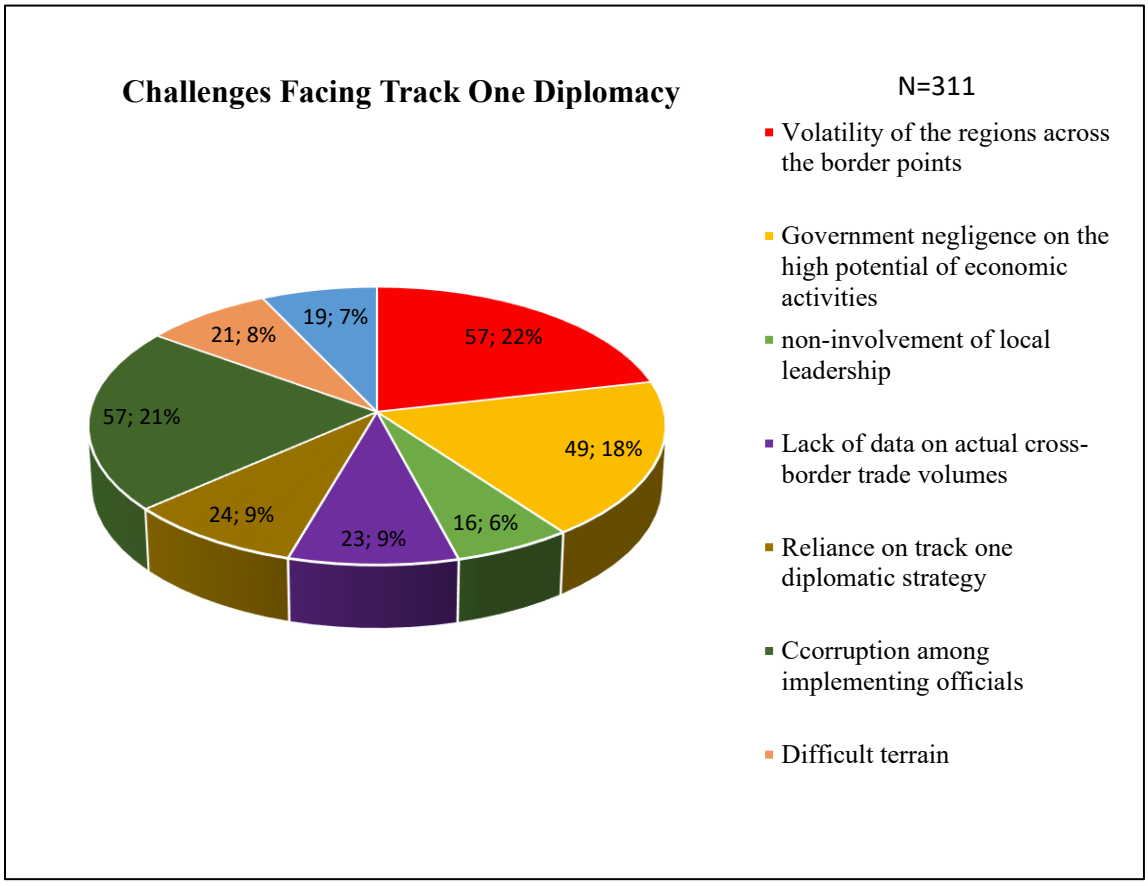

Figure 6. 1 Challenges Facing Track One Diplomacy

Field Data, 2024

The study's findings reveal several significant challenges facing Track One Diplomacy in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. Each challenge is rooted

in the complex socio-political and economic landscape of the region, as expressed by the respondents. Firstly, 57 respondents (18.32%) cited the volatility of regions across the border points as a major challenge. The instability and frequent conflicts in these areas create a hostile environment that hampers diplomatic efforts. Volatile regions are often marked by lawlessness and violence, making it difficult for diplomatic initiatives to gain traction. This instability can disrupt communication, hinder movement, and create a climate of distrust, all of which are detrimental to effective diplomacy. Secondly, 49 respondents (15.76%) identified government negligence of the high potential of economic activities along the border points as a significant challenge.

Governments may overlook the economic opportunities that regulated trade could bring, focusing instead on central urban areas. This negligence results in inadequate infrastructure and security measures at the borders, allowing the bandit economy to flourish unchecked. Recognizing and investing in the economic potential of these border areas shifted the focus from illicit to legitimate economic activities. Thirdly, 61 respondents (19.61%) reasoned that the non-involvement of local leadership was a challenge. Local leaders are often more attuned to the dynamics and needs of their communities and can play a crucial role in facilitating dialogue and cooperation. Their exclusion from Track One Diplomacy efforts undermines the legitimacy and effectiveness of these initiatives. Engaging local leadership can enhance the relevance and acceptance of diplomatic strategies. Fourthly, 23 respondents (7.39%) argued that the lack of data on actual cross-border trade volumes was a significant obstacle. Accurate data is essential for understanding the scale and nature of the bandit economy, enabling

targeted and effective interventions. The absence of reliable data makes it difficult to formulate strategies, monitor progress, and allocate resources efficiently.

Additionally, 24 respondents (7.72%) reasoned that reliance on Track One diplomatic strategies alone was a challenge. Track One Diplomacy, which involves official governmental negotiations, may not be sufficient to address the complexities of the bandit economy. Complementary strategies, including Track Two Diplomacy (involving non-governmental actors) and grassroots initiatives, are necessary to create a comprehensive and multifaceted approach. Corruption among implementing officials was another common challenge identified by 57 respondents (18.32%). Corruption undermines the rule of law and erodes public trust in diplomatic efforts. When officials are involved in or turn a blind eye to illicit activities, it becomes almost impossible to combat the bandit economy effectively.

Furthermore, 21 respondents (6.75%) cited the difficult terrain as a significant impediment to diplomatic activities. The rugged and remote border areas pose logistical challenges, making it difficult for officials to monitor and control the movement of goods and people effectively. This geographical difficulty complicates enforcement and the implementation of anti-banditry measures. Lastly, 19 respondents (6.10%) stated that the unwillingness of governments to commit resources along the border was a challenge. Effective diplomacy and enforcement require substantial financial and human resources. Without adequate commitment from the governments, efforts to combat the bandit economy were under-resourced and ineffective. The study highlights a range of challenges facing Track One Diplomacy in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. These challenges, including regional volatility, government

negligence, lack of local leadership involvement, data deficiencies, over-reliance on official diplomatic strategies, corruption, difficult terrain, and resource unwillingness, underscore the complexity of addressing this issue. Comprehensive and multi-faceted strategies that involve local communities, robust data collection, anti-corruption measures, and significant resource commitment are essential for effective intervention.

6.1.1 Volatility of the regions across the border points

The study's findings that volatility of regions across border points is a challenge facing Track One Diplomacy in combating the bandit economy align with a significant body of scholarly work. This volatility, characterized by instability, violence, and lawlessness, creates a hostile environment that undermines diplomatic efforts and complicates cross-border cooperation.

In support of the foregoing view, one of the security officers stated that:

> The volatility of regions at border points presents a significant challenge to our Track one Diplomacy efforts aimed at combating the bandit economy. Areas marked by instability, violence, and lawlessness make it incredibly difficult to implement and sustain effective security measures. For instance, the ongoing unrest in the border areas between Kenya and Uganda has repeatedly disrupted our joint operations and hindered our ability to enforce agreements. This volatile environment not only complicates coordination but also increases the risk to personnel and undermines our collective efforts to stabilize the region and combat illegal activities (KII with security officer on 25/6/2024).

Scholars such as Patrick (2011) argue that unstable border regions often serve as breeding grounds for illicit activities, including smuggling and banditry. In his research on fragile states, Patrick highlights how instability creates power vacuums that are exploited by non-state actors, making it difficult for official diplomatic efforts to take root. This

supports the study's finding that volatility poses a significant challenge to Track One Diplomacy, as unstable conditions hinder the establishment of effective governance and rule of law.

Further, he stated that:

> Addressing the bandit economy through Track one Diplomacy is severely impacted by the volatility and lawlessness prevalent at some border points. These unstable conditions make it challenging to establish effective cross-border security protocols and cooperative measures. For example, frequent clashes and the absence of consistent law enforcement in volatile regions disrupt our planned operations and create gaps in security coverage. The chaotic nature of these areas often results in unpredictable security threats that undermine our diplomatic and operational efforts, making it harder to achieve our goals of reducing banditry and enhancing border stability. (KII with security officer on 25/6/2024).

Additionally, Menkhaus (2007) discusses the impact of regional volatility on state-building efforts in his study on conflict zones. He asserts that regions plagued by instability tend to resist formal state control, complicating diplomatic efforts to establish legal and economic frameworks. This corroborates the study's finding by demonstrating how such instability disrupts Track One Diplomacy and allows the bandit economy to persist. From the perspective of Soft Power Theory, this volatility undermines the attractiveness and legitimacy of state-led initiatives, limiting their influence over communities that may view state actors with skepticism or hostility (Nye, 2004). Without credible appeal, even diplomatically sound interventions may struggle to win local cooperation.

Furthermore, Galtung's (1969) theory of conflict and violence reinforces this view by illustrating how volatile regions suffer from deep structural issues that diplomatic negotiations alone cannot resolve. His call for comprehensive peacebuilding strategies—

including economic equity, improved governance, and social inclusion—aligns with the soft power principle that influence is most effective when rooted in shared values and trust-building. The state must demonstrate legitimacy and offer attractive alternatives to banditry to reshape local preferences through persuasion rather than coercion.

