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Conflict Dynamics Between the Pastoral Tugen and Pokot Communities of Baringo County, Kenya

By

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Abstract

This article investigated the dynamics of the conflicts between the Tugen and Pokot communities of Baringo North and Tiatey sub counties respectively. The conflicts between the two neighboring communities can be traced to 1907 and have since been frequent and disastrous. The article is based on empirical and secondary data that were collected partly for Phd work at Moi University in 2011. The study found that the Tugen and Pokot conflicts were embedded on cultural perceptions of regarding each other as traditional enemies since time immemorial. This manifested itself in resource conflicts related to pasture, water, land, territory and boundary. Since 2,000, the conflicts have increasingly become violent because of proliferation and use of small arms and light weapons and the commercialization of livestock raids. For instance, in 2012 alone, 7,000 people were displaced while 82 were killed. The article recommends that, for meaningful efforts to resolve conflicts, stakeholders should not only focus on immediate causes of conflict but more importantly the underlying perceptions between communities; whether they regarded each other as allies or enemies.

Key words: Kenya, Pastoral Communities, Conflict, Ethnic Conflict, Conflict dynamics, Causes of Conflict, Tugen, Pokot

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Introduction

Conflict is “a struggle over values and claims to scarce resources” (Omondi, 1994:62). Scholars have varied classifications of conflicts. Gardner (2002), for instance, gives five typologies of conflicts namely: ethno-political, interstate, ethnic, social, structural, and violent conflicts. Similarly, Chazan, *et al* (1999) categorized conflicts into five classes namely; elite, factional, communal, mass and popular. In the same direction, Mwagiru (2000) posits that conflicts can be classified into interpersonal, industrial, political conflicts and international. Doornbos, *et al* (1992) give only two classifications namely economic and political conflicts. Mwagiru (2000:3) explains that conflict arises when two or more parties have incompatible goals about something. Mwagiru's contents that non-violent conflicts lead to violence in the long run. This brings out another dimension of classifying conflicts into violent and non-violent conflicts. Omondi (1994) identified four types of conflicts, thus, direct and indirect, covert and overt, actual and perceived, and internal and external. Using Berger and Luckmann's analysis, Omondi (1994) distinguishes between reality and perception of reality. He states that false conflict is based on mistaken perceptions of reality. He notes that parties in conflict can coexist in some areas. All these classifications attempt to explain the types, nature and causes of conflict. This article limits itself to examining the causes of conflicts among pastoralist communities.

Conflicts over resources have frequently occurred between the Tugen and Pokot communities of Baringo North and Tiately Sub Counties. This article grapples with the question of causation. The conflicts have been responsible for displacements of people who generally face problems of diseases, lack of food, shelter and loss of property. Furthermore, they are pushed to a hostile environment within their country where they rarely get any intervention. Therefore, most of the conflict victims fall in the “lack of responsibility” lacuna (UNHCR, 1996).

In a study of the Tugen and Pokot conflict, Mutsotso (2013: 6) traces the conflict to 1907 when the two communities fought over livestock watering point at river Chepkesin. Mutsotso reports that the Tugen warriors were massacred when they were tricked to attend a peace meeting and since then, the two communities have remained sworn enemies. According to Kandagor and Moindi (2019:429), “while the Tugen warriors knelt down, the Pokot warriors who were hiding behind the scene ambushed and killed all the warriors and their blood flow to the river giving River Chepkesin (the river of blood) ... This is the greatest cause of conflict amongst the Tugen and the Pokot to date.” Deadly conflicts have occurred frequently among the communities bordering the Tugen and the Pokot.

In a previous study on conflicts, Adan, Pkalya, and Masinde (2004) reported that cattle rustling and banditry activities displaced 32,000 people in Kerio Valley and the surrounding areas in the 1990s. Specifically, there has been devastating conflicts between the Pokot and Marakwet groups involving cattle rustling and competition for scarce water and grazing resources (Muchai and Clare, 2003). In addition to the loss of human lives and property, the Pokot and Marakwet conflict has led to new settlements along Kerio Valley escarpment leading to environmental degradation (Opala, 2006). In 2000, conflicts related to resources resulted in the displacement of hundreds of victims in Elgeyo Marakwet County after Pokot cattle rustlers from Baringo County took away their livestock and vandalized their homes leaving many children orphaned following

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the killings of their parents by rustlers (Opala, 2006a). A research by Kusimba (2006:8) reveals that between 2004 and 2006, seventeen (17) people were killed and over 800 animals stolen in the North Rift region of Kenya. In a peace bulletin published by ITDG (2003:5), a government administrator lamented on the dynamic and the complex nature of conflicts related to livestock, among pastoral communities when he remarked:

