# Master Thesis

## Transboundary natural resource conflicts: A multi-actor perspective on Positive Peace in the Kerio Valley, Kenya

submitted by

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# Affidavit

I hereby declare that I have authored this master thesis independently, and that I have not used any assistance other than that which is permitted. The work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise. All ideas taken in wording or in basic content from unpublished sources or from published literature are duly identified and cited, and the precise references included.

I further declare that this master thesis has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in the same or a similar form, to any other educational institution as part of the requirements for an academic degree.

I hereby confirm that I am familiar with the standards of Scientific Integrity and with the guidelines of Good Scientific Practice, and that this work fully complies with these standards and guidelines.

Vienna, September 12, 2022                    Nora HEIN *(manu propria)*

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# Abstract

Recurring violent conflict in Kenya's Kerio Valley between neighbouring Pokot and Marakwet has adversely affected local people's lives and livelihoods for over three decades. Reciprocal attacks for competition over resources, water and land and the traditional practice of cattle rustling have harmed, displaced and killed thousands of people, and continue to disrupt regional development efforts. While peace agreements have been brokered in the past, long-term peace remained elusive. Using a qualitative approach, and Positive Peace as a theoretical lens, the present thesis aims to assess the existence of attitudes, structures and institutions favourable to mitigate and ultimately transform the long-standing conflict after the Chesegon Peace Accord was signed in July 2019. Based on interview material from 28 stakeholders in the local peace process, findings show an ambiguous picture and mixed promise of developing Positive Peace. Both attitudes and institutions had seen some encouraging developments already and were considered likely to improve further. However, insufficient evidence supports the existence of Positive Peace in relation to structures. What is more, while importantly credited with having put a halt to a cycle of violent attacks, to a large extent, peace actors' contributions were yet to transcend beyond a short-term reduction of physical violence. At the same time, triggers of conflict continued to exist. Throughout, much depends on the uncertain continuity of political support. Having preceded peace in the first place, notably, political leadership so far has not remedied a condition of structural inequality between conflicting communities.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Study area

### 1.1.1. Ecological context

Due to its harsh climate and remote location, the border region of Kenya´s Elgeyo-Marakwet, Baringo and West Pokot counties – the Kerio Valley – is considered an area of ecological hardship. Elgeyo- Marakwet´s three distinct ecological zones – the Highlands, the Escarpment and the Kerio Valley – see the lower lying Valley, situated mainly in Baringo county, confronted with comparatively unfavourable climatic conditions, partly due to a variation in altitude from about 900 m above sea level in the Kerio Valley to over 3000 m above sea level in the Highlands. The annual precipitation measures around 600-700 mm in semi-arid Kerio Valley and gets as much as 1700 mm further up in the hills. Temperatures vary according to sea level. Decreasing rainfall patterns show from west to east while rendering the eastern part of the county the most prone to the risks of floods and droughts. The so-called 'upper and lower spencer lines' separate the arable land along Marakwets Escarpment from adjoining Highlands and the Kerio Valley lowlands (County Government of Elgeyo-Marakwet, 2018), the latter considered a low potential area for agricultural management as compared to higher lying fertile grounds. Frequent drought episodes in Baringo are responsible
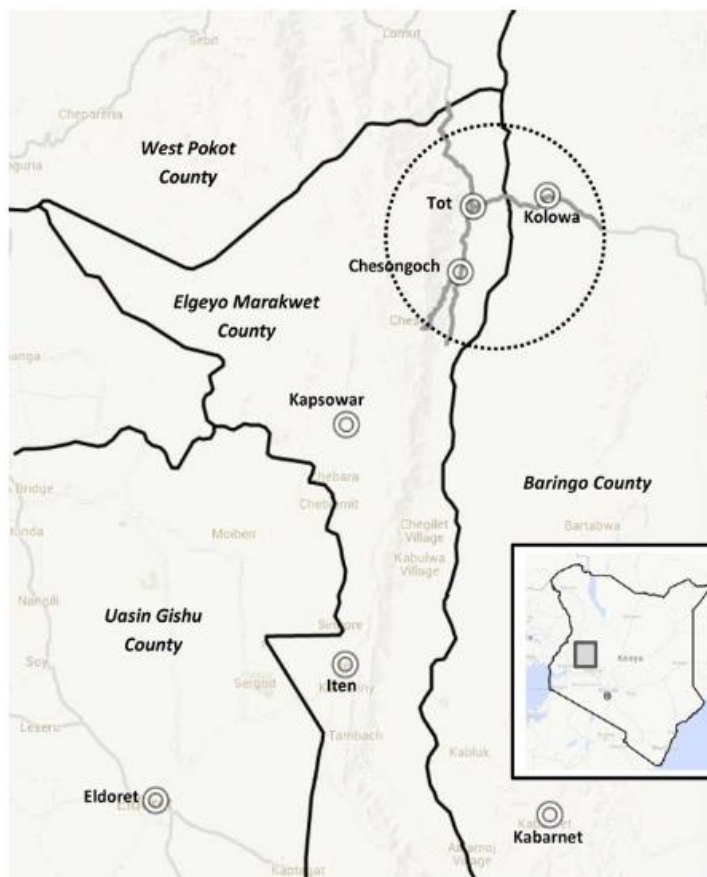


Figure 1: Map of the case study area within Kenya (Elfversson, 2016, 471)

for losing livestock and farm produce. In addition, land degradation related to overstocking, overgrazing, or deforestation threatens the livelihoods of Baringo residents (County Government of Baringo, 2018).

## 1.1.2. Conflicting parties

The Marakwet, who are mainly agro-pastoral communities from Elgeyo-Marakwet, and the Pokot from Baringo, also partly agro-pastoral but with stronger ties to pure nomadic pastoralism, are neighbouring communities in Kenya´s North Rift Kerio Valley. Both subgroups of the Southern Nilotic Kalenjin language group also share a history of conflict. In the Kerio Valley, conflict is mainly associated with reciprocal attacks for competition over resources, water and land and the traditional practice of cattle rustling.

In Baringo, livestock keeping is the major economic activity (County government of Baringo, 2018), while 80% of Elgeyo-Marakwet´s population derives income from agriculture-based activities (County government of Elgeyo-Marakwet, 2018). Climatic variation and agricultural potential make but two influential factors regarding Pokot and Marakwets´ livelihoods. Missionary efforts amongst agro-pastoral Marakwet communities in Elgeyo- Marakwet started in about the early 1970/80s and have resulted in high numbers of people associating themselves with Christianity and its churches in the region. Up to the present day, the work of the Benedictine sisters in the Kerio Valley plays a significant role for many in various spheres of life, offering spiritual guidance as well as support in practical matters such as medical care, food, education or emergency aid. On the Baringo side, settlements are more dispersed over vast stretches of land, and churches have not established a similar presence.

A few NGOs and development partners have been present and working in the area for some decades now. However, in some cases, efforts on programs or projects have not been directed equally on people and areas of counties Baringo and Elgeyo- Marakwet, focussing to a greater extent on Marakwet territory. On that account, much progress was made regarding and consequently due to basic education.

After years of conflict, the opportunities for basic education in Baringo´s Kerio Valley, partly scarce to begin with, were further impaired. Several school buildings had been destroyed, and many children were out of school. Partly this was due to security concerns, as school children have been victims of violent attacks on several occasions. Additionally, whilst the Constitution of Kenya, in Article 53 (1) (b), unequivocally states that *every child has the right to free and compulsory basic education,* implementation and monitoring are harder to come by, for example in the case of Baringo nomadic pastoral communities without permanent places of residence.

## 1.2.  History of conflict in the Kerio Valley

Communal conflict has affected many parts of Kenya already in the past. Even so, it was often amongst the most severe in Rift Valley, where the Kerio Valley is located, next to Kenya´s northeast and on the coast (Elfversson, 2019a). In the Kerio Valley, violent conflict between communities Pokot and Marakwet in the border region of counties Elgeyo- Marakwet, Baringo and West Pokot has considerably shaped people's lives and livelihoods and adversely affected the region´s economic development opportunities. Recurring stretches of violence and interjacent periods of peace have marked the area's history since the 1990s, when widespread ethnic violence, concocted under the leadership of President Daniel arap Moi, led to the escalation of the long-standing conflict between the Marakwet and Pokot. Having promoted the centralization of power and effectively turned Kenyan democracy into a one-party state, Moi got under pressure from the international community and domestic opposition forces in the 1990s. Trying to diffuse resistance, the Moi administration resorted to the manipulation of old grievances regarding land allocations under Jomo Kenyatta, the independent Republic of Kenya´s first president, that unjustly favoured Kikuyu elites. Ethnic voting was staged as a way to ensure leverage on national and local resources. Baringo being Moi´s home area, the perception was now one of political bias and favouritism of local Pokot elites (Elfversson, 2019b), failing to evenly prosecute raids (Kamenju et al., 2003 in Elfversson, 2019b). Notwithstanding Moi´s counter efforts, multi-party democracy in Kenya was restored, and elections were held in 1992, which he won. Subsequent years saw violence become institutionalised (Government of Kenya, 2008) and increasing numbers of fatalities, especially many coinciding with years of elections 1992, 1997 and 2007 (Elfversson, 2019a). After a particularly devastating raid in Murkutwo location in 2001, carried out by hundreds of heavily armed Pokot, that left around 50 people dead (Macharia & Chesos 2001 in Elfversson, 2014) and destroyed houses and property, it seemed "*conflict had reached a level of intensity and destruction that communities felt was no longer bearable*" (Kamenju et al., 2003 in Elfversson, 2014, 16). With "*increased acceptance and institutionalisation of local peacemaking based on customary conflict regulation mechanisms*" (Odendaal, 2013 in Elfversson, 2014, 17) and Moi´s maximum term as president as per the constitution about to end, conditions were conducive to change in the Kerio Valley. (Elfversson, 2014). A few months after the Murkutwo attack, the then period of violence was arranged by signing the Declaration of Kolowa in 2002, a locally driven peace process initiated by community elder leaders seeking dialogue. With the help of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC) who served as a mediator, an arrangement was achieved, specifying matters such as compensation payments, provisions on entitlement to water and land or the establishment of District Peace Committees, which were intended to ensure continuous dialogue and restore interactions between Pokot and

Marakwet communities. According to Emma Elfversson, a key component of the oral declaration – "*sealed by ritual means through slaughtering a cow and drinking its blood*" (2014, 16) was agreeing to individualize responsibility for raids or killings, interrupting the deadly cycle of communal acts of revenge.

Largely peaceful inter-communal relations marked the following decade, with individual assaults and raids being handled well within the given conflict management framework; the limitation being a lack of complete disarmament and demobilization (Elfversson, 2019b).

In 2016, violence started afresh, building up to a series of attacks in the following years. Over time and under the influence of corroborative factors, violence eventually increased to unprecedented levels of cruelty. More frequent attacks with high casualties and ensuing retaliatory attacks saw the overall state of security in the region change for the worse with "*cattle rustling out of control*" (Chai, 2019), also due to flourishing trade business with stolen livestock. A significant number of mentions ins media reporting covered the Kerio Valley´s insecurity, some as drastic as dubbing it a „*valley of death*" (DPPS, 2019). For fear of attacks, numerous schools closed down, and families along the border were displaced (Chai, 2019). Reportedly, early 2019´s demanding dry season contributed further to the deterioration of inter-communal relationships between Pokot and Marakwet communities, with conflict erupting over scarce grazing lands. In light of the rising death toll, the Kenyan government executed a major security operation in July 2019 with National Police Reservists and Police Service aiming to remove raiders from their hiding places in Embobut Forest (Wanjiru, 2019).

## 1.3. Determinants of conflict

Peace research scientist Emma Elfversson´s extensive work on communal conflict in Kenya finds cattle raiding, local resources and boundaries, electoral politics and local authority to be the main drivers of conflict. While arguing their importance for conflict dynamics, she also points out regional variability and differences regarding combinations of contributing factors (Elfversson, 2019a).