Conversely, Zartman (2000), in his "ripeness theory," presents a more dynamic view of volatility, arguing that severe instability can sometimes create opportunities for diplomacy when conflicting parties see continued conflict as too costly. From a soft power standpoint, this "moment of ripeness" can open space for diplomatic actors to project influence by offering peaceful, mutually beneficial alternatives. If timed correctly, such diplomacy can leverage the appeal of stability, economic recovery, and international legitimacy as tools of attraction.

However, the optimism in Zartman's position is tempered by Call (2008), who critiques external diplomatic interventions in volatile regions, particularly when they lack local legitimacy. Call emphasizes that without local ownership and community buy-in, Track One efforts often fail. This highlights a crucial tenet of Soft Power Theory: influence is most effective when grounded in perceived legitimacy, cultural resonance, and voluntary alignment with shared interests. In volatile regions, soft power must therefore be embedded in localized strategies that prioritize trust, dialogue, and respect for local norms.

In conclusion, the study's findings that regional volatility poses significant challenges to Track One Diplomacy are reinforced by scholarly work that highlights both the structural and perceptual barriers to success. Scholars like Menkhaus and Patrick affirm that

instability enables illicit economies while obstructing formal diplomacy. Galtung's emphasis on structural violence and Call's focus on local legitimacy both align with soft power's insistence on attraction and credibility as the basis of influence. While Zartman introduces a strategic opportunity within volatility, successful diplomacy ultimately depends on building and sustaining soft power through inclusive, context-sensitive engagement that integrates local, national, and international efforts.

6.1.2 Government negligence of the high potential of economic activities

The study's findings that government negligence of the high potential of economic activities along border points is a significant challenge in combating the bandit economy are well-supported by scholarly research. This negligence, characterized by a lack of investment in infrastructure, security, and economic development, creates an environment where illicit activities can flourish.

In support of the foregoing one of the KII stated that:

> Government negligence towards the economic potential of border regions exacerbates the challenge of combating the bandit economy. The lack of investment in critical infrastructure and security measures leaves these areas poorly equipped to handle the complexities of border security. For instance, the absence of proper roads and security facilities makes it easier for bandits to operate with impunity. This negligence not only hinders our ability to effectively patrol and monitor these regions but also fails to address the root economic conditions that enable illicit activities to thrive. Without adequate governmental support, our efforts to combat the bandit economy are significantly undermined (KII with POLITICIAN security officer on 25/6/2024).

Scholars such as Frynas (2015) argue that government negligence in border regions often results from a combination of political, economic, and administrative challenges. Frynas highlights that border areas are frequently marginalized in national development plans,

leading to underinvestment in critical infrastructure and services. This neglect allows informal and illegal economic activities to thrive, as formal economic opportunities are scarce. Frynas's research supports the study's findings by illustrating how government neglect creates a vacuum that is filled by the bandit economy.

Additionally, Boone (2003) discusses the political dimensions of government neglect in her study on decentralization and development. She argues that central governments often prioritize politically strategic regions while marginalizing peripheral border areas deemed less vital to national stability. This political neglect exacerbates underdevelopment and insecurity, creating fertile ground for the bandit economy. Boone's work corroborates the study's findings by illustrating how state inattention to border regions contributes to the proliferation of illicit economic networks. From the lens of Soft Power Theory, this neglect signals a failure by the state to project legitimacy and attractiveness in borderlands—key elements required to cultivate voluntary cooperation and allegiance (Nye, 2004). When communities do not perceive the state as a credible or beneficial actor, they are more likely to align with informal or illicit power structures.

Similarly, Herbst (2010), in his analysis of state power in Africa, underscores the logistical and financial barriers that prevent governments from asserting control over remote border regions. His argument that urban centers receive disproportionate attention further aligns with Soft Power Theory: where state presence is minimal or transactional, its persuasive influence erodes. Without consistent investment in services, infrastructure, and inclusion, the state loses its capacity to appeal to border communities through the soft power of legitimacy, identity, and opportunity.

On the other hand, Portes and Haller (2005) present a counterview, suggesting that informal and illegal economies can thrive even in well-governed spaces due to systemic issues such as corruption and weak legal institutions. Their insight implies that soft power alone is insufficient if undermined by internal contradictions; a state may appear developmentally active while lacking the moral authority or institutional integrity to command respect. Thus, soft power must be backed by credible governance and rule of law to sustain its influence.

Additionally, Collier (2000) offers a strategic interpretation of state neglect, arguing that governments may intentionally marginalize border areas to avoid high economic or political costs. This form of calculated disengagement reflects an unwillingness to expend soft power in areas deemed low-return. From a Soft Power Theory standpoint, such neglect represents not just an absence of influence but a conscious withdrawal of the state's persuasive capacities. Reclaiming influence in such areas would require the state to re-establish itself as a legitimate and attractive partner through sustained, inclusive development and political integration.

The study's findings that government negligence undermines efforts to combat the bandit economy are well-supported by scholars such as Boone, Herbst, and Frynas, who highlight the structural and political roots of marginalization. These insights align with Soft Power Theory by underscoring the importance of credibility, legitimacy, and inclusion in shaping behavior and allegiance in border communities. At the same time, critiques from Portes and Haller, and Collier, reveal that soft power must be coupled with institutional reform and strategic clarity. Therefore, effective responses to the bandit economy must go beyond symbolic gestures or isolated investments. They require

holistic strategies that rebuild the state's appeal through consistent presence, fair governance, and culturally resonant development efforts in historically neglected border zones.

6.1.3 Non-involvement of local leadership

The study's findings that the non-involvement of local leadership is a significant challenge in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border align with extensive scholarly research. The involvement of local leadership is crucial for the success of anti-banditry measures, as local leaders possess intimate knowledge of the community and can foster cooperation and compliance. Scholars such as Lund (2006) argue that local leadership plays a pivotal role in governance and conflict resolution in many African contexts. Lund's research highlights that local leaders are often more trusted and respected by their communities than distant central government officials. Their involvement enhances the perceived legitimacy of security interventions, which is central to Soft Power Theory (Nye, 2004). According to this theory, the ability to influence others relies not on coercion or force, but on attraction and legitimacy—qualities that local leaders can confer upon state-led interventions when properly engaged.

Additionally, Baker (2010) emphasizes the effectiveness of community-based approaches to security and governance, arguing that local leaders can mobilize community resources and foster a sense of ownership over security initiatives. From a soft power perspective, such ownership is vital for sustaining influence. When communities are involved in shaping solutions, they are more likely to internalize and support them. Baker's work

corroborates the study's findings by showing that the exclusion of local leadership erodes soft power by reducing the community's willingness to align with state objectives, thereby weakening the state's appeal and effectiveness.

Furthermore, Baldwin (2013), in her analysis of local governance and development, highlights the bridging role local leaders play between the state and community. She argues that their involvement ensures cultural relevance and policy acceptance. This is essential in soft power terms, as policies and programs must resonate with the values and identities of the local population to be persuasive. When these leaders are left out, the state forfeits a key channel for communicating attractive alternatives to the bandit economy—alternatives rooted in legitimacy and local relevance.

On the other hand, some scholars present more cautious views. Jackson (2007) warns that local leaders can sometimes be complicit in the very criminal enterprises they are expected to oppose. In such cases, their involvement may actually undermine state influence rather than enhance it. Soft power relies not only on credibility but also on trust; if local leaders are seen as self-interested or corrupt, their inclusion can backfire, damaging both the message and the messenger.

Likewise, Meagher (2012) offers a nuanced analysis of local governance under conditions of weak state presence. She argues that while local leaders are often indispensable, their authority can be fragmented or contested, and their capacity to implement reform limited. In soft power terms, this means that while local leaders can help project state legitimacy, their impact depends heavily on being backed by a credible and capable state. Their involvement must be supported by institutional infrastructure,

oversight, and consistent alignment with broader governance reforms to ensure sustained influence.

The study's findings that the non-involvement of local leadership is a critical barrier to combating the bandit economy are well-supported by scholars such as Lund, Baker, and Baldwin, who affirm the role of local leadership in facilitating community engagement, legitimacy, and effective governance. These dynamics are central to soft power, which rests on the capacity to win hearts and minds through trust, shared values, and credibility. At the same time, cautionary perspectives from Jackson and Meagher emphasize that local leadership is not inherently virtuous or effective; its soft power potential must be carefully managed. Therefore, effective anti-banditry strategies must integrate trusted local leadership with strong state backing, institutional oversight, and transparent frameworks to maximize influence and community alignment against the bandit economy.

6.1.4 Lack of data on actual cross-border trade volumes

The study's findings that a lack of data on actual cross-border trade volumes poses a significant challenge in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border align with existing scholarly research. Accurate data is essential for understanding the scale and nature of cross-border trade, which in turn informs effective policy-making and enforcement strategies. Scholars such as Lesser and Moisé-Leeman (2009) argue that reliable trade data is critical for formulating effective trade policies and monitoring compliance. Their research underscores that in many developing regions, the absence of accurate data hampers the ability to assess the true extent of both legal and illegal trade

activities. This supports the study's findings by highlighting how data scarcity impedes efforts to combat the bandit economy, as authorities lack the evidence base required to act decisively or persuasively.