Before a Borana milks it, the Samburu have raided it then tomorrow the Turkana have taken it and the following week the Pokot women are milking the cows. The following month the Karamojong of Uganda have escaped with it and before settling in the new country the Sudanese Toposa have raided it and as it tries to orient itself to the Sudanese environment the Merille from Ethiopia are crossing river Omo with the cows. No sooner have the cows settled in Omo delta than the Kenyan Gabra take them . . . Like the pastoralists, who know neither international boundaries nor travelling advisories, the cattle have hopped from one state to the other without passports or visas.

Conflicts have also been registered elsewhere in the republic of Kenya. In 2003 fifty people died as a result of inter- ethnic conflict in Kenya (The Armed Conflicts Report – Kenya, 2005). More deaths occurred before the 2002 and after the 2007 disputed Presidential elections. Some of the ethnic groups mostly affected by conflicts include the Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Luhya, Kisii, Luo, Maasai, Somali, Turkana, Samburu and Teso. In a single incident in Northern Kenya, the Borana and Gabra conflict led to the massacre of 56 people including 22 primary school children at a place called Turbi on 12th July 2005 (Opala, 2006). Further, 18,000 people fled to Uganda while many civilians, police and military officers were injured following government interventions on insecurity through disarmament exercises in Mt Elgon (Ibid.). Conflicts related to political competition in Kenya led to the death of more than 1,133 people and another 6,334 were injured in 2008. In the same period, 117,216 private properties were destroyed while 350,000 people were displaced (Waki Report, 2008:345-346, 351). According to Nyukuri, (1997), between 1992 and July 1995, at least 1,800 people were killed, 30,000 injured and 350,000 displaced as a result of ethnic related conflicts in Kenya.

In an attempt to identify and address the causes of conflict in the country, the government of Kenya has variously engendered various inquiries. There was the Kiliku parliamentary committee of 1992, the Akiwumi commission (1999), the Waki and Kriegler (2008) commission, among others. The search for the real causes of the various typologies of conflicts in Kenya has therefore been on-going.

Statement of the Problem

Conflicts among pastoral groups in Africa have persisted and become a common phenomenon despite efforts by governments to address them. Unlike many other African countries, traditional conflicts among pastoral communities in Kenya have become heavily militarized and commercialized, posing increasing threats on political, economic, social and environmental stability.

The Tugen and the Pokot pastoral communities have perpetually experienced conflicts and insecurity at such a high scale that has negatively affected the development of their regions. According to Kwonyike (2018:58), the Tugen and Pokot conflicts intensified since the year 2,000 as a result of acquisition of increased sophisticated weapons by the Pokot and the procurement of guns by the Tugen. While the Pokot engaged in cattle rustling and banditry, the Tugen responded by counter raids and pursuing lost livestock. All these resulted in deaths, loss of livestock and

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displacements. The internally displaced persons are mainly found in Sibilo, Bartabwa, Marigat and Kampi Samaki. According to Limo (2017:2), over 7,000 people were displaced and 82 killed following conflicts between Tugen and Pokot in 2012.

In an attempt to resolve these conflicts, the government identified illegal small arms as a cause of increasing conflict and gave out amnesty for surrender of small arms, and also established district peace committees. The government has also carried out disarmament exercises occasionally. All these efforts have helped to sensitize the need for peace but have neither stopped conflicts nor the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. This leads to question: What are the real causes of Tugen and Pokot conflicts? We begin to attempt to answer this question by exploring the Enemy System Theory and the Social Identity Theory of conflict

Enemy System Theory

The Enemy System Theory (EST) was developed, by psychiatrists and international relations practitioners, in the late 1980's to explain the antagonistic group behavior of nations during the Cold War period. According to Cunningham (1998), the theory posits that humans have deep rooted unconscious psychological needs which make them to establish enemies and allies. This phenomenon influences the conscious needs in the formation of ethnic or national group identities. It also influences how people perceive themselves and how they relate within in-groups and out-groups. The relations may be based on cooperation, competition, or conflict (Cunningham).

Social Identity Theory

Henri Tajfel and John Turner propounded the Social Identity Theory (SIT) in 1979. It can be summarized in three elements: First, people categorize themselves in relation to their communal communion with their environment. Second, people identify themselves and associate with those groups which they perceive to be similar to them and which bolster their self-esteem. Third, people develop constructive preferences towards the group to which they belong.