### 1.3.1. Cattle rustling

#### 1.3.1.1. A traditional means

In the Kerio Valley, assaults usually are associated with raiding livestock from another community. This practice of cattle rustling is deeply incorporated into pastoral societies' culture

and serves multiple purposes. Traditionally a means of redistributing wealth within pastoral communities (Hendrickson et al. 1996 in Bond, 2014) and restocking herds after losses due to climatic hardship or animal diseases (Schilling et al., 2012), it is still nowadays considered pivotal in pastoral culture as for its relation to rites of passage and status (such as, for example, circumcision, marriage or childbirth). As herd size serves as an indicator of wealth (Juma, 2000), routinely, up to this day, animals are required for dowry. Young men aspiring to get married often are hard-pressed to acquire the number of animals in question. The widespread prevalence of arms adds gravely to the difficulties arising from this. Whilst arming for security purposes is common within cross-border pastoralist communities, weapons easily get utilized in livestock raids as well and whilst by no means innocuous before, modern weaponry "*has turned such traditional practices into lethal warfare*"(Griffith-Fulton, 2002). Unhindered by the porous borders between Kenya and neighbouring north-eastern countries Uganda, Somalia and South Sudan, where civil war or unrest has been going on for many years, large numbers of small arms and light weapons (SALW) have been entering into the country in recent years (Griffiths-Fulton, 2002). Taken together, the significance of having guns within the pastoral community for their stipulated safety aspects and the proliferation of firearms from neighbouring conflict zones have pushed the quality of traditional cattle raiding into devastating spheres. Still, in recent years, one more layer has been added to this deeply rooted cultural practice. Increasing commercialization added another brick to the complexities of the issue at hand.

### 1.3.1.2.  For commercial gains

As a recent development, cattle raiding is being exercised not within a traditional value and belief system but for monetary gains. Following an "*expansion of a market economy and the commercialization of raiding*" (Juma, 2000, 10), operations are associated with organized crime and oriented strategically. Animals captured in raids nowadays are often sold at markets abroad. Meat is being exported even beyond Africa, thus effectively hindering efforts to successfully recapture stolen livestock (ibid.). In addition, sometimes, a lack of adequate identification for individual animals and their respective owners makes it easy to evade legal consequences when trading with stolen animals. Driven by economic and political gains (Sharamo, 2014), with intermediaries and traders benefiting from community disputes, this newly commercialized style of raiding has become another important driver of conflict over the years, potentially fuelled from within as well as without. In a misfortunate cycle of perceived versus actual safety threats, the situation furthers the dissemination of weapons in the region, with livestock being exchanged for arms at times.

## 1.3.2. Natural resources and environment

Agro-pastoral conflicts represent a common feature in various regions of Africa and, indeed, many areas of the world (Turner, 2004). Scholars have elaborately covered these conflicts, using a wide range of approaches to discuss a variety of cases (for this see e.g. Bond, 2014; Ide et al., 2017; Onyekuru & Marchant, 2014; Turner, 2004). Many have positioned themselves within a resource scarcity mentality, but other angles have been presented as well. Climatic stressors (rise in temperature, drought, altered precipitation patterns) in many places contribute to disputes about pasture and rangelands as well as the forcible robbing of livestock (Ide, 2017). As weather conditions and land use changes challenge traditional ways of living amongst parts of the population, these conflicts tend to intensify (Adano et al., 2012).

In the Kerio Valley, clashes are a matter of neighbouring communities conflicting over available resources, land, water and fodder. Disparate access to these resources finds Pokot communities in an unfavourable position. During the local dry season (from January to March), Pokot herd their animals from their homelands in the semi-arid Kerio Valley onto higher-lying and more fertile grounds, mainly on the Elgeyo-Marakwet side of the border region, repeatedly fuelling tensions with locally residing Marakwet in the process.

However, the label 'resource conflict' does not paint the whole picture. The term gets awarded airily in resource-poor areas. Conflict is often interpreted to be centred over scarce resources, neglecting to inquire in-depth for a fuller understanding of underlying tensions and triggers. According to Turner (2004), the material dimension of conflict necessarily implicates natural resources. Therefore most social conflict could be interpreted in relation to resources in poor rural communities. Even so, in regions where a majority of people derive income from agricultural produce, including the keeping of livestock, weather patterns have a crucial influence on livelihoods and food provisioning (Uexkull, 2016). Frequent climatic variability increasingly puts those under pressure dependent on fertile soils for crop growing or grazing animals without reliable means of irrigation. While communities can handle many situations of hardship, Homer-Dixon (1999 in Uexkull, 2016) argues not to underestimate the violent consequences of scarcity. Still, he also emphasizes influential factors:

"*Environmental scarcity is never a sole or sufficient cause of large migrations, poverty, or violence; it always joins with other economic, political, and social factors to produce its effects*" (Homer-Dixon 1999 in Uexkull, 2016).

### 1.3.3. Politics and ethnicity

At the time of data collection for this research, in September and October 2019, the predominant view amongst scholars was that ethnic identity in Kenya is closely interrelated with elections and land tenure, and ethnicity strongly politicized (Elfversson, 2019a). In the past, this held true on both national and local levels, with a history of ethnically motivated violence dating back to Daniel arap Moi´s time as President, after Jomo Kenyatta´s death. Conservative estimates place the number of fatalities from ethnically motivated violent conflict in Kenya since 1989 at about 4000 and multiple times as many gravely affected (Elfversson, 2019a). Widely, Kenyans considered themselves as members of 'tribes' as a "standard unit of domicile identity" (Wamwere, 2008 in Wambua, 2017, 26). Muema Wambua´s analysis of electoral conflict in Kenya finds the political atmosphere and key institutions in Kenya to have borne influence along ethnic lines ever since the 1991 advent of multi-party democratic politics: "(*P)olitical appointment into critical institutions is seen as rewarding certain ethnic groups in the country with a view to gaining loyalty and political patronage*" (Wambua, 2017, 31). Even so, he argues that "*Kenyans co-exist peacefully until the political leadership elevates ethnic persuasions and sensitivities in their quest for political power especially during elections*" (2017, 22). Related to politics´ historically close connection with ethnic identities, Kenyan scholars further describe the harmful consequences that inequitable land distribution practices in post-colonial times had on peaceful community- relations. After independence, land taken from native communities failed to be returned to the former and rightful owners but was claimed instead by elites (see e.g. Munene, 2012 in Wambua, 2017; Mwagiru, 2008 in Wambua, 2017; Wamwere, 2008 in Wambua, 2017).

## 1.4. Frameworks for peace

### 1.4.1. International frameworks for peace

Recognizing Kenya´s strategically important position in the region, international-level ambitions join national efforts to strengthen inter-communal relations. With the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – and the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, two important frameworks for peaceful interaction have been established. The African Union Agenda 2063´s pan- African vision of an '*Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa'* (African Union, n.d.a), stipulates '*A stable and Peaceful Africa*' (goal 14) and that '*Peace Security and Stability is preserved*' (goal 13) (African Union, n.d.b). Linking to that, the SDGs, adopted by all UN Member states in 2015, provide a self-proclaimed '*shared blueprint for peace and prosperity'* (United Nations, 2019), explicitly

asking for '*Peace, justice and strong institutions*' with Sustainable Development Goal 16 and touching upon issues of conflict mitigation in several other goals. Furthermore, the UN strategy to ensure stability in Kenya bestows peace and reconciliation as a comprehensive theme (Cox et al., 2014 in Rohwerder, 2015). While it is suggested that the UN has made significant progress working toward reducing violent inter-group conflict, the „*formalization of peace architecture at state level, however, has been problematic*" and „*traditional, ethno-centric social order remains the dominant form of socio-political organization*" (Cox et al., 2014, 3 in Rohwerder, 2015, 20). The manner and ferocity of conflict stand interrelated with the presence of firearms, a problem seen to affect large stretches of Africa. Therefore, Kenya in 2004 adopted, amongst fellow states of the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, the Nairobi Protocol, based on the 2000 Nairobi Declaration, on the problem of the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. Past and ongoing armed conflicts in the region and illegal trade and terrorist activities have resulted in arms entering the region. Therefore, signatory states of the Nairobi Protocol rededicated themselves to continue efforts to peacefully resolve conflicts in the region and address troubles caused and affected by the vast number of illegal firearms in the region. Civil and inter-state wars, or their interrelation, are said to have resulted in the lively trafficking of illegal firearms, with weapons being used in conflicts over resources or cattle rustling (Griffiths- Fulton, 2002). Mandated to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol in the Great Lakes Region, Horn of Africa and bordering states is the Regional Centre for Small Arms (RECSA), that has been established in 2005 (RECSA, n.d.). Furthermore, cooperating with RECSA on this, Kenya is a member state of the East Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO). Having been established in 1998 to fight transnational and organized crime it remains a potentially powerful but in fact partly ineffective mechanism, as failure to ratify various instruments and lacking to appropriately resource regional offices limit its reach (Gumba, 2018).

With the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Kenya is member to another important transnational body, working closely, for example, with the UN on the implementation of the SDGs or the AU. IGADs mission is to promote peaceful cooperation and integration amongst member states in the Horn of Africa, the Nile Region and the Great Lakes Region. While socio-economic development and good governance are considered by IGAD as best means to prevent conflict, there is recognition as well of the military´s potentially vital role: "*While no crisis in the IGAD region will be permanently resolved through hard military intervention, some crises would require rapid military intervention*" (IGAD, 2016, 46). With the overarching goal of enhancing peace and stability in the region in mind, IGAD strategies for 2016-2020 comprised elements of improving livestock management (putting in place regional and international initiatives, for example to end cattle rustling), enhancing social delivery to

rural and pastoralist areas and their access or protecting climate, water and other natural resources. IGAD initiative CEWARN (Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism), for instance, seeks the prevention, management and resolution of inter and intra-state conflicts of member states through dialogue (IGAD, 2016). While it had been targeted at two mainly pastoralist areas (Kabongah (edt.), 2011), it was not yet active in Kerio Valley.

## 1.4.2. National frameworks for peace

In response to the 2007-2008 period of severe post-election violence, a new constitution was created in Kenya with support from the international community. It came into effect in 2010 and initiated wide-reaching institutional reforms, including key principles of democracy and good governance (Wambua, 2017). At the core stood a dispersion of power through devolved governance, aimed at a more equitable distribution of resources and improving social cohesion. With Kenya Vision 2030, a long-term national development plan was designed, aspiring reforms in social, political and economic regard (Kenya Vision 2030, n.d.). Whilst the new constitution is considered to be progressive, political institutions remain weak and elitist and the underlying issues of poverty and exclusionary politics are seen to have prevented progress from taking full effect (Cox et al., 2014 in Rohwerder, 2015). What is more, while the constitution aims to address "*structural and institutional deficiencies in the pursuit of peace, there is hardly any constitutive Act which expressly legislates on the pursuit of peace in the country*" (Wambua, 2017, 20f).

Kenya sees wide-spread communal conflict, ranking top amongst states in this regard (Brosché & Elfversson, 2012 in Elfversson, 2017) calling for frequent institutional responses. Under the administrative system, mandated by the Ministry of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security, the National Steering Committee on Conflict Management and Peace building (NSC) is responsible for the coordination of actions, with Provincial Peace Forums (PPF) at provincial level and District Peace Committees (DPC) at district level serving at its mandate. The latter contributing as "*largely hybrid peace structures*", that "*build on the current structure of provincial administration while opening it up for community driven/grassroots conflict management initiatives*" (Kabongah (edt.), 2011, 57). In their key roles of 'Violence reduction', 'Problem-solving and community-building', 'Mediation and reconciliation' and 'Sensitization', the District Peace Committees seek to enhance collaborative bonds between various partners. Whilst DPCs´ success in some areas is widely recognized – such as north-eastern Kenya´s Wajir, where a long-standing conflict erupted violently in the 1990s (Elfversson, 2019a) – their overall balance is mixed, as well due to insufficient funding and often lacking capacity, as Kabongah (2011) points out.

Working next to the National Steering Committee, which is trying to impede conflict from evolving in the first place, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC)´s policy developed alongside the 2010 Constitution of Kenya and Kenya Vision 2030 (Kabongah (edt.), 2011). It has "*emerged as the principal formal bureaucratic institution at the helm of nation-wide efforts to change inter-ethnic group attitudes in Kenya and construct a more cohesive, peaceful national identity*" (Cox et al., 2014, 3 in Rohwerder, 2015, 20).

National responses repeatedly include the heralding of disarmament campaigns in rural areas, serving but little effect to actually do so. In this regard, Kabongah argues on the importance of an "*inclusive, gradual process based on consultation and consensus building*" (2011, 80), to abate the significance of guns within pastoralist communities.

Limited government presence in the Kerio Valley implies conflict management to mainly take on the form of reactively deploying security forces (Administration Police, regular police, General Service Units, Anti Stock Theft Unit, and army) in response to violence. Whilst the sole use of (para)military force neglects conflict´s political dimensions and did not prove successful in other areas affected by conflict (Dowd and Raleigh, 2015 in Rohwerder, 2015), the absence of police or security forces works detrimental to ensuring peaceful conditions. Further, a lack of "*coordination and collaboration in peace and security between the local and national level*" (Gibbons, 2014 in Rohwerder, 2015, 17) impeded adequate government response to intercommunal violence in the past.