In the context of Soft Power Theory (Nye, 2004), the absence of reliable data also diminishes a state's credibility and persuasive capacity. Soft power depends not only on cultural appeal or political values but also on perceived competence and trustworthiness. A state that cannot produce or act on basic trade statistics appears less capable, thereby undermining its attractiveness and influence in the eyes of both citizens and regional partners. The inability to demonstrate informed leadership in trade governance weakens the state's moral authority to persuade border communities to align with formal economic structures.

Additionally, Golub (2015) discusses the challenges posed by informal cross-border trade in Africa, noting that this activity is often underreported or completely unrecorded. Informal and illicit trade flourish in these statistical blind spots, making it easier for the bandit economy to persist unnoticed and unchallenged. Golub's work corroborates the study's findings by illustrating how the absence of accurate trade data sustains the invisibility and impunity of criminal networks. From a soft power lens, this invisibility hampers the state's ability to offer compelling, data-driven narratives that justify regulation or law enforcement interventions, leading to diminished public cooperation.

Moreover, De Wulf and Sokol (2004) emphasize that data collection and analysis are fundamental to customs modernization and trade facilitation. They argue that the ability to trace trade flows allows authorities to detect vulnerabilities and respond strategically.

Without this information, enforcement is often reactive rather than proactive, and state institutions appear disconnected from realities on the ground. This detachment further erodes soft power, as affected populations may perceive the state as either uninterested or incapable of managing border economies effectively.

However, some scholars present more nuanced views on the feasibility and necessity of comprehensive trade data. For instance, Bhagwati (2004) argues that while data is valuable, governments can still achieve progress through regulatory reforms and inter-agency coordination. His position implies that credibility—another pillar of soft power—can also be strengthened through transparent processes and best practices, even when data is imperfect or incomplete. This perspective highlights that soft power is not solely dependent on knowledge, but also on consistent, fair, and cooperative behavior from institutions.

Furthermore, Cantens (2012) addresses the logistical and structural barriers that constrain data collection in border regions, particularly in developing countries. He notes that financial, technical, and institutional limitations frequently prevent border and customs agencies from gathering and analyzing trade data effectively. This aligns with Soft Power Theory by emphasizing the importance of institutional capacity in fostering credibility and influence. A state that invests in capacity-building and transparency projects its commitment to effective governance—thereby increasing its soft power and its legitimacy in the eyes of local communities, regional partners, and international actors.

The researcher therefore argues that the study's findings—that the lack of data on actual cross-border trade volumes significantly hampers anti-banditry efforts—are well

supported by the literature. Scholars like Lesser and Moisé-Leeman, Golub, and De Wulf and Sokol affirm the role of data in ensuring effective and targeted interventions. However, views from Bhagwati and Cantens offer important reminders that data collection must be paired with regulatory reforms and institutional strengthening. Within the soft power framework, building influence requires not only knowing more but also appearing competent, fair, and responsive. As such, effective strategies to combat the bandit economy should integrate improved data collection with enhanced institutional credibility, capacity-building, and cooperative governance frameworks that restore public trust and regional alignment.

6.1.5 Reliance on Track One Diplomatic Strategy

The study's findings that reliance on Track One diplomatic strategies poses challenges in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border align with existing scholarly research. Track One diplomacy, which involves formal governmental negotiations and agreements, often falls short in addressing complex, grassroots issues such as the bandit economy due to its inherently top-down approach. Scholars like Zartman (2008) argue that Track One diplomacy is limited in scope, as it typically excludes non-state actors and local stakeholders who are directly involved in or affected by cross-border economic dynamics. Zartman's research emphasizes the need for a multi-track approach—incorporating Track Two (informal, non-governmental dialogue) and Track Three (people-to-people engagement)—to resolve such deeply embedded conflicts. This perspective supports the study’s findings by illustrating that exclusive reliance on high-level diplomacy often fails to engage the social and economic networks sustaining the bandit economy.

Soft Power Theory, as articulated by Nye (2004), provides a useful lens through which to examine these limitations. Soft power relies on attraction and persuasion rather than coercion. In contexts such as the Kenya-Uganda border, the ability of the state to attract cooperation and legitimacy among local actors is weakened when diplomacy is restricted to elites. By sidelining community voices, Track One diplomacy may inadvertently diminish the state's soft power—its capacity to shape preferences through credibility, trust, and cultural resonance. Without the persuasive involvement of local leaders and networks, state-driven interventions risk being perceived as externally imposed and disconnected from lived realities, reducing their legitimacy and impact.

Additionally, Lederach (1997) advocates for a peacebuilding architecture that integrates multiple tracks of diplomacy. He highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity, local ownership, and relational approaches to conflict transformation, all of which amplify soft power by fostering trust and voluntary compliance rather than imposing formal agreements. Lederach's emphasis on inclusivity reinforces the study's findings by affirming that Track One diplomacy alone cannot fully address the multi-layered causes and structures of the bandit economy. Instead, it must be complemented by community-driven processes that enhance both legitimacy and social cohesion.

Paffenholz (2014), in her extensive review of peacebuilding models, also critiques the limited reach of Track One diplomacy, arguing that such efforts often fail to address structural violence and economic injustice. She contends that interventions focused solely on elite negotiation tend to neglect grassroots support and implementation mechanisms, thereby weakening their soft power effect. Her work supports the study's position that

meaningful and sustainable responses to the bandit economy require broader inclusion and participatory frameworks to resonate with local populations.

Conversely, some scholars underscore the continued importance of Track One diplomacy. Crocker, Hampson, and Aall (1999) argue that official diplomacy plays an essential role in creating the legal and institutional foundations for long-term peace and economic cooperation. They maintain that while Track One diplomacy has its shortcomings, it is indispensable for mobilizing international support, formalizing cross-border commitments, and establishing state legitimacy—core components of national soft power. Their position suggests that the challenge is not Track One itself, but its isolation from other diplomatic tracks.

Similarly, Richmond (2011) critiques overly fragmented peacebuilding efforts, warning that poorly coordinated multi-track strategies can result in duplications, confusion, or contradictory agendas. He argues that while the inclusion of civil society is crucial, it must be done within a coherent framework that aligns with official diplomatic efforts. Richmond's perspective implies that the solution lies not in abandoning Track One diplomacy, but in harmonizing it with community-level initiatives to maximize both institutional strength and soft power appeal.

The researcher thus argues that the study's findings on the limitations of exclusive reliance on Track One diplomacy are well substantiated. While this form of diplomacy remains critical for establishing formal agreements and frameworks, its effectiveness is greatly enhanced when combined with bottom-up approaches that bolster state legitimacy and foster local ownership. Within the Soft Power framework, success lies in the state's

ability to persuade rather than impose—an ability that is strengthened through inclusive, well-integrated diplomacy that speaks not only to governments but also to the hearts and interests of border communities.

6.1.6 Corruption among implementing officials

The study's findings that corruption among implementing officials is a significant challenge in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border align with existing scholarly research. Corruption undermines law enforcement efforts, facilitates illegal trade, and erodes public trust in government institutions, making it a critical barrier to effective border management. Scholars like Mbaku (2007) emphasize that corruption within government agencies, including customs and border patrol, significantly impedes economic development and security efforts in Africa. Mbaku's research illustrates how corrupt officials can be bribed to overlook or actively participate in illegal activities, allowing smuggling and other forms of cross-border criminality to thrive. This directly supports the study's findings by showing that corruption not only enables but entrenches the bandit economy.

Moreover, Van Schoor and Martin (2011) reinforce this view by highlighting how corruption at border points undermines trade regulation and enforcement. Their research demonstrates that when officials are complicit in illegal practices, it fosters an environment where informal economies flourish unchecked. This dynamic not only weakens the formal economy but also delegitimizes state authority in the eyes of local communities. This erosion of legitimacy is central to the Soft Power Theory, as articulated by Nye (2004), which holds that the state's power to attract, persuade, and

gain voluntary compliance diminishes when it fails to uphold integrity and public trust. In this sense, corruption does not merely represent administrative inefficiency—it critically damages the state's soft power by undercutting its credibility and moral authority.

Additionally, Hope (2017) examines the systemic nature of corruption across African public institutions and its implications for governance. He contends that pervasive corruption contributes to institutional fragility, weakens state capacity, and undermines reform efforts. Hope's findings support the study's conclusion that corruption among implementing officials facilitates illegal trade and weakens the overall integrity of border governance systems. By extension, it also hinders the state's ability to project soft power, as populations lose faith in the fairness and efficacy of state institutions.

However, some scholars offer more nuanced perspectives. De Wulf and Sokol (2004) argue that corruption, while critical, is not the sole obstacle to effective border management. They point to structural challenges such as underfunding, poor infrastructure, and limited training for border officials. These constraints create vulnerabilities that corruption exploits, suggesting that anti-corruption efforts must be paired with capacity building. This view reinforces the notion that soft power cannot be restored through punitive measures alone—it must be cultivated through investment in competence, transparency, and institutional responsiveness.

Cantens (2012) similarly acknowledges the corrosive effect of corruption but focuses on practical solutions through technological and procedural reforms. His work advocates for digital systems, audit trails, and transparent documentation practices that minimize discretionary power and reduce opportunities for graft. These reforms not only deter

corruption but also enhance public confidence in institutions, thereby strengthening the state's soft power through improved accountability and service delivery.