According to Cunningham (1998), the Social Identity Theory (SIT) attributes conflict to bad group relations as each of them strives to create its identity through the process of identifying positive aspects within them and negative aspects with others. People develop a sense of 'us' and 'them' and regard themselves as good, virtuous, superior and desirable while out groups are considered as bad, inferior, full of vice and undesirable. It argues that human beings, as individual and groups have deep rooted unconscious psychological needs to dichotomize and to establish enemies and allies. Cunningham (1998:15) poses that when in-groups are under political, economic, ecological or military stress; they can become malicious and can be violent on out-groups.

Methodology

The research is qualitative in design aimed at examining the phenomenon of conflict. It utilized interview schedules to collect data from key informants. In addition, an interview guide was used to collect data from Focused Group Discussions (FGDs). The research was carried out in Baringo County in Kenya. Baringo is one of the 47 Counties of Kenya and is located in the Great Rift Valley, particularly the Central and North Rift. In the Arid and Semi-Arid areas Baringo are several communities who depend, for a living, on livestock. Majority of them are the Tugen and the Pokot. The research focused on these groups and excluded those who practice sedentary agriculture in the highland regions of the county.

According to the 2019 census, Baringo North Sub County has a total population of 104,871 while Tiately Sub County has a population of 153,347 (KNBS, 2019). The population of the study comprised the Tugen and Pokot communities living in Baringo North and Tiately Sub Counties

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respectively. The sampling units of the area of study include Sub Counties, divisions, and locations. Since the area covered by the study was large, sampling of the area was done through multi stage sampling. According to Kothari (2004:65) multi stage sampling is done by selecting clusters of units based on geographical areas. This procedure was used to select the divisions, locations, and sub locations in the study area. The researcher used a sampling frame from a list found in the offices of administrators (Sub County Commissioners and Chiefs).

Baringo North Sub County (Tugen) has four divisions namely: Kabartonjo, Barwesa, Kipsaraman and Bartabwa. Tiatey Sub County (Pokot) has three divisions, namely Kolowa, Nginyang, and Tangelbei. Since the study concerned the Tugen and Pokot communities, the researcher sampled part of each of the communities for the study. Consequently, the researcher used purposive sampling to focus on the communities who live along the Sub County administrative boundary that separates the Tugen and the Pokot. Barwesa and Kabartonjo divisions of Baringo North Sub County do not border with Tiatey Sub County and were therefore omitted from the study. Similarly, Tangelbei division of Tiatey was omitted from the study through purposive sampling because it does not have a common administrative boundary with Baringo North Sub County. Thereafter, the researcher was left with Bartabwa and Kipsaraman divisions in Baringo North Sub County and Kolowa and Nginyang divisions in Tiatey Sub County.

Baringo North and Tiatey Sub Counties however have a long administrative boundary measuring approximately 100 km long and it was therefore convenient to study the communities along part of the administrative boundary of the two Sub Counties rather than all the areas along the boundary. The researcher purposively selected Kipsaraman Division in Baringo North and Nginyang division in Tiatey Sub County because both divisions share a common administrative boundary. The two divisions were chosen as the sampled area of study that represented the area inhabited by the pastoralist Tugen and Pokot communities. The advantage of selecting Nginyang division in Tiatey Sub County was that it is the largest division in the Sub County and has the longest administrative boundary that separates the Tugen and the Pokot. The disadvantage however is that the area is too large for such a study. The study overcame this by applying multi stage sampling techniques which involved selecting part of the divisions as the area of study.

Nginyang division has five locations namely: Akoret, Ribkwo, Silale, Kositei and Loyamorok. Through purposive sampling, Loyamorok location with an area of 380.9 km² was selected because it shares a common boundary with Kipsaraman division. Loyamorok is the largest location in Tiatey Sub County and in Nginyang division in particular. Sibilo and Kipkata locations of Baringo North Sub County were also selected through purposive sampling because they both share a common administrative boundary with Loyamorok location. The study focused on three locations namely; Sibilo and Kipkata in Baringo North Sub County and Loyamorok location in Tiatey Sub County. The study targeted to interview individuals in the three locations.

The Sample

The study used a sample of 85 Key Informants. Forty-two (42) of the Key Informants were from Baringo North Sub County while forty-three (43) were from Tiatey Sub County. In addition, 3 FGDs were carried out. The process of using multiple methods of data collection is also referred to as triangulation (Bailey 2007:76-77). Bailey argues that triangulation is good for verification purposes and the researcher should therefore understand the context of different accounts from various participants.