## 1.5. Structure of the present work

Following this 'Introduction' to resource conflicts in the Kerio Valley between Pokot and Marakwet communities, the subsequent chapter presents 'Study objectives' and states the research questions. 'Theoretical background' then introduces the theoretical lens applied to achieve those – conceptualizing peace through 'Negative Peace' and 'Positive Peace' and 'attitudes', 'structures' and 'institutions' as the latter's components. Next, the methodological approach to the current thesis is presented in detail, providing in-depth context and content information. The structure of 'Results' resembles a timeline – from a comprehensive genesis of conflict in the Kerio Valley- category, to the actors involved and enabling factors to the Chesegon peace process, towards requirements to sustain it into the future. Subsequently, results are discussed against literature to allow an assessment of the current peace in the Kerio Valley. Finally, a 'Conclusion' is presented, summarizing the main findings and offering suggestions for further research.

## 2. STUDY OBJECTIVES

By gaining insights into stakeholders´ perceptions after the signing of the Chesegon Peace Accord in July 2019, I seek to find out what keeps triggering conflict behavior in the longstanding dispute between Pokot and Marakwet communities, as well as the role and scope of influence of various peace actors in the most recent peace process. Further, I seek to assess evidence for the existence of conditions favourable to the development of Positive Peace in the Kerio Valley. Advancing the empirical understanding of Positive Peace in the context of the current peace in the Kerio Valley is expected to create a more concise idea of what is required to mitigate and ultimately transform the recurring conflict between Pokot and Marakwet communities in the study area. For that purpose, the research questions are:

| Main research questions | Sub-questions |
| --- | --- |
| **RQ1**: In the Kerio Valley´s recurring conflict between Pokot and Marakwet communities, what are the factors that keep triggering conflict behavior? | |
| **RQ2**: Which state and non-state actors are perceived by interviewees to have predominantly influenced the Chesegon peace process of mid-2019? | **RQ2\***: Which actors are perceived to have been most decisive in developments leading up the signing of Chesegon Peace Accord in July 2019? <br><br> **RQ2\*\*:** Which actors are considered most influential for future developments to sustain the peace in the Kerio Valley? |
| **RQ3**: After the signing of the Chesegon Peace Accord, what evidence exists for the development of Positive Peace and a lowered risks of resource conflicts in the Kerio Valley? | **RQ3\***: What evidence is there for the coherence of attitudes favourable to the development of Positive Peace? <br><br> **RQ3\*\*:** To what extent do social, economic and political structures support the development of Positive Peace? <br><br> **RQ3\*\*\*:** Which institutional arrangements contribute to the development of Positive Peace? |

# 3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

## 3.1. Conceptual framework

Taking into account the Kerio Valley´s history of alternating periods of peace and violence, and past attempts to settle peace, it becomes clear that an orientation towards sustainable peace requires a broad and long-term approach to not only address any fighting but root causes and circumstances to the longstanding conflict. For that purpose, as a conceptual framework for this research, I combine Galtung´s proposition that peace is made up of both *Positive* and *Negative Peace* (see 3.1.1) and elements of Positive Peace *attitudes*, *structures and institutions*, as proposed by the Institute for Economic & Peace (see 3.1.2).
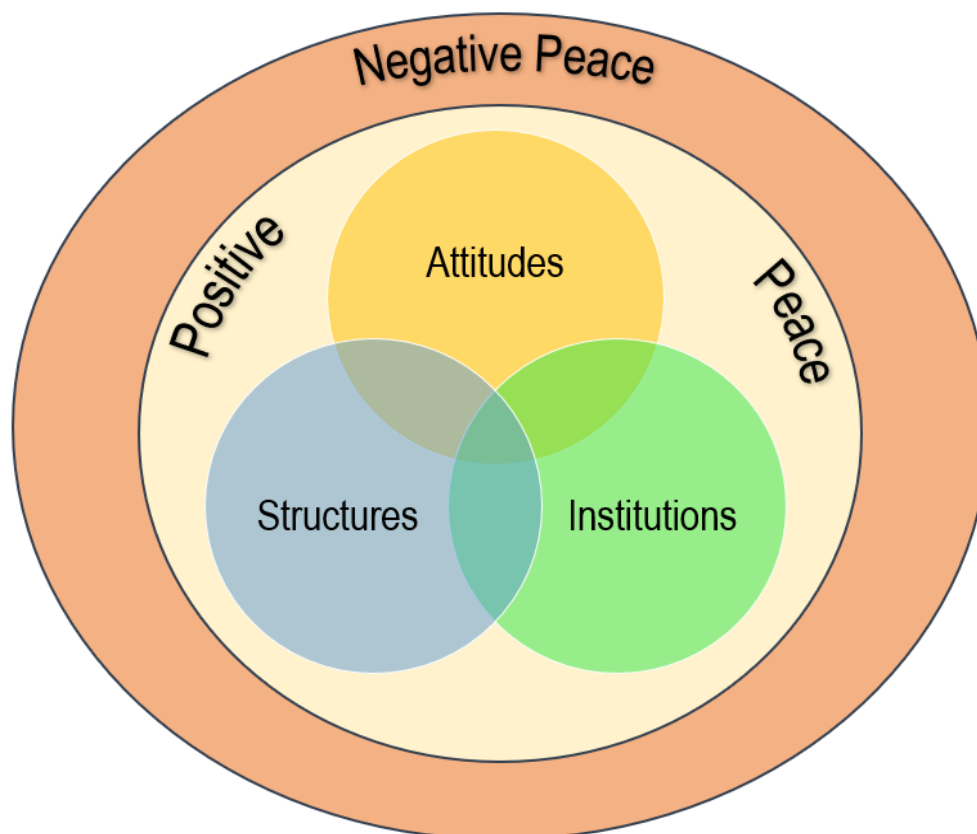


Figure 2: Conceptual framework (own work, based on Galtung, 2012 and IEP, 2021)

Thus encompassing a comprehensive array of aspects regarding social relationships and modes of human interaction but also material and physical privileges or constraints, learning about and assessing evidence for Positive Peace via these categories is well suited to find out what constitutes concept and representation of peace in the Kerio Valley.

### 3.1.1. Conceptualization of 'peace' – Positive Peace & Negative Peace

Since its inception some 55+ years ago, peace research has prompted scholars to discuss the very concept of peace (Gleditsch et al., 2014). Historically widely associated with military success, peace was most commonly understood as maintenance of order in the face of boarder defence or whilst growing an empire (Shields, 2017). Up to this day, the predominant, yet arguably incomplete, conceptualization of peace by scholars of peace research and peace and conflict studies alike is of a 'Negative Peace' – the mere absence of direct violence or war (see e.g. Diehl, 2016; Galtung, 1969; Galtung, 2012; Gleditsch et al., 2014; McConaghy, 2012; Shields, 2017) – with peace and war studies having become *"conflated as if mirror images of each other"* (Shields, 2017, 6).

Negative Peace´s dominance on discourse has been shown also empirically by Gleditsch et al. (2014) who investigated patterns in the first 49 volumes of *Journal of Peace Research* and *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, starting in 1964. They found that, in terms of content, both Negative Peace and Positive Peace have been on peace research´s agenda throughout all these years. However, *"(n)egative peace, in the sense of reducing war, has always been the main focus in peace research"* (Gleditsch et al., 2014, 155). Moreover, a greater number of articles had 'violence' or related terms in the title than they had 'peace' and "*(a)rticles focusing on negative peace have also been more frequently cited*" (ibid.).

While the non-occurrence of direct violence is easily considered a most worthy goal finding broad approval amongst scholars and peace practitioners, it may routinely allow for other forms of violence (see contents of table 1).

Table 1: Matrix of key terms about positive and negative peace (based on Galtung, 2012)

| VIOLENCE | Direct violence | Structural violence | Cultural violence |
|---|---|---|---|
| NEGATIVE PEACE | Ceasefire | No exploitation | No justification of violence |
| POSITIVE PEACE | Cooperation | Equity, equality | Culture of peace and dialogue |
| PEACE | Negative + Positive | Negative + Positive | Negative + Positive |

Centring overly on the short-term time horizon of reducing physical violence, Negative Peace is at risk to consider "*the job complete once the fighting stops"* and thus overlook the need for "*putting mechanisms in place that can repair fractured relationships as well as nurture resilient and just institutions"* (Shields, 2017, 6). Recognizing its limitations in regard to matters of national security, a sole focus on Negative Peace is increasingly considered to produce unsatisfactory policy outcomes (ibid.).

A proposed remedy to that, Positive Peace on the other end of the spectrum – closely associated with development research (Galtung, 1969) – "*is a more holistic experience of social justice, reconciliation and community*" (Galtung, 1969 cited in Millar, 2021, 641). Unlike negative peace, the term Positive Peace isn´t narrowly defined but used inconsistently for a host of concepts and values. Common to a number of contemporary definitions is their long-term perspective (Shields, 2017). In its 2020 Positive Peace Report, the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP) highlights Positive Peace as a transformational concept whose pillars add up to "*more than the simple sum of its components*" (Institute for Economics & Peace , 2020, 2). Positive Peace is expected to *"improve(s) slowly, therefore planning needs to be longitudinal"* (ibid., 4).

Historically, Positive Peace has been understood qualitatively in relation to moral ideas of peaceful societies. The IEP, by contrast, used empirical data to construct the Positive Peace Index. In its statistical analysis, it finds a total of eight structural and attitudinal elements related to Positive Peace – all closely interconnected – each containing three indicators. Amongst those core pillars of Positive Peace, for example, a 'well-functioning government', 'high levels of human capital', an 'equitable distribution of resources' and 'low levels of corruption' have been statistically linked to the most peaceful societies (ibid.).

Positive Peace is "*conceptually and empirically linked to socio-economic resilience*" (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2020, 4) and "*shifts the focus (..) to the positive aspects that create the conditions for a society to flourish*" (Institute for Economics & Peace , 2020, 2). Along that line of thinking, interventions should aim for greater levels of Positive Peace, as defined through the goals a system is expected to evolve to, "*rather than creating radical change*" (ibid.).

For Johan Galtung, the principle founder of peace and conflict studies, whose contributions are "*perhaps (..) most likely to be recognized by all PCS* (a.n. Peace and Conflict Studies) *scholars as central to the field*" (Millar, 2021, 641), peace is made up of elements Positive and Negative Peace (Galtung, 2012). Galtung argues that, taken by itself, 'peace is absence of violence' does not constitute a definition of peace:

"*This situation* (a.n. Negative Peace) *is better than violence, but it is not fully peaceful because positive peace is missing in this conceptualization. Indeed, peace would be a strange concept if it did not include relations between genders, races, classes, and families, and did not also include absence of structural violence (..) and if it excluded the absence of the cultural violence that legitimizes direct and/or structural violence"* (Galtung, 1990 in Galtung, 2012, 1)

### 3.1.2. Elements of Positive Peace – attitudes, structures and institutions

According to the Institute for Economics & Peace, "*key to building peacefulness in times of conflict and uncertainty (..) Positive Peace is defined as the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies*" (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2021, 3):

"*High levels of Positive Peace occur where attitudes make violence less tolerated, institutions are resilient and more responsive to society's needs, and structures create an environment for the nonviolent resolution of grievance*"
(ibid.)

*Attitudes* are expressions of social behaviour and relations. Measuring "*views, tensions and perceptions*" (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2020, 4), they speak, for example, about whether violence is met with discouragement and about the quality of social cohesion (ibid.)

*Structures* are described to "*assess the underpinnings of the socio-economic system*" (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2020, 76), relating, for instance, to "*economic, technological and scientific development*" (ibid., 4).

Social scientists offer various definitions of *institutions*. Prominently, "*institutions-as-equilibria* (a.n. of agents' coordinated responses, reproduced for being convenient to them (Hodgson, 2017)) *can be contrasted with (..) rule-based definitions*" (Hodgson, 2017, 1). As for the latter, institutions are considered the "*rules of the game in society*" (North, 1990 in Hodgson, 2017, 1) that structure and shape human interaction. Examples include language, law and manners (Hodgson, 2017), but also families, civil society organisations or public institutions such as for health care, education and the criminal justice system (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2020, 10). Categories 'formal' and 'informal' are widely recognized in literature, a clear distinction, however, may fail to grasp complex realities (Hodgson, 2006).