Additionally, Bhagwati (2004) argues that anti-corruption efforts should be nested within broader trade facilitation strategies. He maintains that focusing narrowly on corruption risks ignoring other inefficiencies that affect border governance. Instead, he proposes an integrated framework that balances regulatory enforcement with administrative reforms, institutional development, and cross-border cooperation. From a soft power perspective, this comprehensive approach can help rebuild the state's attractiveness and moral authority by showing competence, fairness, and a commitment to development.

The researcher thus argues that the study's findings—highlighting corruption among implementing officials as a major impediment to combating the bandit economy—are well-supported by scholarly literature. Scholars such as Mbaku, Van Schoor, Martin, and Hope provide evidence that corruption compromises law enforcement and facilitates illicit trade. Meanwhile, insights from De Wulf, Sokol, Cantens, and Bhagwati broaden the discussion by emphasizing the importance of institutional reform, infrastructure investment, and capacity-building. When viewed through the lens of Soft Power Theory, these findings underscore that curbing corruption is not merely a matter of legality but a vital strategy for restoring state legitimacy and rebuilding the trust necessary to persuade communities to reject the bandit economy. A state that is seen as just, capable, and incorruptible wields soft power that can ultimately prove more enduring and effective than coercion alone.

6.1.7 Difficult terrain

The study's findings that difficult terrain poses a significant challenge to combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border are consistent with existing scholarly research. The geographical and topographical characteristics of border regions can impede law enforcement efforts, facilitate illegal activities, and complicate the implementation of effective border management strategies. Scholars such as Beek (2000) emphasize the impact of challenging terrain on border security. Beek's research highlights how mountainous areas, dense forests, and other difficult terrains create natural barriers that hinder patrols and surveillance. These environments provide cover for smugglers and bandits, allowing them to evade detection and enforcement. This directly supports the study's findings by demonstrating that difficult terrain contributes to the persistence of the bandit economy.

Furthermore, Anderson (1996) discusses the historical context of border regions, noting that difficult terrain has long been exploited by those engaged in illicit activities. Anderson argues that such regions often become zones of limited state control, where formal authority is weak and local actors can operate with relative impunity. This historical perspective aligns with the study's findings by showing that challenging terrain has consistently been a factor in the difficulty of maintaining effective border control.

In line with this, Donnan and Wilson (1999) explore the sociopolitical dimensions of borderlands, noting that difficult terrain can exacerbate issues of governance and enforcement. Their research points out that remote and rugged areas are often

underdeveloped and lack infrastructure, making it hard for authorities to maintain a presence. This supports the study's findings by highlighting how the physical characteristics of the border region hinder effective law enforcement and contribute to the bandit economy.

From the perspective of Soft Power Theory, as conceptualized by Nye (2004), the inability of the state to project presence and provide services in these hard-to-reach regions undermines its attractiveness and perceived legitimacy. When the state fails to maintain a presence in these regions—not only in terms of security, but also through basic infrastructure, healthcare, and development—it loses the trust and loyalty of local communities. This creates a soft power vacuum that is often filled by informal networks or non-state actors, including those involved in the bandit economy. As such, difficult terrain does not only hinder the exercise of hard power (law enforcement) but also erodes the state's soft power—its ability to shape preferences through appeal and legitimacy.

However, some scholars offer differing perspectives on the impact of terrain on border management. For example, Andreas (2003) suggests that while difficult terrain is a challenge, it is not insurmountable. Andreas argues that with the right resources, technology, and strategies, governments can overcome the obstacles posed by challenging geography. This perspective implies that addressing the issue of difficult terrain requires investment in technologies such as drones, surveillance systems, and enhanced mobility for border patrols. Strategically deploying such innovations can enhance both the reach of hard power and the credibility of soft power by demonstrating the state's capability and responsiveness.

Moreover, Newman (2006) presents a critique of the overemphasis on terrain as a primary factor in border management challenges. Newman contends that while terrain is a significant factor, issues such as corruption, lack of political will, and inadequate resources often play more critical roles. This view suggests that the study's findings on difficult terrain must be understood within a broader context of multifaceted challenges that include but are not limited to geographical obstacles. Addressing terrain-related challenges, therefore, must go hand-in-hand with restoring soft power through transparent governance, equitable service delivery, and consistent state engagement.

In contrast, Korf and Raeymaekers (2013) argue that the combination of difficult terrain and socio-economic factors creates a complex environment particularly conducive to illegal activities. They highlight that in areas where both the terrain is challenging and economic opportunities are limited, local populations may turn to the bandit economy as a means of survival. This perspective strengthens the soft power argument—showing that neglecting development in hard-to-reach regions reduces the state's moral and cultural authority and drives people to seek alternatives, even if illicit.

The study's findings that difficult terrain poses a significant challenge to combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border are thus well-supported by scholarly research. Scholars like Beek, Anderson, and Donnan and Wilson provide evidence that geographical obstacles undermine state control and law enforcement efforts. At the same time, scholars like Andreas and Newman highlight the role of political will, technology, and systemic factors. Korf and Raeymaekers further stress the interplay between geography and socio-economic marginalization. Viewed through the lens of Soft Power Theory, it becomes clear that a state's inability to project legitimacy, inclusion, and

development into difficult terrains weakens its overall influence. Effective strategies must therefore integrate technological solutions, institutional reforms, and socio-economic investments that not only address the physical barriers but also rebuild the state's image as a reliable and attractive authority among borderland communities.

6.2 Opportunities arising from Track one Diplomacy in combating bandit economy

6.2.1 Bilateral Agreements on security

Bilateral agreements on security between Kenya and Uganda offer significant opportunities to combat the bandit economy along their shared border through Track One diplomacy, which involves formal, government-to-government negotiations and agreements. These agreements are essential in fostering cooperation and implementing comprehensive strategies to address cross-border criminal activities effectively.Bilateral security agreements facilitate the harmonization of laws and institutional frameworks between Kenya and Uganda. This alignment is crucial in closing legal loopholes that bandits exploit. By creating unified legal frameworks and joint border patrols, both nations can respond more effectively to security threats. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), regions with harmonized legal structures see a significant reduction in cross-border crimes (UNODC, 2020).One of the key benefits of bilateral agreements is improved intelligence sharing between the two countries. Establishing joint intelligence task forces allows for real-time monitoring and analysis of bandit activities, leading to coordinated and timely responses. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) reports that effective intelligence sharing reduces the frequency and severity of bandit attacks (ISS, 2021).

In light of the preceding assertion, one of the NGO officials affirmed that :

> Track one Diplomacy has proven pivotal in addressing the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border through the establishment of bilateral security agreements. These agreements have enabled both nations to coordinate their security efforts more effectively, allowing for joint operations and resource sharing. For example, the recent agreement signed in 2023 between Kenya and Uganda outlines clear protocols for cross-border patrols and intelligence exchange. This collaborative approach not only strengthens the security infrastructure but also fosters a more unified response to the bandit economy, enhancing the overall effectiveness of our efforts in mitigating these illicit activities(KII with NGO official on 24/6/2024).

Further, another NGO official opined that:

> Bilateral security agreements, facilitated through Track one Diplomacy, have significantly advanced our efforts against the bandit economy. The cooperation established by these agreements, such as the one initiated in 2022, has created a framework for regular joint security meetings and coordinated operations. This has led to improved monitoring and control along the border. Moreover, the exchange of intelligence between Kenya and Uganda has increased the efficiency of targeting and dismantling bandit networks. These agreements are crucial for reinforcing border security, which in turn helps reduce the influence of banditry and improves stability in the region(KII with NGO official on 24/6/2024)

Bilateral agreements often include provisions for joint training and capacity-building initiatives. Law enforcement agencies from both Kenya and Uganda benefit from shared training programs that enhance their operational readiness and foster the capacity for coordinated cross-border security operations. The International Peace Institute (IPI, 2019) underscores that such joint training not only improves tactical competencies but also builds mutual trust and inter-agency rapport—an essential dimension of soft power. Trust and coordination enhance the perceived legitimacy and reliability of security institutions, allowing them to gain the confidence of border communities and diminish the appeal of parallel security networks controlled by bandit groups.

Furthermore, bilateral security agreements support economic development initiatives aimed at stabilizing border regions. Addressing structural drivers of the bandit economy, such as poverty and unemployment, aligns with the soft power principle of attraction through opportunity. The African Development Bank (AfDB, 2018) notes that joint economic projects, including infrastructure development and trade facilitation, not only stimulate regional economies but also offer legitimate livelihoods to populations otherwise vulnerable to recruitment by criminal networks. By increasing the state's capacity to deliver public goods and economic opportunity, these bilateral frameworks strengthen its soft power influence, particularly in historically marginalized areas.

Empirical research reinforces the effectiveness of bilateral security agreements in combating cross-border criminal activity. Successful joint operations across East Africa demonstrate the potential of bilateral collaboration to neutralize criminal networks that exploit porous borders. However, as observed in regional security dynamics, challenges such as resource constraints, political divergences, and inconsistent commitment levels can hinder the full realization of these agreements. Despite these barriers, the potential benefits—enhanced security, economic revitalization, and improved bilateral relations—highlight the strategic value of these diplomatic instruments.

Bilateral agreements between Kenya and Uganda, therefore, exemplify the positive impact of Track One diplomacy when strategically integrated with soft power mechanisms. By incorporating legal harmonization, intelligence sharing, joint training, and cross-border economic development, these agreements represent a comprehensive and multilateral response to the bandit economy. Importantly, their soft power dimensions—trust-building, community legitimacy, and socio-economic appeal—serve

to complement hard power enforcement strategies. As such, these agreements not only deter illegal activities but also reshape the social and economic conditions that allow banditry to persist. The empirical and theoretical evidence thus supports the view that bilateral cooperation rooted in both hard and soft power imperatives is essential for long-term peace and stability in the Kenya-Uganda borderlands.