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Quoting Morse (1994) Moran (2013) notes that the sample size for Phenomenological research is 25 cases but also acknowledges that the number may depend on the point of saturation.. Similarly, Bailey (2007:65) posits that the number of cases selected in purposeful sampling should not be too small or too large and are often chosen for in-depth examination. Bailey recommends a starting point of 20 cases. More are interviewed until the researcher gets at least five new cases that fail to add relevant information to the analysis. Bogdan and Biklen (1992:68) emphasize this by stating that the researcher continues with additional five cases until the researcher reaches “*the point of data saturation*” where additional information obtained becomes redundant. Similarly, De Paulo (2000) recommends a sample of nearly 50 if the researcher wants to attain “99 percent confidence level (to be more conservative and reduce the risk of missing the one-in-10 sub group to less than 1 percent)”

The researcher identified one Key Informant from each ethnic group and through snow balling techniques selected a total of 85 Key Informants from both Tugen and Pokot pastoral groups. After interviewing a total of 42 Key Informants from the Tugen and 43 Key Informants from the Pokot the researcher found that additional information gathered was redundant. Table 1, 2, and 3 show the sampled Key informants from the Tugen and Pokot communities.

Table 1: Sampled Key Informants per sub location in Baringo North Sub County

Tugen (Baringo North Sub County) Selected Key Informants		
Location	Sub Location	Number
Sibilo	Sibilo	10
	Loruk	8
	Rondinin	4
Sub total		22
Kipkata	Kapkoivo	11
	Barketiew	9
Sub total		20
Total		42

Source: Researcher, 2019

Table 2: Sampled Key Informants per sub location in Tiatey Sub County

Location	Key Informants	Number
Loyamorok	Nginyang East	18
	Paka	9
	Kechii (L. Kongasis)	9
	Kakore	7
Total		43

Source: Researcher, 2019

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Table 3: Sampled Key Informants in Baringo North and Tiatey Sub Counties

Categories of Key Informants	Tugen	Pokot	Total	Percentage
Local administrators	10	11	21	24.71
Politicians	10	10	20	23.53
NGO officials	6	6	12	14.11
Opinion molders	16	16	32	37.65
Total	42 (100%)	43 (100%)	85 (100%)	100

Source: Researcher, 2019

The study used Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) to compliment the information obtained from Key Informants.

Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)

The study carried out three FGDs in total. One FGD comprised participants from the Tugen community while another FGD comprised Pokot participants. The third FGD comprised members from both the Tugen and Pokot community. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 3 FGDs. The first Focused Group Discussion was conducted in Baringo North Sub County (Tugen) and the second one in Tiatey Sub County (Pokot) while third FGD was a combined FGD with members from both Tugen and Pokot

Focused Group Discussions ensured that the researcher obtained information, which was more accurate as the group members assisted each other to clarify facts during the discussions. However, this technique had shortcomings as some group members dominated the discussions. In some cases, members also disagreed on some of the information given by their colleagues. Another shortcoming was that women were less represented.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data was sorted, summarized and interpreted according to research objectives. Transcription of tapes and translation of transcripts from mother tongue to English was carried out before data was analyzed. The meanings of words of people were interpreted in the form of descriptions and explanations. Thus, the causes of conflict between the Tugen and the Pokot were identified and described in depth.

The methodology of the study was limited by a number of factors that include unwillingness of Key Informants to respond especially among women and the elderly persons. The researcher overcame this by spending more time to convince the respondents. Another limitation was the poor road accessibility in many areas. In such areas the researcher overcame by walking through the villages, the researcher faced the limitation of having to avoid certain places because of banditry insecurity. The researcher overcame this by traveling with Research Assistants and volunteers to other places which were perceived less dangerous and returning early in the day from such places. In addition, the researcher met a few Key Informants, on prior arrangement, outside the study area.

Findings

This section presents the findings of the research focusing on the causation of conflict between the Tugen and Pokot of Baringo County in Kenya. It examines the empirical causes of conflicts and the underlying causation of conflict. The findings are based on data collected from Tugen and Pokot key informants and focused group discussions. Table 4 indicates the results from Tugen interviewees on the causes of conflicts.

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Table 4: Causes of Conflicts according to Tugen Key Informants

	Causes of Conflict	No	Percentage
1	Cattle rustling	9	21.42
2	Land	6	14.28
3	Water	5	11.9
4	Pasture	7	16.7
5	Drought	4	9.52
6	Lack of Govt. action	4	9.52
7	Political	4	9.52
8	Commerce	3	7.14
	Total	42	100

Source: Researcher, 2019

Tugen Key Informants (64.29%) identified resources (cattle/livestock, land/territory, water and pasture) as the main causes of conflict between the Tugen and Pokot. This suggests that the ever-diminishing environmental goods have contributed to more conflicts over water, pasture and land holding rights. Table 5 indicates the causes of conflicts as reported by Pokot interviewees.