# 4. METHODOLOGY

Figure 2 shows the sequence of steps taken for this research, which are explained in detail in the following passages.
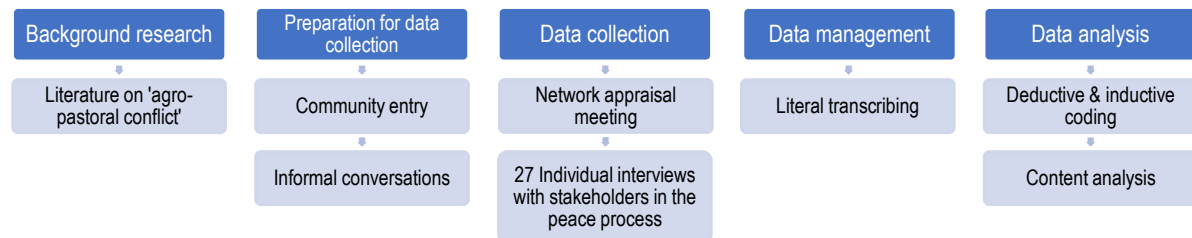


Figure 3: Sequence of steps taken for my thesis research

## 4.1. Background research

Starting in May 2019, to get a clear understanding of the research´s background, an extensive period of literature research was conducted on the topic of 'agro-pastoral conflict' in Africa and a focus on Kenya, using Google Scholar database and snowball sampling technique.

## 4.2. Preparation for data collection

An initial 3-day stay at the study site in the Kerio Valley was conducted mid-August 2019. The purpose of this initial shorter stay was to get up-to-date information on the situation on the ground at the time, arrange the logistics of the later stay in the Kerio Valley for data collection and meet for the first time extension workers and local chiefs. Importantly, I learned about the recent peace agreement that had been brokered 2 weeks earlier and was told by extension workers about local people's wish to 'look forward' instead of analysing in-depth problems of the past. Accordingly, the focus of my research was adapted to reflect these developments, towards learning about enabling factors of the then peace agreement and requirements of sustainable peace in the future.

### 4.2.1. Community entry

To be able to get in touch with local leaders and communities and to help with organisational tasks on the ground, such as, for example, means of transport or participant communications, this research relied on the support of two local extension workers from Elgeyo-Marakwet, their experience and knowledge about local communities and proceedings. With their help and being accommodated at the study site for the whole period of data collection – within the neutral and safe space of Chesongoch missionary at the Benedictine sisters' – facilitated access to a network of contacts of local participants and logistical resources.

### 4.2.2. Informal conversations

Preceding data collection and complementing literature research, informal conversations with two local extension workers, the manager of an irrigation facility in the Kerio Valley, a Marakwet local inhabitant who formerly lived and worked in the study area, as well as four scientists from Uppsala university, ENACT, Egerton university and CIMMYT – with expertise in the context of Kenya on peace research, security and organised crime, and agriculture – gave both personal and professional insights into the topic and offered me in-depth knowledge about past as well as the most recent developments in the Kerio Valley. Learning, amongst other things, about previous peace processes and enabling/hindering circumstances was a valuable starting point from which to approach and analyse the current situation.

## 4.3. Data collection

The main 3-week period of data collection in the Kerio Valley took place in September and October 2019. Data collection consisted of 2 steps – a Network Appraisal Meeting (see 1.3.2) that was held upon arrival in Chesongoch, Elgeyo-Marakwet, and subsequent semi-structured interviews with individual stakeholders in Elgeyo Marakwet, Baringo and Uasin Gishu counties (see 1.3.4).

### 4.3.1. Sampling for participants of Network Appraisal meeting (NAM)

Preceding the network appraisal meeting, the following cluster of stakeholders to the local peace process had been identified, based on findings from literature research and the advance personal transmission of two local extension workers:

- Men and women representatives of Marakwet communities
- Men and women representatives of Pokot communities
- Public representatives from affected-by-conflict wards Endo (Elgeyo-Marakwet), Tiaty (Baringo) and Chesegon (West Pokot)
- Representative of an NGO working in Elgeyo-Marakwet county
- Representative of an NGO working in Baringo county
- Representative of a faith-based organisation

## 4.3.2. Network appraisal meeting (NAM)

Following preparations (in relation to process, setting, material requirements, etc.) and having invited representatives of above-mentioned stakeholder clusters, a network appraisal meeting was held on the premises of Chesongoch missionary in Elgeyo- Marakwet, widely regarded 'neutral grounds' and appreciated by both communities. By means of discussion and a mapping exercise, stakeholder analysis was performed by 12 local participants over the course of about 4 hours. People identified possible missing actor groups, selected actor representatives of the Kerio Valley peace process for the purpose of interviewing, highlighted those perceived to be particularly important/influential in relation to peace dynamics and described their contributions, power, interests and relationships (Lelea, 2014). In line with transdisciplinary approaches, this course of action seeks to integrate also non-academic knowledge into the research process (ibid.)

For visualization, a continued actors Venn Diagram was used to help to "*balance dialogue and increase the depth and intensity of discussion*" Pretty (1995, 1255). Upon receiving consent, the meeting was audio recorded and findings made note of, as well by means of taking photographs.

The main purpose of the meeting was to

1. generate a list of (key) actors, involved in the local peace process, to consider for the subsequent interviews,
2. provide an assembly of stakeholder relationships, with
3. another emphasis on (power) positions, as perceived by NAM participants.

### 4.3.3. Sampling for semi-structured interviews

The initial list of names and contacts provided by participants during the network appraisal meeting was complemented over time using snowball sampling technique until a point of saturation appeared to have been achieved. To ensure purposeful sampling, the final selection of interview partners considered a set of pre-determined criteria ('historic affiliation with the situation', 'insights into situational dynamics', and 'good oratory and listening skills').

### 4.3.4. Semi-structured interviews

As a final result, 27 interviews with 28 key stakeholders (see table 2) were conducted. To enable an interview format "*as open as possible, as structured as necessary*" (Helfferich, 2019, 670, own translation), a semi-structured guideline was prepared in advance (see Annex), to enhance the comparability of results (Helfferich, 2019) without taking away participant's room to freely elaborate on their views or add new aspects that they deemed important.

- Out of 28 interviewees, 20 interviewees were male and 8 were female; 2 interviewees were elders and 2 were youth.
- 15 interviews were held in Elgeyo-Marakwet (13 in Marakwet East, 2 in Keiyo North), 10 in Baringo county (8 in Tiaty, 2 in Baringo Central) and 2 in Uasin Gishu county (2 in Eldoret).
- Interviews were held, for instance, in the Chesongoch missionary, Lagam library, open space food stalls in Kolowa or in the offices of political representatives in both Iten (for Elgeyo Marakwet) and Kabarnet (for Baringo).
- Interviews lasted between a minimum of 24 minutes and 1 hour and 51 minutes at most. Most interviews, however, lasted for 50 minutes to 1 hour.
- All but 2 interviews took place in English. In these 2 cases, data collection was supported by two local extension people from Elgeyo-Marakwet who provided translation into local language in one setting each.

Table 2: List of interview participants

| Interview participant nr. | Gender | Profession (location) |
|---|---|---|
| IP1 | m | Local administrator (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP2 | m | Local administrator (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP3 | m | Local politician (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP4 | f | Teacher (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP5 | m | Spiritual teacher (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP6 | m | Local leader (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP7 | m | Elder, member of irrigation committee (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP8 | f | Trader (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP9 | f | Trader (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP10 | f | Teacher (Baringo) |
| IP11 | m | Local politician (Baringo) |
| IP12 | m | Local politican (Baringo) |
| IP13 | m | Local leader (Baringo) |
| IP14 | f | Shop keeper (Baringo) |
| IP15 | m | Church representative (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP16 | m | School representative (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP17 | m | County government representative (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP18 | m | Local leader (Baringo) |
| IP19 | m | Youth, student (Baringo) |
| IP20 | f | NGO representative (Baringo) |
| IP21 | f | Youth, student (Baringo) |
| IP22.1 | m | County government representative (Baringo) |
| IP22.2 | m | County government representative (Baringo) |
| IP23 | m | National government representative (Baringo) |
| IP24 | m | Elder (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP25 | f | County government representative (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP26 | m | NGO representative (Elgeyo Marakwet) |
| IP27 | m | County government representative (Elgeyo Marakwet) |

## 4.4. Data management

For both data management and analysis, MAXQDA software was used, at first for literal transcribing, systematically converting the audio recorded data from interview interactions into writing.

## 4.5. Data analysis

For data analysis, a content-analytical approach was applied that combined category development and a structuring of content. Interview transcripts were first visually scanned, to choose those parts of data relevant for answering the research questions. Next, basic code

categories based on literature research were defined (deductive coding) and applied, for example 'drivers/triggers of conflict' (resources; political; cultural; firearms; ..); 'enabling factors for peace' (peace actors; positive/negative contributions; ..); 'obstacles to sustainable peace'; etc.

Existing code categories were complemented and refined with additional categories and sub-categories that emerging during the engagement with interview data (inductive coding), for example 'security infrastructure' or 'livelihood opportunities' (Honey harvesting, fish farming, ..). In a next step, elements of Positive Peace (attitudes, structures, institutions) were coded, guided by definitions presented in 3.1.2 Elements of Positive Peace.

## 4.6. Limitations

Data collection – in the case of my research by means of a network appraisal meeting and subsequent interviews – takes place in tangible social situations, whose impact on every encounter is recognized. *„(R)ichly descriptive"* (Merriam, 2002, 5) data is produced, in need of interpretation (Atteslander, 2010) by researchers who are challenged to be responsive and adaptive. While this potentially implicates valuable in-depth insights of social processes, there needs to be awareness that findings lack wide generalizability due to their limited scope and do not claim to be representative. Having only twice spent time in the Kerio Valley, for a total of just about 3,5 weeks, put as well natural limits to the reach of my research. The initial 4-hour network appraisal meeting, apart from its practical purpose of gathering data, was a valuable first opportunity to engage with local communities and even meet some stakeholders who were later suggested by participants of NAM for the purpose of interviewing. Having interviewed every participant only once, however, it is reasonable to assume that repeated forms of contact and more time, alongside financial resources, for follow-up conversations might have enabled further insights into their perceptions.

My choice of research topic and area was co-determined by my local supervisors, relying on their extensive knowledge and information base. They presented me with the initial parameters of this particular research after I had approached them, interested in conducting my master´s thesis research within their area of expertise. Pre-data collection, I engaged in a wide literature research about 'agro-pastoral conflict' in Africa in general and with a particular focus on Kenya that left me with some ideas of what to expect but hardly qualifying as solid assumptions. Important to add, only a few days before I arrived at the research site, the situation on the ground had changed quite considerably from ongoing fighting to agreeing on a peace accord. Thus, extensive preparation notwithstanding, only once I arrived at the study

site, a truly clear picture of the complexity regarding dynamics of peace and conflict on the ground began to emerge. From that time onwards, I sought to contribute to enhance understanding of these dynamics and potential for Positive Peace, so that subsequently any project or measures taken to support local populations could be provided a more robust data background and therefore develop a more fitting design.

While a special emphasis was given to impartiality and a balance of NAM and interviewee participants regarding gender, age group and association with Marakwet and Pokot community, I recognize that being based in Elgeyo-Marakwet during the time I collected data and my reliance on the support of local extension people from Elgeyo-Marakwet likely influenced my choice of interview partners.

## 4.7. Role of the researcher

(Social) qualitative research's justification, according to Flick, lies in describing people's „*living environments*" „*from within*" (1996, 28ff). Within that realm, I, the researcher, am the instrument of data collection and cannot be considered separately from my research – "*all research will be influenced by the researcher and there is no completely 'neutral' or 'objective' knowledge*" (Ormston et al., 2014 in Holmes, 2020, 4). Acknowledging my own subjectivity, being aware and mindful of potential biases and, more generally, my position(s) towards research participants, subjects and context of my research is thus of particular importance to increase its credibility. Consistent with a relativist stance, I do believe there is not one 'true' reality but multiple mental constructions of reality, equal in space and time. Further, in line with constructionist epistemology and "*assessing the viability (..) as opposed to the validity (truth) of an individual's unique worldview*" (Neimayer and Neimayer, 1993, 2 in Creswell, 2007, 287), I believe that meaning does not exists by itself, independent of human activities, but that "*meanings are varied and multiple*" (Creswell, 2007, 20) and form out of an individual's engagement with these realities. In the case of my research – providing contextual understanding on the development of Positive Peace and conflict triggers in the Kerio Valley – I aim to depict the "*complexity of views*" (ibid.) but also integrate them into a bigger picture and, crucially, "*rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation*" (ibid.).