6.2.2 Economic Development Programs

Economic development programs arising from Track One diplomacy—official negotiations and agreements between governments—offer not only structural solutions but also a form of soft power in combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. These programs address the root causes of banditry, such as poverty, unemployment, and socio-economic marginalization, by fostering inclusive growth and enhancing state legitimacy. Through attraction and empowerment rather than coercion, such initiatives reshape the socio-economic environment in ways that delegitimize banditry and promote lawful livelihoods.

Economic development initiatives, including infrastructure projects, agricultural enhancement, and trade facilitation, play a vital role in reducing economic desperation—one of the primary drivers of illicit activities. By creating jobs, expanding access to markets, and improving household income, these programs reduce the appeal of illegal trade. The African Development Bank (AfDB, 2018) reports that regions with robust development programming tend to experience a measurable decline in crime and banditry, suggesting a causal link between economic empowerment and social stability. These outcomes exemplify soft power in practice: development generates loyalty and

social cohesion by aligning state policies with the material and aspirational needs of citizens.

Infrastructure development—particularly transportation and communication networks—enhances both state visibility and responsiveness in peripheral regions. Roads, bridges, and mobile connectivity allow for faster deployment of security forces, but they also promote commerce, mobility, and connectivity. As infrastructure projects generate employment and unlock regional markets, they offer non-coercive incentives for cooperation with the state. The World Bank (2020) affirms that improved infrastructure not only facilitates development but also fosters a sense of inclusion, reducing local grievances that fuel the bandit economy.

Equally important is the promotion of formal cross-border trade and market access, which softens previously hard borders. By creating structured and legally recognized trade routes, governments integrate informal economies into regulated systems, thereby reducing the operating space for bandits and smugglers. The International Trade Centre (ITC, 2019) has documented multiple instances where market formalization reduced illicit activities and increased tax revenue and business registration. This reinforces the idea that the state can exert influence and foster voluntary compliance through economic opportunity—core to soft power's logic.

In addition, economic programs that incorporate community engagement and education help shift local perceptions about state authority and legitimacy. When local actors are involved in designing and implementing development projects, they are more likely to internalize the benefits and reject the bandit economy. The United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP, 2021) emphasizes that such participatory models enhance project success and long-term sustainability by fostering social buy-in—a hallmark of soft power, where legitimacy stems from consent rather than coercion.

In sum, economic development programs rooted in Track One diplomacy function not just as material interventions but also as soft power instruments that attract, co-opt, and integrate marginalized communities into lawful economic networks. By addressing structural inequalities through infrastructure, trade, employment, and participatory governance, these initiatives delegitimize the bandit economy and foster a culture of peace and economic cooperation. Empirical evidence underscores the need to incorporate these soft power strategies into broader security frameworks to achieve durable stability along the Kenya-Uganda border.

6.2.3 Track One Diplomacy initiatives

Track Two diplomacy, which refers to non-governmental, informal, and unofficial contacts and activities between private citizens or groups—often called non-state actors—complements the formal mechanisms of Track One diplomacy. In the context of combating the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border, Track Two diplomacy embodies soft power in action: it draws on attraction, legitimacy, and voluntary cooperation to achieve peace and stability, as opposed to coercion or force.

By leveraging the frameworks established through Track One diplomacy—such as bilateral security and economic agreements—Track Two actors gain both legitimacy and operational space. As Joseph Nye's Soft Power Theory explains, influence is more sustainable when built on shared values, culture, and policies that are perceived as

legitimate and beneficial. NGOs, religious leaders, local businesses, and grassroots organizations can use this legitimacy to create people-centered initiatives that align state interests with local aspirations. According to Lederach (1997), these informal efforts build the social capital necessary for long-term peace, reinforcing the soft power capacity of the state and its allies.

Community involvement and local ownership, hallmarks of Track Two diplomacy, are critical in soft power terms because they generate buy-in and trust—two key resources of influence. As the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (2016) notes, community-driven interventions rooted in local context tend to be more effective than top-down state initiatives. By involving non-state actors in designing and implementing interventions that address poverty, land disputes, or cross-border grievances, the state projects a benevolent and responsive image—thus gaining influence without coercion.

Cultural exchanges, community dialogues, and informal trade networks further embody soft power tools that reshape border relations. Where Track One diplomacy may be constrained by political tensions or sovereignty concerns, Track Two diplomacy allows for relational influence through everyday interactions. International Alert (2018) documents how informal trade initiatives reduced hostilities and fostered mutual interdependence between border communities, weakening the socio-economic foundation of the bandit economy.

Furthermore, Track Two diplomacy enables non-coercive responses to structural issues such as unemployment, lack of education, and marginalization. Through soft power instruments like microfinance, vocational training, and peace education, NGOs and civil

society actors offer attractive alternatives to illicit livelihoods. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2020) confirms that socio-economic interventions—when led by trusted local actors—reduce crime more sustainably than enforcement alone.

Importantly, Track Two diplomacy also enhances dialogue and mediation, relying on the cultural credibility of local mediators like religious leaders and elders. These actors embody soft power through moral influence and social legitimacy, qualities that enable them to de-escalate conflicts and foster reconciliation more effectively than state agents. Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana (2009) demonstrate how such mediators resolve tensions by appealing to shared values and norms, rather than legal authority.

Finally, capacity-building initiatives facilitated through Track Two channels increase the resilience of communities to violence and criminal economies. By training local leaders, youth, and security personnel in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, non-state actors diffuse knowledge and create local hubs of influence. ACCORD (2017) has documented how such programs generate durable peace dividends, empowering communities to reject the bandit economy through collective agency and self-regulation.

In summary, Track Two diplomacy along the Kenya-Uganda border exemplifies the practical application of soft power. It enhances the appeal and legitimacy of anti-banditry efforts by working through influence, attraction, and local partnership, rather than force or formal authority alone. When harmonized with Track One initiatives, Track Two diplomacy can cultivate a grassroots peace architecture that addresses the root causes of the bandit economy while strengthening cross-border cohesion and state legitimacy.

6.3 Chapter summary

This chapter evaluated the challenges arising from Track one diplomacy in combating bandit economy. These challenges include but not limited to, volatility of the region, government negligence, and non-involvement of the local residents in the fight against bandit economy, corruption and difficult terrain to pursue masterminds of bandit economy. This chapter has also highlighted a number of opportunities such as bilateral agreements on security, economic development as well as use of Track one I diplomacy initiatives in combating bandit economy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The summary, conclusions and recommendations are tailored according to specific research objectives.

7.1 Summary of Findings

In light of first objective the study makes the following summary: The study sought to examine the nature of the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. Thus it examined the types of goods commonly traded across the border. Out of 311 respondents, 53.69% reasoned that livestock, including cattle, camels, goats, and sheep were very common trade along the border 7.39% respondents were neutral, and 38.9% stated that such a trade was not common. Further 52.4% respondents averred that mean was very common trade 6.75% were neutral in their response and 40.8% stated that it was not common a trade along the border. Additionally, 53.1% respondents stated that food products such as maize, beans, bananas, and groundnuts were commonly traded along the border, 5.45% were neutral and 41.47% stated that such a trade was not common. For sugar, sugar products, and small arms,51.765% respondents uniformly reasoned that they were very common goods traded along the border,5.45% were neutral and 42.77% stated that these goods were not commonly traded along the border.

The study sought to assess which means of transporting goods across the Kenya-Uganda border was the most common. Out of 311, the study found out that,35.69% affirmed that

the use of lorries or long trucks was the commonest means of transport aiding bandit economy,13.5% said that pick-ups were used to transport goods,23.47% said that motorcycles were commonly used,6.75% argued that bicycles were used,13.18% reasoned that animals such as donkeys were used to aid bandit economy across Kenya-Uganda border. Additionally,7.39% said that people on foot were used to transport goods across the border. The study also sought to examine the tactics used to move goods along the border. Out of 311 respondents, 26.0% stated that concealment of goods in vehicles and cargoes was tactic used by traders, 6.75% reasoned that local residents were used in moving goods across customary border points,38.91% argued that bribery of officials was a common tactic used to move goods across the border, 22.51% argued that use of alternative routes away from the customary border point was a tactic used to move goods across the border and 5.78% stated that non-concealment of goods due to lack of enforcement was a tactic employed to move goods across Kenya-Uganda border.

There are several motivating factors for the bandit economy. Thus the study sought to assess the motivating factors for individuals participating in the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. Out of 311 respondents 19.6% stated that individuals participated for economic necessity, 1.39% stated that individuals participated for lack of employment opportunities, 31.19% stated that traditional customary practices were a major factor motivating individuals to participate in bandit economy. Besides,19.% reasoned that profits involved in the bandit economy were a motivating factor for individuals,6.75% stated that negligence of law enforcement at the border point was a motivating factor and 6.43% reasoned that availability of cheap commodities was a factor motivating individuals to participate in bandit economy.

The study also assessed whether participants were aware of the legal and economic consequences of bandit economy activities along the Kenya-Uganda border. Out of 311 respondents, 12.54% stated that they were fully aware of both legal and economic consequences of a bandit economy, 38.91% were somewhat aware and 48.55% were not aware at all.