Table 5: Causes of conflict according to Pokot Key Informants

	Causes of Conflict	No	Percentage
1	Cattle rustling	9	20.93
2	Land	3	6.98
3	Water	6	13.95
4	Pasture	5	11.63
5	Drought	6	13.95
6	Lack of Govt. action	2	4.65
7	Political	11	25.58
8	Commerce	1	2.33
	Total	43	100

Source: Researcher, 2019

Conflicts over Resources

When the respondents were further probed on livestock as a cause of conflict, it was revealed that revenge for cattle rustling and the demand for livestock for dowry payments exacerbated conflicts. These reasons were corroborated by FGDs from both communities.

Pokot respondents however indicated non resource-based issues, particularly politics as the major cause of conflicts between the Tugen and Pokot. Despite this, they acknowledge that other causes of conflict include water, land, pasture, and commercialization of livestock and cattle rustling as the major causes of conflict

Thus, 25.58% of the Pokot respondents reported that the single and major cause of conflict between the Tugen and Pokot is political factors. Despite this, both communities identified similar issues as those mentioned by the combined FGD responses but each group only gave emphasis on different aspects.

When the responses were analyzed according to each community, the respondents identified similar issues as those mentioned by the combined FGD responses but each group gave emphasis on different aspects.

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Livestock

Both Tugen and Pokot respondents agreed that when livestock are stolen from a community the aggrieved community tends to retaliate and this exacerbates conflict. Tugen Key Informants underscored this by stating that at times, the Pokot could provoke the Tugen by sending word that they were planning to carry out revenge attacks for stolen livestock. This causes tension between the communities. It was also reported that, in many cases, the Pokot carried out livestock raids without any warning.

The research revealed that the Tugen, unlike the Pokot, did not normally engage in livestock raids. This was evidenced by the absence of livestock raids between the Tugen and her other neighbors, for instance, the Njemps, Marakwet and the Keiyo. However, the Tugen respondents indicated that the Tugen normally pursued Pokot raiders, leading to violent confrontation. Livestock raids cause more conflict especially when they lead to deaths of culprits or innocent people from either group. The community whose members died during such raids often look for opportunities to avenge the deaths by carrying out more livestock revenge raids. The cyclical nature of livestock theft and counter raids raises the question; what is the force behind this type of conflict?

Interviews of Key Informants and FGDs revealed that livestock among the Tugen and Pokot have a cultural importance. As a source of livelihood, livestock provide meat, milk and blood for consumption. It also provides hides, skins and horns which are used for various purposes including garments and ornaments. Both Pokot and Tugen who reside in the lowlands of Baringo County depend on livestock for their survival as the climate does not support tending of crops. Any theft of livestock, which is the only source of livelihood, is therefore strongly resisted, pursued and/or revenged. The Tugen use the term *kerob tuga* (to follow up the stolen cows) to emphasize that any livestock stolen cannot be left out to the raiders but should be pursued until they were returned and the culprits made to pay a fine. Livestock is also perceived as a source of wealth, prestige and a means of payment.

The need for acquiring livestock is exacerbated by cultural beliefs among the Pokot that cows belong to their forefathers and when they raid, they are simply engaging in efforts to return their wealth which were stolen from them previously. As one Pokot Key Informant remarked, the Pokot use the phrase *tetab babunyan. Uamaten kolyong* (This is my father's cow; go and eat flies) to emphasize two things. Firstly, that the cow belongs to them, and secondly, the cow is their source of livelihood as they were not expected to eat flies. Unemployment and general idleness among the youth contributes to the urge to engage in livestock theft. The researcher observed this kind of idleness when he noted that men, and the youth in particular, sleep under trees during the day.

Traditionally, ethnic communities carry out livestock raids on communities they regarded as enemies. Both the Tugen and Pokot respect successful livestock raiders. Thus a warrior who brought cows from another community or kills a raider from another community was praised and blessed by elders. This triggers a chain of revenge attacks thus enhancing conflicts. A Tugen Key Informant, for example, narrated how a Tugen man was praised in his community for killing a Pokot. The Tugen nick-named "Sibirbire" in the year between 1900 and 1920, sang 'to praise himself' for killing a Pokot. The song goes: *Arimo nyang'ole beanya, arimo nyang'ole beanya kotoran Chemurya karambasan, kotoran Chemurya karambasan, kotoran kobat* (I am brave, I am brave, I got chance, and I speared Chemurya like a useless thing. I speared Chemurya to death like a useless thing. I just pinned him down). The Tugen usually sang this song among others, to praise their heroes. Focused Group Discussions further indicated that in some cases politicians incite their community to raid livestock from other communities so as to gain fame. Raided cattle are sold to

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businessmen and this phenomenon complicates livestock rustling as new external players come into play hence expanding the conflict participants and the cyclical nature of livestock raids.