As an Austrian- European women, a university student, agnostic and atheistic, a young adult with a family background that encouraged me to be aware of the many faces of privilege – offering the safety and good fortune of many of those to myself – and not least growing up in steadily peaceful times (and certainly in many more regards), I relate to some aspects of my research – others I cannot. Importantly, I agree with Holmes (2020, 6) that *"(t)he*

*insider/outsider dichotomy is, in reality, a continuum with multiple dimension and that all researchers constantly move back and forth along several axes, depending upon time, location, participants and topic*". What is more, as e.g. Hammersley (1993 in Holmes, 2020) argues, there is no definite advantages to either being an insider or outsider – the latter without "*any prior intimate knowledge of the group being researched*" (Griffith, 1998 in Holmes, 2020, 6) – each of the two positions holds potential benefits. In the case of my research, for example me being a geographical outsider and an outsider to local culture and customs, the language barrier influenced, likely downgraded, on a number of occasions the level of deep understanding between interview participants and myself. On many other occasions – still considering myself an outsider – I am positive that lacking "*a lived familiarity*" (ibid.) with my counterpart enabled me to add a valuable external perspective to legitimately ask questions an insider may not have been able to ask (Holmes, 2020). In contrast, sharing with some participants an insider-like level of understanding regarding issues such as, for example, gender dynamics or the lived experience of a currently young person, I perceive advantageous, too, while at the same time, to some extent, it may have increased my risk of being inherently biased.

The present research is closely interconnected, partly in topic and fully in travel logistics and mental support, with the work of Roman Spiegelsberger, my colleague from BOKU University, Vienna, whose goal is to learn about pastoralists´ acceptance of options to mitigate fodder scarcity in the Kerio Valley. Both our work ultimately aim to add to conflict mitigation and transformation. Our joint reflection on daily experiences at the study site was a valuable opportunity to gain more clarity about research work in a place we had previously been unaccustomed to, a first for both of us.

## 4.8. Ethical procedures

Both for NAM and the individual interviews, participants were informed on terms of confidentiality before giving their written consent. All participants agreed to their conversations being audio recorded. For NAM, besides audio recording, consent was granted by participants for pictures to be taken of the event.

# 5. RESULTS

## 5.1. Genesis of conflict in the Kerio Valley

### 5.1.1. Conflict in the Kerio Valley until 2015

Interviewees unanimously described the conflict between Pokot and Marakwet communities in the Kerio Valley as a recurring severe insecurity issue for an extensive period. Accounts on the very beginning vary slightly, though:

It *"has been a big problem to the entire community of Kerio Valley since 1970s"* (IP5, 4), one report stated, "*since independence*" (IP23, 43) or for *"several decades"* (IP25, 10), said others. "*It comes and goes*" (IP26, 37), "*a game they used to play since time and memorial*" (IP20, 50).

Previously, it had been considered a strict taboo to kill women and children amongst both Marakwet and Pokot communities, and elders used to pass the informal rule of conduct on to younger generations. However, as one interviewee recalled it, that changed from around 1998 onwards, and many of those who died in the years to come were women and children (IP27), described on multiple occasions as the most vulnerable parties involved, alongside the elderly (IP10, IP12, IP13, IP25). Furthermore, while the youth was said to be the "*driving forces*" (IP25, 52) of conflict – interviewees agreed it was the youth who were the raiders (IP5, IP12, IP15, IP20, IP23, IP25) – they could also "*just do their thing and vanish into the bushes*" (IP12, 146). Many women, children and the elderly did not have the opportunity to leave areas affected by conflict and would, therefore, often remain behind (IP10, IP12).

By the end of 1991, tensions in Kenya under president Daniel arap Moi (KANU) around the introduction of a multi-party political system had been high (IP24). Several interviewees talked about the main political underpinning this earlier period of violence had, with political interests or incitement by political powers dominating the events (IP1, IP5, IP16, IP24). The first deadly attack in Tot around March 1992 marked the beginning of years of violent clashes, many deaths and hundreds displaced.

Until the 1980s, the use of traditional and less damaging weapons, such as arrows, bows, bangas or rungos, had been widespread and common (IP4, IP15, IP27), a "*face-to-face kind of conflict*", as one interviewee described it (IP27, 4). Elders frequently managed to appease disputes, using traditional mechanisms of conflict-solving resolution (IP8).

> "*But with the coming of the guns, everything changed. And it moved towards the worst side*" (IP4, 224). "*Now, from 1998 going down (..) many people have been killed, so many have been maimed as a result of the guns*" (IP27,4)

With many illegal firearms starting to appear in the hands of civilians, the intensity of conflict in the Kerio Valley dramatically increased in the 1990s. A change for the worst (IP5, IP8, IP15, IP27), contributing to the following years of insecurity in the region (IP3, IP11): "*Because the availability of these weapons has actually made communities to attack other communities without any (..) fear*" (IP3, 21).

NGOs like World Vision and ChildFund, having been active in the Kerio Valley before, had to close their offices because some of their staff had been killed. Also, many children that they had been supporting had already fled the area. Marakwet locals from lower-lying areas retreated to living in the Highlands for safety concerns in the Valley. The Pokot were known to seek shelter from fighting in the Tiaty hills (IP14).

> "*Kerio Valley by this time, between 1992 and 2000, it was a Valley of Death*" (IP24, 58)

Around 2000, the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC) began peace work in the Valley. People were chosen to attend peace committees meant to initiate dialogue and build mutual trust. On previous occasions, peace talks had been facilitated in Eldoret alongside participants' transport. After 2000, this practice changed as it was found that the content of those meetings was hardly disseminated amongst people back home. Thus, a series of meetings was held at peace sites along the Kerio river. At first, people were hesitant and fearful, but due to the presence of 'peace animators', assuring both side's safety, the intercommunion worked well:

> "*When the first meetings were very tense, but after some time then we found people now were relaxed, and they could voluntarily dialogue, and they were discussing the issues which were causing the conflicts. And they agreed also to begin to name the culprits, the people who cause this problems, who steal cows*" (IP24, 16)

Next to their efforts to kick-start interaction and initiate peaceful dialogue, peace workers from CJPC in those early 2000s recognised the urgent need to address the issue of water and pasture within the Kerio Valley. Within a project's framework, they built water pans to collect water both for domestic use and livestock – to help "*reduce the pressure and people movement*" (IP24, 79) – and supplied local women with bee hives so that they could back up their family income. In addition, they focussed on treating livestock diseases, as the loss of cattle heads would often result in attempts to replace them by stealing from neighbouring communities. Also, they surveyed the Kolowa division to see how many Pokot children were in school and found it was only about five hundred amongst "*thousands and thousands and thousands of children*" (IP24, 91), the "*majority of children were at home, where they grow up to (..) become the militia for community*" (IP24, 93). Another project focus, therefore, was to support Pokot children to come to Marakwet schools. They compensated sixty-six children's school fees between 2002 and 2005, "*and this helped because Pokot would not attack. Because their children are on the Marakwet*" (IP24, 93) side.

Starting in 2000, there was continued dialogue between Pokot and Marakwet communities, but no agreement had been reached yet when in 2001, some Pokot herders mistook the friendly atmosphere for permission to graze on Marakwet land and took their cattle across. Without peace workers' knowledge, Marakwet youth responded with a vast attack, stealing hundreds of cattle heads from the Pokot in addition to chasing their herd boys. "*So that incident destabilised (..) peace activities*" (IP24, 16) and the fragile connection that had been achieved before. Efforts to calm the heated situation failed, and frequent fighting began anew.

Shortly after, in March 2001, the Pokot responded with a massive attack of their own – known as 'Murkutwo massacre' – that killed dozens and destroyed many homes (IP5, IP24, IP25). Any attempt to achieve peace became very difficult after that. Only when "*there was a new government (..) things changed*" (IP24, 18) and "*the environment (..) became conducive for dialogue*" (IP24 ,20) again. (A.n. Daniel arap Moi´s KANU lost the general election in 2002 to Mwai Kibaki from NARC). In Elgeyo-Marakwet, Linah Kilimo was elected the first woman Member of Parliament (MP), supported by CJPC. Linah Kilimo "*was pro-peace. Because the men were always supporting the young men to go for war*" (IP24, 66). She brought people together (IP4), moving around and reminding people about the pain of losing a child or family relative. "*And the people listen to her*" (IP19, 54). Then Linah met and joined forces with Baringo East MP (a.n. Asman) Kamama.

> "*(A.n. Peace) work became very easy. Because now the members of parliament worked together*" (IP24, 70)

Under Mwai Kibaki's presidency, during her time as Marakwet East constituency MP (a.n. 2002-2012), Linah Kilimo advocated strongly and successfully for calmness in the region, initiating projects like a water pipeline to enable collective farming between the Pokot and the Marakwet (IP4). After years of horrifying conflict in the Kerio Valley, from 2002/03 onwards, peace prevailed for over a decade (IP19, IP25). A single incident in 2005 was successfully contained. During all these years, people from both communities interacted much, children crossed over to go to school on the other side, and many were able to generate some wealth for themselves. Despite these developments, a Marakwet man expressed his conviction that a deep trauma remained from past experiences of violence and Marakwet community members, during all these years, kept being bitter without ever fully healing (IP24).

Traditional systems of trauma healing – people gathering and sharing their stories about dealing with losses and how they were able to recover eventually– were not active anymore, so many people were still hurting. Children who lost a parent to this conflict would often be raised longing for revenge and thus more likely to conduct a retaliatory attack at some point (IP27).

In 2013 Linah Kilimo was succeeded by a male MP (a.n. David Kangogo Bowen) who, according to one interviewee, did not consider fighting a problem (IP4). From that time onwards, insecurity returned to the Kerio Valley (IP19, IP25).


While people's opinions on the critical drivers of conflict vary, accounts of what sparked the beginning of the latest period of violence in the Kerio Valley are more similar. Many interviewees believed one or few incidents led the way for further violence (IP1, IP2, IP16, IP18, IP19, IP20, IP24, IP26). The rough story almost always revolved around an incident in 2015 (IP2, IP4, IP13, IP14, IP18, IP24) or 2016 (IP1, IP5, IP6, IP7, IP9, IP17, IP27) on a farm in Endo ward, Marakwet East constituency, where watermelons had been planted (IP1, IP2, IP14, IP19, IP26, IP27). Some of these plants got destroyed when cattle were brought there to graze (IP1), which sparked violence that led to the subsequent death of one or several people. It remained unclear how many people were initially involved – one report mentioned some Pokot feeding their animals on watermelons that Marakwet farmers had been cultivating (IP27), and another one that "*somebody came and killed people in a watermelon farm*" (IP26, 53). Others said conflict started as small as friends fighting over watermelons (IP19) or someone trespassing on someone's watermelon farm (IP14). Instead of reporting the incident to the authorities, the watermelon farmer was described as having hit and finally killed the intruder (IP1) – his friend, one interviewee believed (IP19). Another interviewee reported it to have happened the other way around, *"the Pokot man killed the Marakwet man over the dispute of this land"* (IP24, 105).

"*Initially it was an isolated case*", sparking anger and suspicion first only amongst closest relatives but eventually *"it became a community issue (..) It just grew from one person*" (IP16, 162). Relationships, friendships, they all "*would not matter anymore*" (ibid.). Others confirmed that a single incident triggered a series of mutual revenge acts and, instead of being handled as individual people's issue, soon widened its stretch:

A "*Marakwet is a Marakwet*" (IP8, 22), "*a Pokot is a Pokot*" (IP8, 25) or "*any Pokot is an enemy, any Marakwet is an enemy*" (IP16, 162). Before long, a full-grown conflict involving both communities had formed (IP2, IP19, IP20), starting another "*round of war*" (IP24, 103).

Some interviewees referred to fights under the influence of alcohol that were problematic (IP6, IP8, IP14, IP18). Some reports recalled such fights, motivated by jealousy, to have taken place in 2015 (IP8, IP18) and how everything got out of hand, as firearms entered the region (IP5, IP8). Another person believed that by the time the drunken fights began, it was already on top of the underlying problem of conflict between farmers and keepers of livestock. Some people then were looking for a scapegoat, which is why "*they went ahead and said, Marakwet side, ah doing infidelity with Pokot women*" (IP18, 10).

A single report talked about a series of events, minor thefts, that eventually grew into something bigger (IP10). Some interviewees – members of both Marakwet and Pokot communities – indicated it was at first Marakwet clan conflicts over land ownership issues that triggered the latest violence. Whereas Pokot land was being managed communally (IP17) without demarcation, Marakwets ran a system of plots allocated to certain clans (IP25). In these Marakwet clan disputes, the Pokot were said to have gotten involved because of the strong family across both communities. They were described as having come to aid their relatives in what turned out to be a series of retaliatory attacks (IP13, IP26). One interviewee added that from there on, cattle rustlers were quickly able to take advantage of the situation and started to recruit people for further raids (IP26). According to one interviewee, even after many peaceful years, it took only little for violence to flare up again was young boys' (a.n. IP talks about the Marakwet) motivation to seek conflict as stealing cows gained them a living (IP24).