In light of the second objective of the study, the study makes the following summary: The study examined whether there was awareness with regard to diplomatic efforts to combat the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. The study found out that, out of 311 respondents, 36.02% respondents acknowledged that there were efforts to combat the bandit economy, however, on the contrary, 63.98% of the respondents were not aware whether there were diplomatic efforts put in place to combat the bandit economy. , this study found out that, out of 311 respondents,18.64% stated that joint border patrols were a strategy adopted to combat bandit economy,18.33% stated that bilateral agreements as a result of negotiations were another strategy employed,6.75% reasoned that information sharing and intelligence exchange on economic activities was a strategy employed,22.82% stated that cross border community engagement to reduce support for bandit economic activities along the border, 6.75% stated that cross-border trade facilitation through establishment of legal trade routes,additionaly,7.07% stated that harmonization of laws to combat bandit economy was a strategy employed and 6.43% reasoned that joint public awareness campaigns were used to combat bandit economy along the border.

In light of objective three, this study makes the following summary: Track One Diplomacy faces several challenges, including political resistance, conflicting national

interests, and the complexity of international negotiations. These obstacles hinder progress and effectiveness, impacting efforts to resolve conflicts and foster cooperation between nations. However, this study found that out of 311 respondents 18.32% reasoned that volatility of the regions across the border points was a challenge facing track one diplomacy in combating bandit economy 15.76% stated that government negligence on the high potential of economic activities along the border points was a challenge, 19.61% reasoned that non-involvement of local leadership was a challenge, 7.39% argued that lack of data on actual cross-border trade volumes was a challenge, 7.72% reasoned that reliance on track one diplomatic strategy was a challenge, 18.32% reasoned that corruption among implementing officials was a common challenge, 6.75% averred that difficult terrain compounded activities initiated by Track one to combat bandit economy along the border and 6.10% stated that unwillingness of governments to commit resources along the border was a challenge facing Track one diplomacy.

7.2 Conclusions of the Study

In light of specific objective, one the study concludes that the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border is characterized by a range of illegal activities, including cattle rustling, smuggling, and armed banditry. These activities are driven by socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and inadequate state presence in border regions. The bandit economy is deeply embedded in the local communities, providing livelihoods for individuals who lack legitimate economic opportunities. The informal nature of these activities makes them resilient and challenging to eradicate. The economic benefits derived from banditry create a cycle of dependency, perpetuating insecurity and undermining development efforts. The extent of the bandit economy's impact is

significant, affecting not only the immediate security of border communities but also the broader economic and social stability of the region. Efforts to address the bandit economy must therefore adopt a holistic approach, incorporating both security measures and socio-economic interventions. This includes improving access to education, creating economic opportunities, and strengthening governance structures. By addressing the root causes of the bandit economy, it is possible to reduce its prevalence and mitigate its negative impacts on the region.

In light of specific objective two, the study concludes that, Track one diplomacy strategies along the Kenya-Uganda border have been pivotal in addressing cross-border security issues and fostering bilateral cooperation. These formal diplomatic engagements involve government-level negotiations, treaties, and agreements aimed at enhancing security and stability in the region. Key strategies include joint border patrols, intelligence sharing, and coordinated military operations to combat banditry and other illegal activities. The establishment of bilateral security agreements has provided a structured framework for collaboration, enabling both countries to respond more effectively to security threats. Despite these efforts, the success of Track one diplomacy is often hindered by challenges such as limited resources, political instability, and varying levels of commitment from local authorities. Nonetheless, these strategies have laid a solid foundation for cooperation and have facilitated a more systematic approach to border security. To enhance the effectiveness of Track one diplomacy, it is essential to ensure sustained political will, adequate resource allocation, and continuous dialogue between the two nations. By addressing these challenges, Track one diplomacy can significantly contribute to long-term peace and security along the Kenya-Uganda border.

In light of specific objective three, the study concludes that, Track one diplomacy presents both challenges and opportunities in managing the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border. One of the primary challenges is the complexity of the bandit economy, which is deeply rooted in socio-economic disparities and local power dynamics. Limited resources, corruption, and inconsistent enforcement of agreements further complicate diplomatic efforts. Additionally, political instability and lack of trust between local authorities can undermine collaborative initiatives. Despite these challenges, Track one diplomacy offers significant opportunities for fostering long-term peace and security. By formalizing bilateral agreements and enhancing coordination between security forces, both countries can more effectively address cross-border crime. Diplomatic engagements also provide a platform for addressing broader socio-economic issues, promoting development, and improving governance in border regions. The integration of economic development programs and community engagement initiatives can complement security measures, addressing the root causes of the bandit economy. To maximize these opportunities, it is crucial to ensure sustained political commitment, allocate sufficient resources, and maintain open channels of communication between the two nations. By leveraging the strengths of Track one diplomacy, it is possible to create a more secure and prosperous environment along the Kenya-Uganda border.

Overall, the study concludes that despite the implementation of Track One Diplomacy strategies, including bilateral agreements and high-level negotiations, the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border has persisted unabated. The ongoing volatility, government negligence, and insufficient investment in infrastructure and security have undermined these diplomatic efforts. The resilience of the bandit economy highlights the

urgent need for a more robust and multifaceted approach, incorporating both diplomatic and operational enhancements. Strengthening on-the-ground security measures, investing in regional development, and fostering deeper cross-border cooperation are crucial to effectively combat the bandit economy and ensure lasting stability in these volatile regions.

7.3 Recommendations of the Study

In light of specific objective one ,the, the study recommends that both Kenya and Uganda invest in joint training programs for security personnel and establish a permanent bilateral commission to oversee border security initiatives. Additionally, increasing funding for border infrastructure and technology will improve the effectiveness of coordinated patrols and intelligence sharing, fostering a more secure and stable border region.

In light of specific objective two, the study recommends that both governments implement community development programs that provide alternative livelihoods, improve access to education, and create economic opportunities. Strengthening local governance and increasing the presence of state institutions in border areas will also help mitigate the factors driving the bandit economy, leading to long-term stability.

With regards to specific objective three, the study recommends that regular dialogue forums be established, involving community leaders in decision-making processes, and ensuring transparent and accountable enforcement of agreements. Additionally, addressing corruption and ensuring consistent resource allocation will enhance the

effectiveness of diplomatic efforts in managing the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border.

7.4 Suggestions for further research

Given the study's findings and the challenges identified in combating the bandit economy despite Track One Diplomacy, the study suggests the following:

Research should focus on evaluating the impact of integrated security and development programs in border regions. This would involve examining how combining infrastructure development, economic incentives, and security measures can address the root causes of the bandit economy. Understanding which programs effectively deter illicit activities and promote economic stability could provide insights into more comprehensive solutions.

Further investigation could explore the role of local communities in combating the bandit economy. Research could assess the effectiveness of various community engagement and empowerment strategies, such as grassroots initiatives, local leadership involvement, and public awareness campaigns. This would provide a deeper understanding of how to harness local knowledge and support to enhance the impact of diplomatic and security efforts.

Studying the effectiveness of cross-border coordination mechanisms and the role of technology in enhancing border security could be valuable. Research could focus on integrating technology, such as surveillance systems and data-sharing platforms, to improve the coordination between Kenyan and Ugandan authorities. This area could also explore how technological advancements can address challenges in monitoring and responding to bandit activities in real time.

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APPENDICES

Appendix: 1: Questionnaires (For Households along Lokinyattala Border)

SECTION A: NATURE OF BANDIT ECONOMY ALONG KENYA-UGANDA BORDER

1. The following are said to be the causes of economic banditry, please express your opinion on each.

Causes of bandit economy	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No comment
Displacement due to civil wars in the neighbouring countries					
Displacement due to natural disasters e.g. drought.					
Lack of basic amenities in the border communities					
Growing unemployment among youths					
Moral decadence					
Harsh economic environment					
Ready availability of small and light weapons					

2. Are the bandits usually purely males? YES NO

3. What is their estimated number when they attack? 2-5, 6-10, 11-15 Above 16
4. What language(s) do the bandits usually speak?

i. Local language ( )
ii. Foreign language ( )
iii. Other ….. ( )

5. Do the bandits use weapons? YES NO

If yes, what kind of weapons? .....

6. Are the bandits usually violent? YES NO
7. Do they usually kill their victims? YES NO
8. If yes, why do you think they kill their victims?
   .....
   ……

9. When do the bandits usually attack?
   i. On market days ( )
   ii. During harvest ( )
   iii. On festival days ( )
   iv. At random ( )
10. What time of the day do the bandits usually attack?
   i. 6am-12noon ( )
   ii. 12noon-6pm ( )
   iii. 6pm-12midnight ( )
   iv. At random ( )
11. What form does their attack usually take?
   i. Livestock raids ( )
   ii. Attacking homes ( )
   iii. Attacking people on the highways ( )
   iv. Attacking business premises ( )

12. What do they usually dispossess people of?
   i. Money ( )
   ii. Goods ( )
   iii. Cattle ( )
   iv. Materials ( )
   v. Handsets ( )
   vi. Jewelries ( )
   vii. Vehicles ( )
13. After such attacks, how do the bandits usually escape?.....
   ……
   ……..
   ……
   ……
14. After such attacks where do the bandits perpetuating bandit economy escape to?
   …

15. What form did banditry take in your area 25 years ago?
   i. Cattle rustling ( )
   ii. Raiding of farmlands ( )
   iii. Raiding of markets ( )
   iv. Raiding and burning of houses ( )
   v. Attacking people on highways ( )
   vi. Attacking people on bush paths ( )
   vii. Attacking people in their houses ( )

SECTION B: TRACK ONE DIPLOMACY STRATEGIES

16. To what extent do you think the following constitutes Track One Diplomacy along Kenya-Uganda border? (√)

	Very great extent	Moderate extent	Little extent	Very little extent	Not at all
Fact-finding mission					
De-Escalation of tensions and disputes					
Negotiations					
Mediations					
Psychological intimidations					
Ultimatums					
Economic sanctions					

17. How does Track One diplomacy manifest itself along Kenya-Uganda border?
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18. Who are the major players of Track One Diplomacy along Kenya-Uganda border?
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19. What intergovernmental Organizations operate along Kenya-Uganda Border?
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……..