Interviews revealed more details regarding causes of violence as a local Key informant (resident of Loruk) stated that the main cause of violence is political instigation. Other respondents stated that members of the two communities perceived each other as traditional enemies. As mentioned in our theoretical framework, the Tugen and Pokot refer each other as enemies. The Tugen use the term *bunyon* (enemy) to describe their relation with the Pokot.

From these responses, it was clear that the Pokot emphasized political issues as a major cause of conflict followed by cattle rustling, drought, and lack of government action while the Tugen on the other hand emphasized on cattle rustling, land, pasture, and lack of government action. Responses from FGDs indicated that these differences in emphasis of particular aspects as causes of conflict may be related to how each community perceived the other group. The fact that each group has different perceptions as to the causes emphasizes the link with our theoretical perspective of the enemy system theory. Despite this, there is consensus on many of the causes of conflict such as cattle rustling, water, and lack of government action.

From the analysis of responses from Key Informants and FGDs, the study revealed that the perception of viewing each other as traditional enemies is a major cause of conflict between the Tugen and the Pokot. This perception manifests itself in resources conflicts over livestock, water, land/ territory, and pasture.

Whenever there is a conflict, an enemy must exist and to abolish or resolve a conflict the disagreeing parties must transcend and supersede the enemy images embedded in their conscience with understanding based on tolerance and solidarity (Chelang'a et. al, 2019:16).

Communities' Perceptions

When communities perceive each other as enemies, they reinforce their social identities where they consider the opposite group as bad and themselves as virtuous. Thus, as Key Informants asserted, when a Pokot kills an enemy (Tugen man); he is respected and regarded as a hero in his community. Tattoos are cut on the bodies of such heroes as a sign of their heroism in a process locally referred to as "*kewat kole*". When a man kills a girl or a woman, he is given the name *selya moi* which is a name with low respect/prestige and when he kills a mad man or a disabled person, he is not respected as this act is regarded as an act of cowardice. This tradition is similar to occasions where one kills an animal.

When a Tugen or a Pokot kills a lion, he is respected and no tattoos are cut on his body. Interviews of Key Informants and FGDs all revealed that the Tugen and Pokot regard each other as enemies and this perception exacerbates conflict at the slightest provocation. According to Kandagor and Moindi (2019:430), cultural teachings and beliefs heavily contributed to conflicts between the Tugen and Pokot. From the foregoing, we therefore conclude that conflicts related to resources took place between perceived enemies. The Tugen, for instance, do not raid the Keiyo because the two communities became friends following a sustainable peace agreement of 1870s (Chelal, 1969). Frequent livestock raiding and counter raiding may therefore lead to enmity among communities

Perceptions of Inadequate government

One of the functions of a government is to ensure that there is law and order in a country. Interviews from both Tugen and Pokot indicate that government action or inaction is a source of conflict between the Tugen and Pokot. Lack of government action is blamed for the escalation of conflict. This is because the communities are not operating solely under traditional laws but also under the legal laws administered by government. The areas where the government is blamed

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include slow response to conflict, and lack of capacity to respond. In cattle rustling cases, it is reported that the government responds when the raiders have long gone. This is exacerbated by lack of police stations, poor and inaccessible roads. In other areas, absence of police creates insecurity (an administrative vacuum) as the government presence is not felt. In cases where the police respond, it is reported that livestock thieves had superior weapons making the government machinery ineffective. A Key Informant cited a case which took place on Friday 26th May 2007 when Pokot cattle rustlers raided a village at Kinyach and the administration police had no vehicle to respond to the situation.

According to the Tugen, the Pokot do not respect leaders from outside their community, hence reinforcing the perception that outsiders were enemies. Interviews further revealed that the local administration that comprises Assistant County Commissioners (District Officers) and Chiefs had no authority to command local police and home guards to act when there is conflict. Instead, they wait for centralized command. This makes government action slow and uncoordinated. The failure of the government to act promptly during times of conflict makes communities to take the law in their hands. Thus, communities carry out revenge cattle rustling missions or do other acts of revenge depending on the kind of dispute.