Since the 1970s, more than five thousand people died in relation to the insecurity, a Marakwet man recalled (IP5), and many more – mainly those economically well-off (IP26) – left their homes and the area; some only temporarily sought shelter from attacks (IP5, IP14, IP21), others left the Valley for good. Particularly many left after the severe 2001 attack in Murkutwo, where many houses had been destroyed by arson (IP5).

Violence has adversely affected the Kerio Valley population and development in the whole region (IP5, IP12), yet the latest period of violence was repeatedly referred to as the worst so far (IP1, IP4, IP26, IP27). An interviewee described it to have displaced fewer people than previous ones, partly due to the government's interference and security operation (IP5) in early to mid- 2019. Most interviewees emphasised that it has been a crucial factor in the local peace process, culminating in the signing of the Chesegon Peace Accord on July 31st, 2019.

According to some reports, before the signing of the Peace Accord, there had been earlier, unsuccessful attempts to agree on peace which "*didn't yield fruits*" (IP14, 24) because they failed to include essential stakeholders (IP3), for example, back then, some local politicians did not partake (IP14). "*This time around, we had even people from outside these two counties*" (IP12, 15), as high up as the Deputy President's office, that supported efforts to pacify the region and finally achieved a breakthrough, a Baringo resident reported (IP12). With the Chesegon Peace Accord, "*all leaders (..) were there*" (IP3, 77) – local and spiritual leaders, even the Deputy President – to witness and support the signing. They leant accountability to the agreement and thus signalled their determination to resolve the issue (IP3). Immediately after the signing, the conflict halted: "*the whole thing went down again*" (IP24, 193).

## 5.1.2. Conflict triggers

### *5.1.2.1. Dispute over use of resources pasture and water*

Grass and water are routinely limited and sometimes acutely scarce in the Kerio Valley. To most Pokot – largely nomadic pastoralists who depend on their livestock to make a living – this has direct implications on their livelihoods and links to the overall situation of security in the Kerio Valley. Many interviewees emphasised the difficulties arising from erratic rainfall patterns in Tiaty or, subsequently, a shortage of water and pasture (IP3, IP4, IP5, IP6, IP7, IP9, IP10, IP11, IP12, IP13, IP15, IP16, IP17, IP20, IP22.1, IP25). The more significant part of Baringo's Kerio Valley is hot and arid, sometimes going without rain for years (IP25). Currently, there is not enough water for humans and livestock (IP12).

In Elgeyo-Marakwet, water is generally more readily available as several small streams come down from the Highlands (IP3, IP4, IP17, IP25, IP27). Kerio river – the border between counties Baringo and Elgeyo-Marakwet – serves both communities with water (IP21). For many Pokot, it is the primary water source (IP3, IP10). Until a few years ago, there were no boreholes in the region due to the high cost of drilling them or constructing dams. A Baringo man explained that "*this problem is so big that no one person can afford*" (IP13, 159) to do something about it. In recent years, the government and Christian organisations such as, for

example, World Vision dug several boreholes in Ngoron (IP13), to be used by people and livestock (IP11). However, this kind of support was unpredictable – "*when somebody now asks for a request to the public you don't know who will come for you (..) you are not sure who will give*" (IP13, 163) – and while the situation did slightly improve due to individual initiatives, most interviewees agreed that water supply in Tiaty was far from sufficient, adding to pressure on local communities.

Two interviewees offered different opinions. One did not consider water scarcity an issue or, at most, during a particular season (IP26). The other suspected that "*what has been causing this thing it is man-made. A man-made problem, not a natural-made problem*", as even during times of drought when the area was often exceedingly inhospitable, peace prevailed. People had been living calmly together (IP15).

Compared to their Marakwet counterparts, the Pokot were commonly disadvantaged regarding their land's agricultural potential (IP10, IP25) and pasture supply. Especially when there are prolonged periods of drought but also during the regular dry season - December, January, February and March – difficulties for Pokot herders to see for their animals' provision regularly increase. Water pans may dry up completely (IP12). An interviewee mentioned a prolonged drought around 2017 in the Kerio Valley that "*killed almost all cows here*" (IP18, 127) and forced some people to migrate to other places because of it (IP18).

There was much agreement amongst interviewees that during dry times, conflict posed a more significant challenge (IP12, IP20, IP22.1) when the Pokot, struggling to find sufficient pasture on their side of the Kerio river, often resolved to move their animals closer toward the river (IP12, IP17) or eventually crossed over to Elgeyo-Marakwet (IP3, IP4, IP15). "*So the clashes come when they cross over, looking for pasture*" (IP10, 60), was a view shared by many interviewees (IP2, IP3, IP7, IP9, IP12, IP19, IP20, IP22.1, IP25, IP26). Similarly, one other interviewee believed that Marakwets opposing the crossing laid the groundwork for conflict to start (IP4). A Baringo resident put it more drastically: In times of need, the Pokot might be more tempted to "*encroach, they will feed on crops, peoples' crops. That will cause some chaos*" (IP18, 8). Important to add, "*the more cattle you have, the more pasture they need (..) those two things go together*" (IP7, 47). That point was taken up by other interviewees, too, who believed that additional pressure was added when herds became big in number over time (IP1, IP24), maybe even too big related to a growing population (IP13), thus aggravating this kind of conflict (IP27). An interviewee brought up the perspective of Pokot herders envying their Marakwet counterparts and their high number of animals. Due to the advantageous situation in Elgeyo-Marakwet regarding pasture, "*after short time there are so many numbers of livestock on this side*" that Pokot "*go and steal them*" (IP9, 131).

On some accounts, interviewees described changes in weather patterns in the Kerio Valley (IP6, IP12, IP13). "*Rain pattern and even the climatic system*" (IP13, 12), "*the weather of this area changed completely. About nine months without rain. That is quite an amount of time*" (IP13, 10). In the past, people got food from wild trees, and there was enough rain for pasture and even fodder crops. Starting some ten to twenty years ago, the rain had become unreliable, sometimes rare, and – alongside environmental degradation and a growing population – pressure on local communities and natural resources in the region significantly increased over time. Due to severe drought, people regularly lost some animals (IP13, IP22.1) because the remaining pasture could not sustain them.

### 5.1.2.2.  The role of (local) politics and political leaders

Many interviewees assumed that political interests were involved in keeping conflict alive (IP3, IP5, IP13, IP15, IP22.2, IP24, IP26, IP27) – quite *"possibly there were people who benefited from it politically"* (IP16, 45), "*MPs mostly, even the MCAs*" (IP25, 106). Several interviewees pointed out that "*local politics, not national politics*" (IP25, 104) contributed to conflict in the Kerio Valley. Previously, at the county and sub-county level, *"those who are in power seem to use conflict as a strategy to win (..) votes"* (IP13, 66). With politicians' minds on short-term solutions for immediate (voter-)gain and election results, some interviewees did not put it past them to heat emotions between the Pokot and the Marakwet on purpose and incite them to advance their agenda. On a similar note, politicians were said to rather back and help generate government support for current projects rather than longer-term ones. While quick to initiate the handing out of relief food to needy people or call for security personnel to be deployed to an area affected by conflict, projects that aimed at benefitting people sustainably in the long run – for example, regarding pasture or irrigation schemes – were reportedly less likely to be approved of by said politicians.

Leadership in the region was said to be well respected. People believe in their local leaders and tend to look at them for directions (IP15, IP26), as politicians are considered to know and understand people and their culture (IP1). When politicians are close to their communities, they can teach their constituents about many issues, such as the importance of unity and not stealing others' property. However, in the past, local leaders often lacked "*nearness*" (IP10, 60) with their communities and toward one another (IP10). While some interviewees merely referred to the weight of political voices in regard to conflict resolution – "*when the politicians come together (..) they follow their leaders*" (IP19, 58) – others suspected a more active role politics had in preventing previous mediation efforts to succeed – "*politicians used to manipulate peace before*" (IP5, 86), "*when communities try to sit down*

*to agree they fuel it from behind for their own interest*" (IP8, 71) – and even fuelling conflict in the first place (IP1, IP3, IP8, IP23, IP24): "*The community won't fight if there is no any invisible actor, like the politicians* (IP5, 12); "*They incite. Those guys are not reliable* "(IP1, 143).

Some politicians were said to have their place of residence elsewhere and only ever have come to the Valley for votes when an election was coming up (IP9). In that case, they also "*go as per what people say so that they cannot be voted down the next election*" (IP1, 149). An interviewee described them as "*hand-outs (..) When they come here they give you fifty Bob* (a.n. referring to fifty Kenyan Shilling) *and you sing their song*" (IP1, 145). To achieve a leadership position, politicians would always return to their local voters for endorsement (IP15). Likewise, people would request their support for various issues, including getting a hold of firearms or bullets. "*In a sub-county like Tiaty, when you are dealing with warriors, and you want to elect an MP, a warrior would want an MP who's going to support activities for warrior*" (IP22.1, 176).

"*Every age sets has, let's say their patron*" (IP27, 12) amongst politicians or those aspiring for an office. Politicians, looking for votes in exchange for handing out favours to communities, were suspected of having been responsible for handing out firearms to pastoral communities in the past (IP3, IP13) or showing their support by helping people to access bullets, thus enabling further violence (IP24, IP26, IP27). When National Police Reservists were disarmed, "*there was now a cry for insecurity. And then the government discovered it was the member of parliament now who came in to support their militia. Giving them, buying now the weapons (..) giving them the bullets*" (IP24, 183).

A few interviewees recalled leaders who were easily corrupted (IP5, IP8) and chiefs who were perpetrators of this conflict (IP25). Several interviewees considered politicians inciting for the good of their agenda the leading cause of this conflict, bringing insecurity into the Kerio Valley:

> "*The leaders who are there still want to remain leaders. And because they have their culture (..) of I want to be in the power, he will manipulate the community*" (IP5, 36)

> "*The culture here is that most politicians always hope for the shortest solutions to problems. (..) All decisions that they make is always informed by their benefit in terms of votes*" (NAM149, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet)

Leadership is supposed to protect citizens and is described as possessing both the capacity and resources necessary to do it (IP17, IP26) – "*They have their power to give us peace*" (IP26, 9). While people believed leaders were protecting their interests, they may have instead been playing against each other and creating opportunities to blame others at a higher level "*with the strongest words possible*" (IP15, 51).

A Marakwet man reported that Pokot animals often exhausted the grass within their area in times of need. Pokot herders had thus been required to move them to graze on Marakwet land. When done forcefully and without permission, the Marakwet would likely react irritably and disapprove: "*We want the Pokot to come and ask for pasture*" (IP5, 12), he said. Before, they used to send over people to request approval for grazing on Marakwet land:

> "*Kindly allow us to graze our animals in your area. And they give out an animal to be an element of binding them together*" (IP5, 12)

This way, it went well, but eventually, some politicians were said to have interfered. They came to ask, "*why are you negotiating with Marakwets? Kindly graze your animals freely and if someone wants to obstruct you, shoot them*" (IP5, 12). An interviewee further talked about a narrative that was making rounds amongst members of the Marakwet community, supported by members of parliaments and youth leaders, about Pokot people who were allegedly trying to get the better of Marakwets, making them their "*women*" and "*nursery school*" (IP24, 111) and who were said to be waiting to attack Marakwets. This narrative served to encourage "*all the Marakwet community to speak with one language. To go against Pokot because they are hitting us, they are killing us, they stole our animals (..) So everybody was going like that* "(IP24, 131). In heavy spirits like that, politicians would seek to achieve popularity amongst their potential voters while fostering opportunities for economic gain through the large-scale stealing and selling of cattle (IP24).