20. Please rate the frequency of the use of Track One diplomacy along Kenya-Uganda border, how often?

i. Most frequently [ ]
ii. Frequently [ ]
iii. Partially [ ]

iv. Not at all [ ]
v. Not sure [ ]

SECTION C: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN COMBATING ECONOMY

21. What is the influence of Track One diplomacy in combating bandit economy along Kenya-Uganda border?

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……

22. How effective have these measures been,in combating bandit economy along Kenya-Uganda border?

	Highly effective	Effective	Less effective	Not effective	Don't know
Opening up the rural areas with a view to creating gainful employment					
Provision of basic infrastructure and amenities in the border communities					
Development of adequate grazing area for herdsmen.					
Assisting County security agencies with necessary equipment to curb the menace of bandit economy					
Curtailing influx of refuges and ex-combatants from our neighbouring countries.					
Controlling the flow, circulation and use of small and light weapons.					
Proper coordination between the state security agencies of member countries towards assisting each other to apprehend suspected bandits					
Enforcement of community policing and crime prevention measures.					

Provision of basic infrastructure and amenities in the border communities.					
Improving the frosty relationship along the border.					
Provision of necessary equipment and materials required for adequate crime control and prevention					
Provision of adequate welfare package for security personnel, especially at the borders.					

23. What are challenges encountered in using Track One diplomacy to combat bandit economy?

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Appendix: 2: Interview (Key Informants-Security officers, Religious leaders, custom officials)

i. What are the key historical and contemporary factors shaping the dynamics of Track one Diplomacy along the Kenya-Uganda border, and how have they influenced cross-border relations between the two countries?

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ii. Can you describe the main stakeholders involved in Track one Diplomacy efforts along the Kenya-Uganda border, and how do their interests and priorities impact the negotiation process and outcomes?

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iii. In your view, what are the major challenges and opportunities for enhancing Track one Diplomacy initiatives along the Kenya-Uganda border, and what strategies would you recommend to address these challenges and capitalize on the opportunities for promoting sustainable peace and cooperation in the region?

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iv. How do you assess the effectiveness of Track one diplomatic strategies in managing the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border, and what specific measures have been implemented to address this issue?

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…….

v. Can you elaborate on the coordination and collaboration between government agencies, international organizations, and local stakeholders in implementing Track one diplomatic approaches to counter the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border?

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vi. What are the main challenges encountered in applying Track one diplomatic strategies to mitigate the bandit economy, and how do you propose overcoming these challenges to achieve sustainable economic development and security in the border region?

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……

Appendix: 3: Focus Group Discussion Guide

i. What are the key historical and contemporary factors shaping the dynamics of Track one Diplomacy along the Kenya-Uganda border, and how have they influenced cross-border relations between the two countries?

ii. Can you describe the main stakeholders involved in Track one Diplomacy efforts along the Kenya-Uganda border, and how do their interests and priorities impact the negotiation process and outcomes?
iii. In your view, what are the major challenges and opportunities for enhancing Track one Diplomacy initiatives along the Kenya-Uganda border, and what strategies would you recommend to address these challenges and capitalize on the opportunities for promoting sustainable peace and cooperation in the region?
iv. How do you assess the effectiveness of Track one diplomatic strategies in managing the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border, and what specific measures have been implemented to address this issue?
v. Can you elaborate on the coordination and collaboration between government agencies, international organizations, and local stakeholders in implementing Track one diplomatic approaches to counter the bandit economy along the Kenya-Uganda border?
vi. What are the main challenges encountered in applying Track one diplomatic strategies to mitigate the bandit economy, and how do you propose overcoming these challenges to achieve sustainable economic development and security in the border region?

Appendix: 4: University Approval Letter

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MMUST)

Tel: 056-30870
Fax: 056-30153
E-mail: directordps@mmust.ac.ke
Website: www.mmust.ac.ke

P.O Box 190
Kakamega – 50100
Kenya

Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

Ref: MMU/COR: 509099 21st May 2024

Dennis Mutesa
CDR/G/01-70201/2021
P.O. Box 190-50100
KAKAMEGA

Dear Mr. Mutesa,

RE: APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies has considered and approved your Master's proposal entitled: ***"Role of Track 1 Diplomacy in Combating Bandit Economy along Kenya-Uganda Border"*** and appointed the following as supervisors:

1. Prof. Frank Matanga - SDMHA - MMUST
2. Dr. Susan Kimokoti - SDMHA - MMUST

You are required to submit through your supervisor(s) progress reports every three months to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Such reports should be copied to the following: Chairman, School of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Graduate Studies Committee and Chairman, Department of Peace and Conflict studies. Kindly adhere to research ethics consideration in conducting research.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe a deadline of two years from the date of registration to complete your Master's thesis. Do not hesitate to consult this office in case of any problem encountered in the course of your work.

We wish you the best in your research and hope the study will make original contribution to knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES P.O. Box 190 – 50100, KAKAMEGA (K) Date:..... Sign:.....

Prof. Stephen O. Odebero, PhD, FIEEP
DIRECTOR, DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Appendix: 5: NACOSTI Research Authorization

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **613717**

Date of Issue: **31/May/2024**

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Mr.. Dennis Gimomodi Mutesa of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Westpokot on the topic: ROLE OF TRACK ONE DIPLOMACY IN COMBATING BANDIT ECONOMY ALONG KENYA-UGANDA BORDER for the period ending : 31/May/2025.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/24/36298**

613717

Applicant Identification Number

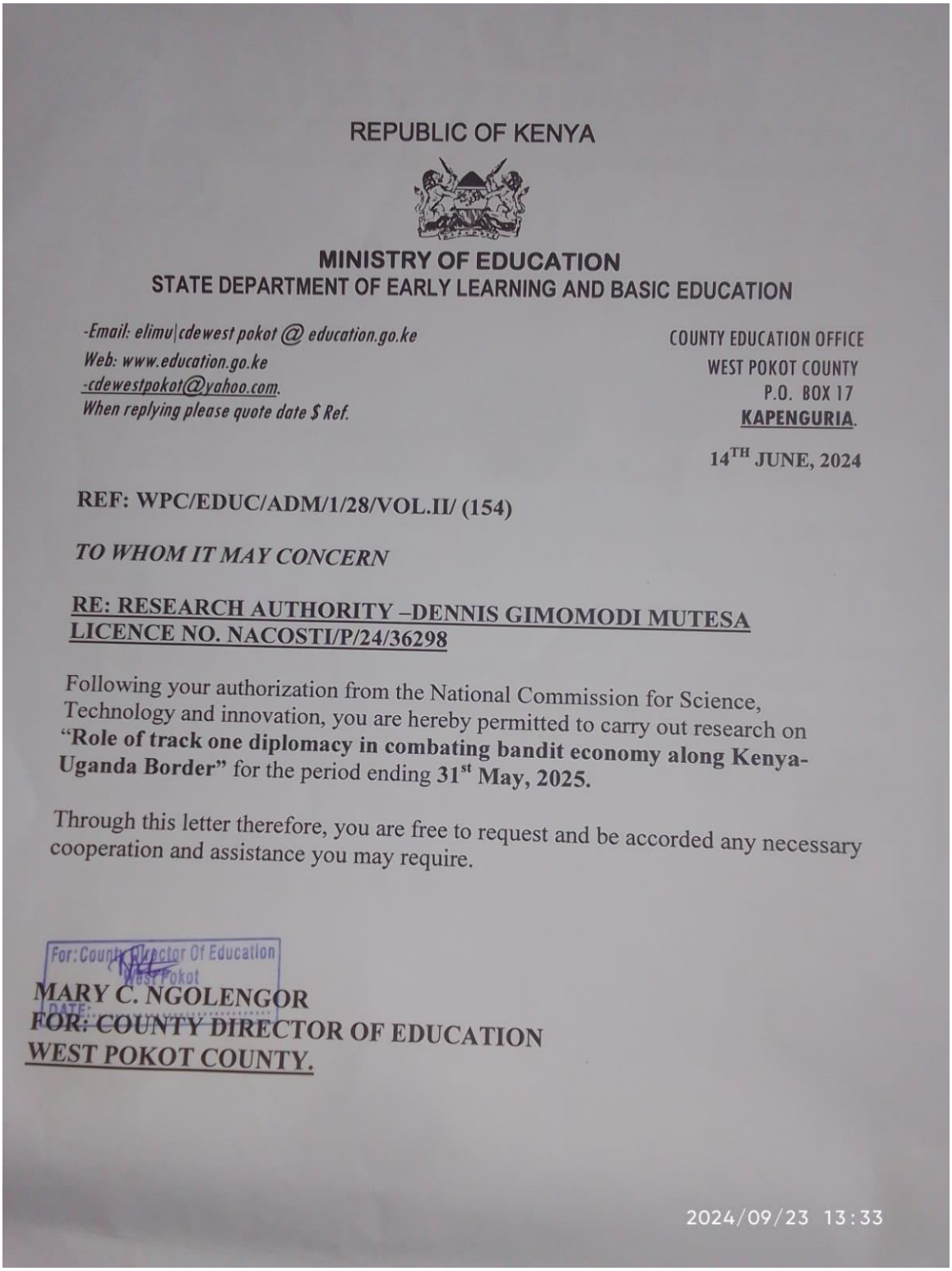
Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

Appendix: 6: Research Authorization from Ministry of Education



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING AND BASIC EDUCATION

-Email: elimu|cdewest pokot @ education.go.ke
Web: www.education.go.ke
-cdewestpokot@yahoo.com.
When replying please quote date $ Ref.

COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE
WEST POKOT COUNTY
P.O. BOX 17
KAPENGURIA.

14TH JUNE, 2024

REF: WPC/EDUC/ADM/1/28/VOL.II/ (154)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORITY –DENNIS GIMOMODI MUTESA
LICENCE NO. NACOSTI/P/24/36298

Following your authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology and innovation, you are hereby permitted to carry out research on **"Role of track one diplomacy in combating bandit economy along Kenya-Uganda Border"** for the period ending **31st May, 2025.**

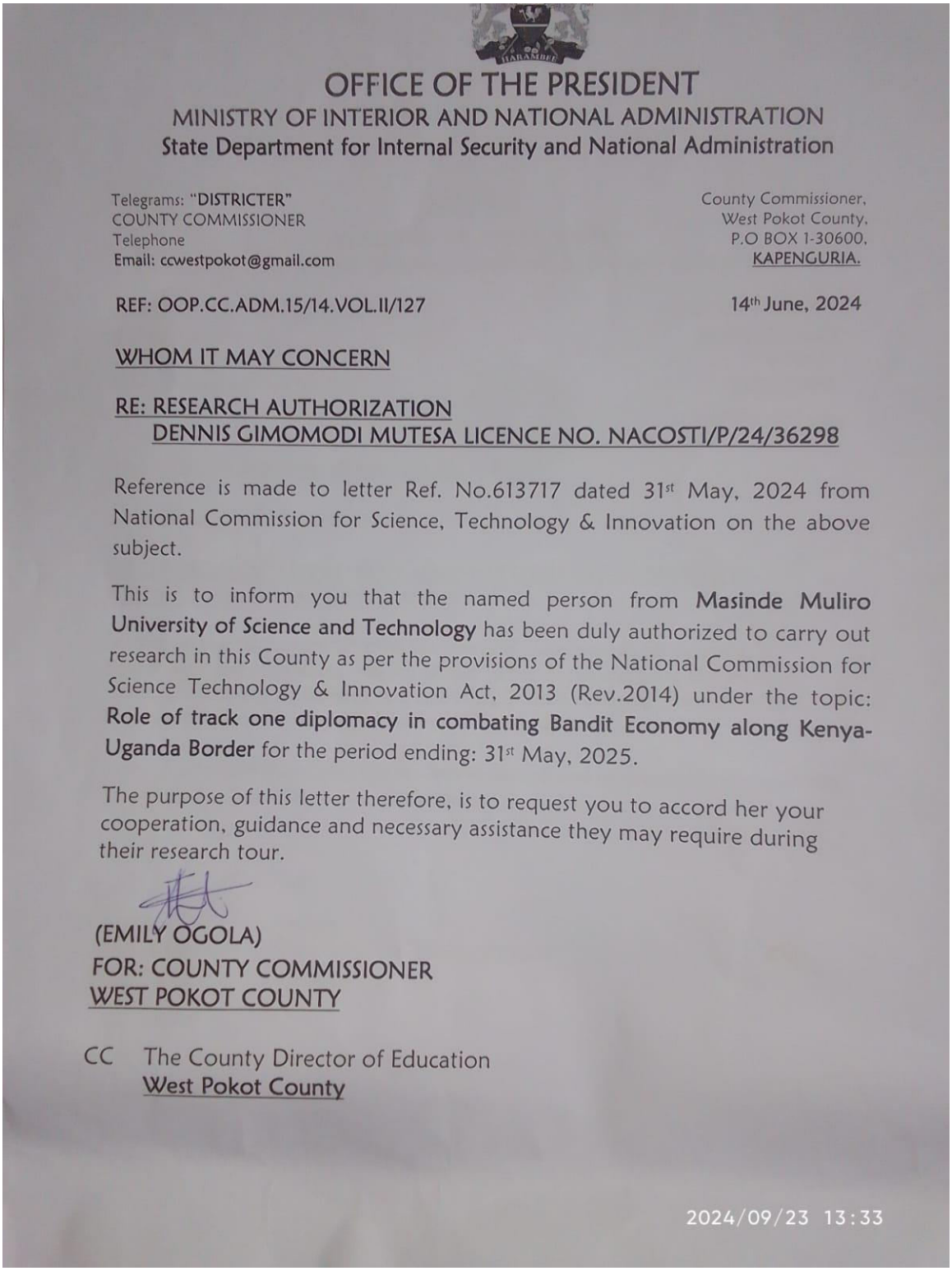
Through this letter therefore, you are free to request and be accorded any necessary cooperation and assistance you may require.

For: County Director Of Education
West Pokot
DATE:

MARY C. NGOLENGOR
FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
WEST POKOT COUNTY.

2024/09/23 13:33

Appendix: 7:Research Authorization from the Ministry of Interior



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
State Department for Internal Security and National Administration

Telegrams: "DISTRICTER"
COUNTY COMMISSIONER
Telephone
Email: ccwestpokot@gmail.com

County Commissioner,
West Pokot County,
P.O BOX 1-30600,
KAPENGURIA.

REF: OOP.CC.ADM.15/14.VOL.II/127

14th June, 2024

WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION
DENNIS GIMOMODI MUTESA LICENCE NO. NACOSTI/P/24/36298

Reference is made to letter Ref. No.613717 dated 31st May, 2024 from National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation on the above subject.

This is to inform you that the named person from **Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology** has been duly authorized to carry out research in this County as per the provisions of the National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) under the topic: **Role of track one diplomacy in combating Bandit Economy along Kenya-Uganda Border** for the period ending: 31st May, 2025.

The purpose of this letter therefore, is to request you to accord her your cooperation, guidance and necessary assistance they may require during their research tour.

(EMILY OGOLA)
FOR: COUNTY COMMISSIONER
WEST POKOT COUNTY

CC The County Director of Education
West Pokot County

2024/09/23 13:33

Appendix: 8: Research Authorization-County Government of West Pokot

REPUBLIC OF KENYA
COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF WEST POKOT

When replying please quote
Email: cs@westpokot.go.ke
Website: www.westpokot.go.ke

P.O. BOX 222 - 30600
KAPENGURIA

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY SECRETARY

Ref. No: WPC/CS/08/24

14th June, 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

RE: AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH IN WEST POKOT

This is to notify you that, the bearer of this letter, Mr. Dennis Gimomodi Mutesa –Licence No. **NACOSTI/P/24/36298** has been granted permission to undertake Research on the topic: **ROLE OF TRACK ONE DIPLOMACY IN COMBATING BANDIT ECONOMY ALONG KENYA-UGANDA BORDER for** the period ending 31st May, 2025.

The purpose of this letter therefore, is to request you to accord him your cooperation, guidance and necessary assistance he may require during the research tour.

COUNTY SECRETARY
COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF WEST POKOT
18 JUN 2024
P. O. Box 222-30600,
KAPENGURIA

JONATHAN SIWANYANG
COUNTY SECRETARY /HEAD OF COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICE
COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF WEST POKOT

Appendix: 9: Research Authorization from Moroto District Local Governemnt

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY

Chief Administrative Officer
E-mail:info@moroto.go.ug
REF: Moro53/22/P/24/36298

Chief Administrative officer
Moroto District Local Government
P.O Box 4.
Moroto.
17/6/2024

To Whom It May Concern,

RE: AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF TRACK I DIPLOMACY IN COMBATING THE BANDIT ECONOMY ON THE KENYA-UGANDA BORDER

Reference is made to letter Ref. No.613717 dated 31st.May,2024 from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation of Kenya,Act, 2013 (Rev.2014), on the aforementioned subject.

This is to notify you that Mr.Denis Gimomodi Mutesa from Masinde Muliro of the University of Science and Technology has been authorized to conduct research along the Uganda-Kenya border as per the provisions of Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) Chapter 209. The research topic is : THE ROLE OF TRACK I DIPLOMACY IN COMBATING BANDIT ECONOMY ON KENYA-UGANDA BORDER, for the period ending 31st. May,2025.

This will allow Mr. Mutesa to interact with key stakeholders such as government officials, diplomatic missions, and security personnel; and access the relevant archival data and resources needed for the research. Research will be conducted in strict accordance with ethical guidelines, protecting confidentiality and assuring the rights of participants.

We hope the results from this study will inform policy responses to transnational crime and eventually to stronger diplomacy between Kenya and Uganda.

Kindly accord him the necessary support.

Sincerely,

Mr.Charles Komaketch
Chief Administrative officer
Moroto District Local Government

Cc West Pokot County Commissioner (Kenya)