The Pokot who were interviewed revealed interesting data on how the Pokot perceived the government during president Moi's regime and how this impacted on conflicts between the Tugen and the Pokot. First, the Pokot thought that Moi, being a Tugen, was from the enemy community, hence was biased against them whenever there was a conflict between the two communities. One respondent thus stated:

During Moi's regime, unfair government action was the major source of conflict. When the Pokot stole livestock from the Tugen, the government used excessive force including using the Police, General Service Unit (GSU), and the army to disarm the Pokot and forcefully take Pokot livestock rather than pursue the thieves. This kind of force was not exercised when the Tugen stole livestock from the Pokot.

Another respondent with a similar view remarked that: "*The Moi's government took sides in the Tugen and Pokot conflict leading to intense enmity and prolonged conflicts*" Other respondents thought that Moi's government collected taxes from Pokot territory and used it to develop Tugen areas, leaving the Pokot community to remain behind in education and other areas of development. The construction of a tarmac road through the Tugen territory, from Marigat to Loruk, by the Moi regime was cited as an example of discrimination. The Pokot believed that Moi did not want the tarmac road to extent into the Pokot territory. Local people used to sarcastically refer to the region without a tarmac road as "Kenya one" to express the differences between the Tugen and the Pokot territory. The tarmac has since been extended into the Pokot territory during the subsequent regimes of President Mwai Kibaki and President Uhuru Kenyatta.

Loruk Centre is situated at the Tugen/ Pokot border and is where the Tugen and Pokot communities interact in trade. It is a place where there are unresolved border conflicts. It is also a Centre where the Tugen and Pokot elders meet to discuss conflicts affecting them. Available data indicate Tugen and Pokot elders signed a peace agreement at Loruk Centre in a meeting witnessed by the then chiefs of Saimo location (Tugen) and Loyamorok location (Pokot) respectively in 1978. This peace agreement has often been violated due to persistent perceptions of enmity among the communities and the divisive nature of party politics

Drawing from the responses, it may be concluded that it is the perceptions of being discriminated by government that increased the intensity of enmity between the two communities. In some cases, this led to political differences among leaders from the two communities. For instance, the Pokot leaders have supported different political parties from those supported by the

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Tugen between 1992 when multi-party politics were introduced and in 2017 Presidential elections. This scenario created a political dimension to traditional conflicts which existed before.

Political Rivalry

Political causes of conflict between the Tugen and Pokot may have intensified in 1992 when some Pokot politicians defected from Kenya African National Union (KANU) party which had been the dominant party in Kenya since independence to Democratic Party (DP). In the 1997 Presidential, Parliamentary and Civic elections, majority of the Tugen voted for KANU while the Pokot votes were divided between the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy- Kenya (FORD Kenya) and DP. In 2002 and 2007, majority of the Pokot voted for National Rainbow Coalition (NARC Kenya) and Party of National Unity (PNU) while the Tugen votes were split between KANU and Orange Democratic Party (ODM) in the respective period.

In 2002 when President Moi completed his tenure as president, the Pokot (then Baringo East constituency) elected a member of parliament on FORD ASILI ticket with majority of them voting for Mwai Kibaki for president. During the same period, the Tugen (Baringo North Constituency) elected a member of parliament on a KANU ticket with majority votes for Uhuru Kenyatta who lost the presidential elections. During the 2007 elections, the Pokot elected a member of parliament on a NARCK ticket with majority votes for president going to Mwai Kibaki of NARCK party who won the disputed presidential election. During this period, the Tugen Member of Parliament for Baringo North was elected on an Orange Development Party (ODM) with majority votes for president going to Raila Odinga who lost the disputed presidential election. It was 10 years after Moi left power when the Tugen and Pokot voted for Jubilee party for both parliamentary and presidential candidates in 2013. The elections of 2017 followed a similar pattern as the two communities voted Jubilee candidate for president. However, while the Tugen voted for the Jubilee party candidate for Member of Parliament, the Pokot voted for their member of parliament on a KANU party. Thus since 1992, the Tugen and the Pokot were divided along party lines.

Besides differences during elections period, both the Tugen and Pokot also agree that conflicts between them were ignited by politicians who held meetings inside the territory of another community. This is manifested in disputes over land/territory as it was assumed that the venue of the meeting signifies ownership of the area. Interviews also revealed that the desire to expand territory for political reasons was a cause of conflict. Tugen Key Informants posit that Pokot politicians incited their youth to expand their territory in order to acquire more locations which will translate to more food relief, government grants, and Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

Political boundaries (territory as earlier reported) were also cited by the two communities as a cause of conflict as each group perceive certain areas (and environmental resources) as exclusively theirs. Political matters have further contributed to livestock raids as politicians not only facilitated the use of small arms in livestock raids but also facilitated large sale of livestock acquired from raids.