An interviewee further pointed out the difficulties that arise from politicians who receive unfair treatment in case of misdemeanour, thus further aggravating the advantaged position political decision-makers were bestowed upon. Politicians might be arrested but often will not be criminally prosecuted the same as any other citizen would but released on just a tiny bond. As such, "*the obstacle* (a.n. to do away with cattle rustling*) is not a politician, the obstacle is politics*" (IP27, 218)

Opinions differed on the likelihood of the Kenyan 2022 general elections and possible post-election violence adversely affecting proceedings in the Kerio Valley. While two interviewees outright disagreed – *"this is a continuous war, whether there is an election year or a period where we don't have election"* (IP5, 30) – and two believed national elections *"will cause problems"* (IP25, 215) because *"when the government goes to elections, usually the attention will shift, to elections and then (..) criminals may take control of the situation"* (IP16, 55), other people's opinion remained undecided. One interviewee said it depended on many factors, not the candidates themselves (IP22.1). Another interviewee speculated that due to the Building Bridges Initiative – a "*truce*" (IP23, 120) between President Uhuru Kenyatta and the leader of the largest opposition party, Raila (a.n. Odinga; stipulated in 2019) – unrest after the 2022 elections was unlikely as this "*brought in a lot of calmness*" (IP23, 120).

### 5.1.2.3. Cattle rustling - "now turning from customary to commercialised" (IP2, 14)

Almost all interviewees referred to some 'cultural' aspects contributing to this conflict (IP1, IP2, IP3, IP5, IP6, IP7, IP9, IP11, IP13, IP17, IP18, IP22.1, IP23, IP25, IP27). The Pokot, traditionally pastoral communities, value their animals – such as cattle, camels or goats – very highly (IP3, IP7, IP9, IP25) and commonly refrain from selling them unless there is an absolute necessity (IP24). According to some interviewees, there was a widespread belief amongst the Pokot that livestock inherently belongs to them and not to the Marakwet (IP9, IP23) or that certain members of the Pokot community failed to recognise other people's private property (IP17).

From a certain age onwards and following circumcision (IP27), Pokot boys "*transition from childhood to adult*" (IP3, 119) and are called 'morans' (IP25). Wishing to get married, they are expected to acquire animals for the paying dowry, the still common practice of traditional bride price (IP1, IP3, IP5, IP11, IP17, IP18, IP22.2, IP23, IP25, IP27). Unlike within Marakwet communities where "*you can marry a girl even if you don't have livestock. People have changed lifestyle*" (IP3, 11). The same goes for polygynous relationships. While for the Pokot, marriage between one man and several women is still common practice (IP1, IP7, IP9), the Marakwet abandoned that notion some time ago. Interviewees explained that for many young Pokot men, the amount of animals they are required to account for – multiplied in case they wish to marry more than one wife – is often far out of their or their families' economic reach (IP2, IP18, IP21, IP27), which was "*forcing*" them to "*come and steal*" (IP7, 35):

> "*Mostly they don't have anything in terms of livestock, so they have to raid the neighbouring communities for livestock*" (IP3, 11)

> *"So what happens is that there is pressure to this generation of the youth that has been circumcised. So what they'll do is they'll have to raid"* (IP27, 4)

Several interviewees expressed their beliefs that due to a culture failing to punish stealing but rather endorsing it, this practice of cattle rustling – having been on and off for many years in the Kerio Valley (IP25) – contributed mainly or to a large extent to this conflict (IP2, IP3, IP7, IP9, IP13, IP17, IP18, IP21, IP22.2, IP23, IP25, IP27). Many further assumed that the motives behind these raids have evolved (IP2, IP18, IP21, IP22.1, IP25, IP27), from raids being a traditional practice to secure animals to pay dowry or make up for livestock losses due to droughts or diseases (IP13) toward being driven mainly by economic gain. According to an interviewee, the stealing of animals was "*now turning from customary to commercialised*" (IP2, 14). For many in the Kerio Valley, animals are the only source of livelihood available: "*We don't have people doing businesses, we don't have anybody employed by the government*", a Baringo resident explained, *"these young boys who are disturbing people, they have not gone to school. These are guys who are just living looking after animals" (IP12, 131).*

Large herds of animals are considered a source of wealth (IP3, IP27) and serve to increase someone's social status (IP25, IP27). Some teenagers or very young men across both communities, therefore (IP23), would be motivated to join a raid to acquire the number of animals they need to get married. Others would want to grow their wealth quickly (IP24, IP27) or simply "*look for something to earn a living, so they go and steal animals*" (IP25, 52). With time, raiders also started to attack and kill random people - pedestrians, road users, school children (IP26, IP27) - making it unsafe even to ride a boda-boda (IP21).

"*Once they are fighting* (a.n. over scarce pasture), *others are stealing the livestock".* Cattle rustlers who *"come specifically for animals to steal"* (IP25, 10) would take them away.

However, some interviewees talked about a wider "*commercial network*" (IP16, 45) or "*animal business*" (IP26, 83) behind the frequent raids. Terrorising people and creating fear would enable bandits to take advantage of the situation and take away cattle. Interviewees suggested several people were involved. These people would incite, fuel tensions, foster opportunities where animals could be stolen and generally benefit from trading stolen livestock (IP6, IP16, IP18, IP26, IP27). Loot often vanished quickly after the event, and animals were being collected and transported to faraway places for processing (IP2, IP22.1), such as the Nairobi slaughterhouse (IP25, IP26, IP27), frequently leaving no trace to follow behind: *"you follow you find lorries, loaded" (IP25, 98).*

Some interviewees described lawless individuals, "*middlemen*" (IP2, 18), to have entered the scene; people whose job it is to supply meat – e.g. to Kenya Meat Commission – and who would buy or steal from pastoral communities (IP2). If they do not "*have enough animals to supply*" they might "*use the idle youth to go steal for them*" (IP25, 100). Often, in exchange, they were the ones who served cattle rustlers with guns, bullets and other provisions (IP22.1, IP26, IP27). An interviewee explained that during the 1990s, politicians sponsored raids and bought and sold stolen livestock to national meat factories (IP5).

Trading stolen livestock has become a lucrative business. Only when the government stepped up, "*all the loopholes were (..) sealed and such individuals were punished for that severe*" (IP2, 18). Several interviewees believed the underlying economic motivation to continue cattle rustling to be still strong (IP6, IP8, IP24). Some actors involved would not be interested in peace for their personal benefit (IP8). An interviewee voiced concern that "*one day somebody who has an interest (..) people who benefit, maybe they have a market of selling livestock*" (IP6, 117), "*maybe they will start again the conflict*" (IP6, 119).

### 5.1.2.4. Limited security presence in remote locations

Notwithstanding its large surface area, there is no police station in Ngoron (a.n. Tiaty, Baringo county) location (IP11, IP18, IP19) – the only division without one (IP19). Indeed, many interviewees talked about insufficient security personnel in Tiaty constituency (IP3, IP11, IP18, IP19, IP26). In the past, *National Police Reservists* (NPR) had been stationed in Ngoron (IP11, IP27). Recruited from within local communities and armed by the government, NPRs were to assist in fighting "*this menace of cattle rustling*" (IP3, 23). Their intentions failed as, in fact, "*some of these young boys who were recruited as a national police reservist they were found, it was realised that some of them were taking part in the cattle rustling. So eventually we disarmed all of them*" (IP3, 23). According to some interviewees, this added to peace in the region (IP12, IP27).

A Baringo county official reported a different view on the overall security presence, according to him, there were "*so many cops over there*" (IP23, 206), "*strategically positioned*", only "*we can't guard every home*" (IP23, 208).

Most interviewees, however, considered the alleged absence of security personnel a contributing factor to the disturbance that the Pokot were causing other communities, as one interviewee put it (IP3). Elgeyo-Marakwet, by some, was described to have a significantly higher presence of police forces (IP3, IP15). Continued attacks, nonetheless, had also been frequently reported there, and the heavy security presence on the Marakwet side possibly served only to shift attacks toward night-time. Partly due to the bushy terrain, even high

amounts of the security personnel did not manage to stop attacks already, a Marakwet man suggested:

> "*So these cattle rustlers they are well versed with this, this routes. So, if you are told eh fifty cows have just been taken from their herder you find you are following somebody you don't see, you are following somebody where there is no roads*" (IP3, 89)

Two other reports stated that, frequently, the police had not even been interfering with raids. Only after the event would they say "*come and report in the office*" (IP26, 216), or they would "*come run and (..) they go back they report, but there was nothing decisively*" (IP16, 79).

### 5.1.2.5. Prevalence of firearms

Failure to secure the regional borders led people to access guns easily. Recently, firearms and ammunition entered Kenya via neighbouring countries Southern Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda and Somalia. "*So you had illegal firearms crossing our borders, getting into wrong hands*" (IP3, 19). As the animosity between Pokot and Marakwet communities grew over time, locals would also go to their leaders and ask them for guns for safety reasons. At times, the area around river Kerio would become a no-go zone, where everybody had to have a gun (IP27).

Some interviewees characterised the harmful influence arms had on people: "p*eople with arms tend to be lawbreakers all the time without warning*" (IP2, 46); "*it is this having been armed that makes a person feel that he is (..) superior or he has the power (..) strength to fight the other person*" (IP3, 23). Earlier calls for disarmament – one dating back to the 1990s (IP6) – was described by some as not having been successful (IP11); guns continued to be readily available: "*(t)he government failed to secure the community*" (IP5, 6).

One interviewee reported being told about a "*very good disarmament in West Pokot*" (IP27, 83) under President Daniel arap Moi.

Several interviewees suspected a business objective behind the raids. They referred to raiders, usually young boys, who managed to get their hands on a constant supply of guns and bullets while mastering only their mother tongues but not even Swahili. Therefore *"there must be something else bigger than now this small man who is doing it there"* (IP22.1, 11). Likely there were other invisible actors around who "*operate behind the scenes*" (ibid.), people making a profit trading weapons (IP26) and ammunition (IP5).

### 5.1.2.6. Inequality and marginalisation

Some parts of the Kerio Valley are remote, and not all inhabited places are connected via roads (IP18). An interviewee described the political administration as focusing less on people in remote, arid areas unless leaders were particularly supportive of their people (IP5). A few interviewees (IP5, IP26, IP27) found that "*the place* (a.n. Tiaty) *has been neglected*" (IP23, 69). The land there is primarily bushy, and the government was described as not having extended development efforts to all areas. Communities themselves felt marginalised, and "*therefore they tend to be negative in so many things (..) not receptive*" (IP22.1, 205), a Baringo official put it. The Pokot frequently lacked essential medical services (IP1, IP26), the possibility to retire with old age (IP12*)* and various other forms of social support. They have not been provided such services for decades, leaving families vulnerable and far from public awareness (IP27). In Elgeyo-Marakwet, conditions were similar until about the 1980s, when the church, missionary work and schools slowly brought about positive change (IP4, IP16, IP26). By contrast, the Pokot "*were not empowered. Nobody (*a.n. *"their leadership"*) *has really been keen changing them, developing them"* (IP16, 123).

The road network does not cover all areas of Baringo (IP22.1), making it difficult for people to commute and trade goods. It also decreases the chances of security personnel catching raiders who seek to hide in the bushy terrain (IP3, IP11, IP17).

### 5.1.2.7. Socio-economic factors

#### 5.1.2.7.1. Educational opportunities

Kenya's constitution calls for free primary education for all children (IP24). To some extent, the government supported this notion, interviewees found, e.g. by employing teachers, supplying food for school meals to relieve the financial burden on parents or raising awareness of the constitution, and telling people about child rights and child protection (IP13). However, in Tiaty, Baringo, populations are scattered and scarcer than in adjacent Elgeyo-Marakwet territory, and more places lack school infrastructure (IP3). Some schools have been started by the church (IP5). Almost all interviewees agreed on the importance of schools and education – "*life will change*" (IP4, 260). A Baringo resident said about Tiaty, "*now not like in the past, close to every family now are taking their children to school*" (IP13, 24). Most interviewees, however, referred to low school enrolment rates in that area for any of the below-mentioned reasons:

Missing school infrastructure (IP3, IP4, IP7, IP12, IP22.1), schools closed due to conflict (IP12, IP14, IP27), no teaching professionals available due to the insecure working environment (IP11, IP22.1), a nomad lifestyle (IP1, IP11, IP18), low appreciation toward formal education (IP3, IP4, IP9, IP13, IP16, IP18, IP19, IP20), a lack of motivation because employment prospects after school are bad (IP4), parents' lack of means or difficulties to pay school fees (IP1, IP7, IP10, IP13, IP16, IP24), the overall security situation due to which children were unable to reach their school facilities (IP10, IP18, IP21).