Commercialization of Livestock

Traditionally, raiding cattle of other communities in contemporary society was generally considered an acceptable practice among pastoral communities. The Youth were blessed by elders before they carried out raids. Among the Pokot, those who raid without blessings were regarded as thieves. Cows acquired through blessed raids were shared among the members of the community except one cow which is slaughtered and its hide cut into small pieces which are used as ornaments by warriors who wear them on their fingers, arms and the waist. Constant Tugen resistance against Pokot raids exacerbated conflicts.

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In an isolated, but important case, a Key Informant blamed government administrator for using security forces to engage in cattle raids for their own profits. He further reported that in some incidences, the security forces, particularly the GSU exacerbated conflict by harassing businessmen and robbing their shops. Available data in the form of a letter written in Kiswahili to the District Commissioner on August 25th 1975 corroborated this information. The letter alleged that GSU officers in a government lorry bearing registration number GK 1382 harassed shop keepers at Loruk trading Centre and stole Ksh. 6,448 from nine shops. The local residents asked the government to take appropriate action against the security forces involved (un-published letter). Key Informants alleged that the Kenya Meat Commission (KMC) brought an easy exit for stolen livestock. This was further aggravated by the use of Lorries to transport them. A recent research indicates that violent conflicts in Northern Kenya is sustained by powerful and well-connected businessmen and politicians who supply illegal firearms to raiders in exchange of raided livestock for commercial purposes (Limo, 2017:35)

The Tugen are the main buyers of livestock from Pokot and are regarded by the latter as monopolists. The Pokot believe that the Tugen deliberately prevented other potential livestock buyers from accessing the Pokot livestock market. They believe that the Tugen position themselves at Marigat to discourage non Tugen from reaching Nginyang market so that they were the only ones to buy the livestock at low prices. They further believed that the Tugen agreed on the buying prices of the livestock before they go to the Pokot markets. They also thought that former President Moi promoted the Tugen livestock market at Kimalel (Tugen) and ignored markets in Pokot territory.

Conflicts arose when Pokot businessmen whose cows were not bought or those who were dissatisfied with low prices, felt oppressed and exploited. They resorted to banditry, hence robbing Tugen traders on their way to the livestock markets. Other livestock keepers sell their cows and immediately follow the buyers, after which they forcefully take back the cows and any businessmen who resisted were murdered. Episodes of this nature have encouraged banditry between Loruk and Nginyang. In 1997, for example, an Asian businessman locally known as 'Kiptingilen' became a victim of bandits when he was murdered when on his way to supply maize flour to Loruk, Nginyang, Chemolingot and Yatya markets. Banditry is therefore a new source of conflict.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The article examined the dynamics of conflicts between the Tugen and Pokot and posits that the conflicts were related to competition over diminishing resources. It was also found that the real underlying causation of conflict was related to how the communities perceived each other as foes rather than allies. As Muntet argues, the perception of the Pokot is that the communities that surrounded them were enemies (Muntet, 2016: 31). The two communities regard each other as traditional enemies. The conflicts over livestock and resources such as pasture, water, territory, and politics were just the manifestations of deep-rooted perceptions of enmity between the two communities. We also argued that conflicts arising from competition over resources can lead to enmity among communities. Enemy perceptions should therefore be addressed when seeking the resolution of conflicts among groups.

The article also established that most livestock related conflicts took place during the rainy season when there is plenty of water and pasture rather than during drought. This meant that cattle rustling conflicts were practices carried out for restocking after drought. We also argued that communities don't just carry out livestock raids from any community but focused mainly on perceived enemy groups. These practices are exacerbated by revenge attacks (counter-raids), pursuance of stolen livestock, hatred, idleness and the demand for livestock for livelihood and cultural purposes such as payment of dowry. In the recent time, conflicts have increased because of new practices (which were non-traditional) such as selling raided livestock and this was worsened

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by the use of Lorries to transport stolen livestock. It was further aggravated by the politics which divided communities along political party lines, ethnic groups, and those perceived as friends or enemies.

Recommendation

We recommend that stakeholder's efforts to resolve perennial and traditional conflicts among pastoral communities should not only focus on immediate causes of conflicts but should also tackle the existing perceptions whether the communities regarded each other as foes or allies.

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