An interviewee suggested that the percentage of people in Tiaty who appreciated education was still relatively low and that changing those views was a slow process (IP16). Many, "*when they look at somebody who has gone to school (..) like this girl from Pokot, according to the traditional girl, this one is lost*" (IP16, 166). Cultural values and norms continued to be influential (IP25). *"The parents themselves are illiterate. So telling them to take children to school is of course hard*" (IP18, 25). Many children, therefore, still grow up expected to look after livestock and, without education, were said to be more likely to engage in raids and cattle theft than those educated (IP5, IP12, IP18, IP23, IP27): *"So when people are illiterate that is the only source of life they know*", a *"cheap way of getting property*" (IP18, 21). There was much agreement on the dire consequences low school enrolment rates might have on the probability of future conflict in the Kerio Valley and vice-versa. With conflict, "*there is no schools. So you find a whole generation who has not gone to school. And since they've not gone to school, and they have grown knowing that war is the in-thing, they become warmongers*" (IP27, 77).

A teacher explained that youths have also left school prematurely for lack of a job prospect, and school drop-out levels are high (IP4). A few interviewees hinted at the possibility of some degree of deliberateness, as some politicians may not even "*want their people to be exposed* (a.n. to education)". Because "*when somebody goes to school, you'll know what is right and what is wrong*" (IP1, 111). Some politicians might have been taking advantage of their constituents' illiteracy (IP26), at the same time readily offering support to certain privileged people who seek to educate their children, for example by paying their school fees (IP1).

### 5.1.2.7.2. Unemployment

Several interviewees referred to difficulties relating to the Kerio Valley's high unemployment rates (IP4, IP18, IP20, IP21, IP25), especially amongst the youth:

> "*Nowadays they say there is no employment. Three quarters of the youth are not employed*" (IP4, 81)

For lack of employment opportunities, some youth turned to raids instead, looking to generate some income (IP23, IP24, IP25, IP27). Several interviewees further described some of the Valley's youth to have become perceptible to idleness under these circumstances (IP4, IP7, IP9, IP10, IP11, IP12, IP20, IP21, IP25). Walking around, "*you just get people lying in town (..) sitting under trees (..) talking about maybe the people from across. When you go there the same thing*" (IP11, 136) and "*there is nothing to do. They just go and fight*" (IP20, 48), some Baringo residents explained.

### 5.1.2.8. Food insecurity

> "*If we wanted peace to prevail, first of all, I think, is the issue of food security. We need to empower these people to be food secure. Because when they depend from another agency for relief, I think, we'll not realise peace*" (IP26, 136)

Even cattle rustlers often were looking for food (IP26). The Pokot cannot rely as much on farming to provide for themselves due to less advantageous climatic conditions (IP17) and erratic, hard-to-predict rains (IP12). As a result, there would often be acute shortages of pasture; especially children and the elderly face risk of malnutrition (IP13).

An interviewee explained that without food at home or animals to sell, hungry people would often be forced to "*take a shortcut*" (IP4, 83) and look for food elsewhere, possibly on someone else's fields. A situation like that risked not being handled as someone's responsibility but instead treated as a community offence, in which case the situation might quickly get worse before long (IP4). Especially during times of environmental hardship, "*food security and nutrition becomes an issue*" (IP25, 46) and "*people fight for it*" (IP25, 48).

Others agreed with that sentiment, and fighting over scarce food resources was repeatedly mentioned as a contributing factor to conflict in the Valley (IP4, IP10, IP15, IP20):

> "*When there is food insecurity, they tend to steal from other people*" (IP10, 227)

"*It drives people to actually make wrong decisions. Today you don't have food, you don't have anything, tomorrow he'll take a gun and attack the other neighbour*" (IP3, 35)

### 5.1.2.9. Poverty

Some interviewees described high levels of poverty in both counties to be an underlying driver contributing to conflict, increasing the likelihood of people fighting over resources or stealing cattle (IP2, IP3, IP20):

> "*When you don't have anything you're out to look for ways of making sure you have survival*" (IP3, 79)

One interviewee disagreed that people in Pokot were poor: "*They are not poor people because they have large numbers of livestock*" (IP22.1, 33).

## 5.2. Actors in the Chesegon Peace process, their relations and contributions

### 5.2.1. Ranking of most influential actor groups in the Chesegon Peace process, as perceived by participants of NAM

Figure 3 shows the result of a discussion amongst NAM participants when encouraged to consider actor groups involved in the current local peace process. On inquiry, it was declared to be exhaustive by general agreement. The order reflects the results of a ranking exercise following discussion amongst participants, from the topmost position perceived as the most influential.
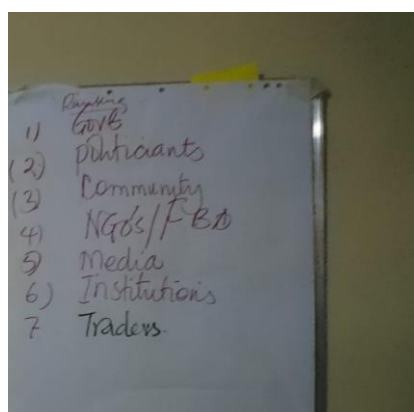


1) Government (national) (see 5.2.2.1)
2) Politicians (see 5.2.2.2)
3) Community (see 5.2.2.3)
4) NGOs/FBOs (see 5.2.2.4 and 5.2.2.5)
5) Media (see 5.2.2.6)
6) Institutions (see 5.2.2.7)
7) Traders (see 5.2.2.8)

Figure 4: Ranking of actor groups involved in the local peace process (own picture)

Figure 5: Establishment of peace actor network (own picture)

Figure 4 shows members of NAM discussing their views of a peace actor-network in the Chesegon peace process. Before these pictures were taken, at the beginning of NAM, actor groups had been identified and their various contributions collected. Learnings from this discussion are depicted partly in figure 5 and further included in the following subitem (5.2.2).



Figure 6: Peace actors' contributions (own picture)

## 5.2.2. Actors and contributions, as perceived by IPs and members of NAM

### 5.2.2.1. National government

Most interviewees expressed their firm conviction that the initial initiative of intervening for peace was coming from higher-up authorities – the national government – taking the lead and calling to come to a peaceful agreement (IP1, IP2, IP5, IP6, IP15, IP18, IP19, IP20):

> *"There has been serious pressure from the national government to say, the war that is happening in Kerio Valley must come to an end"* (IP27, 51)

What is more, participants of NAM almost unambiguously concluded that the national government constituted the most influential actor in the Kerio Valley peace process – same as several interviewees (IP3, IP4, IP11, IP13, IP16, IP17, IP22.1, IP27):

> "*The big person is national government*" (IP1, 161); "*After the national government instructed all the politicians to meet and end conflict (..) it went just like that. Everywhere was quiet*" (IP1, 163)

Indeed, most interviewees underlined the importance of the government's decision to intervene, saying "*enough is enough*" (IP1, 151): *"It is the government who has earned this. Not the people. It's not them*" (IP16, 41), an interviewee stressed his view.

### 5.2.2.2. Politicians

Many interviewees confirmed the critical role that local administrators, chiefs and politicians held in the local peace process (IP1, IP2, IP6, IP7, IP8, IP10, IP11, IP13, IP16, IP17, IP19, IP21, IP26). Officials that worked within a particular locality were not at risk of being easily transferred elsewhere and thus often intimately familiar with local proceedings (IP1). Some interviewees further mentioned the essential influence of county governments from Baringo, West Pokot and Elgeyo-Marakwet (IP3, IP4, IP6, IP12, IP22.1, IP27), holding peace talks, for example (IP25). According to some, Members of Parliament and County Assembly, Governors, local administration and both Marakwet and Pokot leaders created a strong team striving for peace (IP2, IP12).

Most interviewees considered the role and influence of politicians to have been extensive but ambiguous. Participants of NAM explained that politicians might offer support to local communities by providing the hospital's dispensary with medicine, for example. However, interviewees described politicians' attention as inconsistent and frequently not without hidden agenda:

> *"We are the voters, they want our votes. So whatever they talk today and when they go back to Nairobi, they forget about you"* (NAM86, participant unknown)

Several interviewees stated that "*people embraced peace*" (IP20, 28) after leaders from all over the region decided to come together, talked with one another and to their communities about the importance of having peace and security (IP4, IP12, IP18, IP19, IP20, IP23):

> "*So for now, the peace that we enjoy today is because of our leaders*"
> (IP12, 9)

> "*Politicians are strongly respected in our local community (..) When they started to be peace actors, people started say yeah we have to co-exist*"
> (NAM93, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet)

> "*We have been in conflict from 1970s up to the other day, July* (a.n. 2019), *when the politicians sat down and said 'let there be peace'. And peace was there the next evening. Meaning they had the capability to give us that peace long time ago. But because they had their interests, they let it be there for their own personal gains*" (NAM143, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet)

### 5.2.2.3. Community

Interviewees described communities' role in peace as important (IP12) or critical (IP22.1). Some interviewees considered the community the most influential actor in peace (IP17, IP18, IP21). Most reported that communities were very willing to agree (IP12) as they have seen and experienced the devastating effects this lengthy bloody conflict brought upon them (IP6, IP15). One man expressed his belief that – "*the Pokot this time (..) wanted peace more than the Marakwet (..) In fact even they begun to say, we want disarmament (..) We want the government to remove the guns*" (IP24, 161).

Unlike before, communities had begun to widely assist the government by disclosing any individual culprit who otherwise would have been able to hide and escape detention (IP8) or by reporting illegal gun ownership to the authorities (IP14). Like this, local people "*provided the solution for this peace*" (IP17, 133), and this was "*now from the people telling the government to do this (..) people themselves doing the initiative*" (IP13, 98).

An interviewee explained that at grassroot local level, all people should be allowed to own their peace (IP15), and, indeed, both communities initiated public meetings (*barazas*) and

organised peace committees (IP9). Also, they nominated peace ambassadors from amongst themselves who set out to tell others about the merits of peace (IP20). This way, others were most likely to follow their lead. Some of these peace ambassadors were 'reformed warriors', they used to be raiders but have genuinely changed their ways ever since and now helped to raise awareness to stop cattle rustling:

> "*Those (..) who are reformed, they are no longer doing it* (a.n. cattle rustling).
> *So those are the people to use when building peace (..) who are to be invited*
> *in functions so that the community will know someone who has reformed is*
> *better than someone who is still practising the other*" (IP18, 41)

### 5.2.2.3.1. Elders

Elders often stayed behind and were amongst those most affected by conflict, while younger generations were more likely to have already left the region for safety concerns (IP12, IP25). People often were attentive to their words as they are known to utter curses (IP11, IP25) which many people pay heed to. Many interviewees confirmed elders to be well respected (IP5, IP7) and influential (IP8, IP9, IP11, IP12, IP20, IP21, IP23) and hinted at elders' significant contribution leading up to the Peace Accord. They initiated peace talks (IP14, IP20) and called on the government to take swift action (IP24):

> "*They are key in making sure everybody embraces the peace that we have*"
> (IP12, 146)

Reportedly, elders said: "*our children are dying, our people are suffering, the community is less developing because of the conflict, so what we want the government to do for us is to arrest those who are doing this*" (IP13, 104). So the community put the government under pressure to act, which is why they eventually came and made some arrests (IP13, IP20). Before the signing of the Peace Accord, influential elders who "*know how to talk for people*" (IP11, 158) had been selected amongst members of both communities to attend peace meetings (IP9). They would meet and talk and maybe even develop a declaration to show (IP11). A more detailed report referred to twenty elders travelling throughout the Kerio Valley in 2018, administering oaths and preaching peace (IP24).

### 5.2.2.4. Nongovernmental organisations

Nongovernmental organisations – such as Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC), Finn Church, World Vision, Red Cross, SNV, and ChildFund – were frequently mentioned as having contributed to the overall situation of peace in the Kerio Valley (IP1, IP3, IP7, IP8, IP10, IP11, IP12, IP13, IP16, IP23, IP25). They were involved either directly, bringing people together and facilitating peace meetings, including transportation to and fro (IP10, IP13), or via their support for local people's livelihoods, sponsoring, for example, children's access to education (IP12) or providing assistance for smallholder businesses' activities.

### 5.2.2.5. Churches

Many interviewees stated churches to be influential actors of peace (IP1, IP2, IP3, IP4, IP8, IP9, IP11, IP15, IP16, IP19, IP22.1, IP23). They "*have done a great deal of work*" (IP16, 71). Pastors, religious/spiritual leaders and women's groups were described to have been preaching for peace and telling people about the importance of living together amicably (IP10, IP19, IP21, IP23). In Elgeyo-Marakwet, most people belong to the Catholic Church, while in Tiaty, "*most of the churches are Protestant Churches, small splinter groups*" (IP5, 130).

(Catholic) women's church groups – who repeatedly organised, e.g. marches and joint prayers for peace (IP4, IP8, IP11) – were often highlighted to have had a powerful positive impact, having actively engaged in "*peace advocacy*" (IP8, 106). Also, during an earlier time of conflict, it had been women's groups brought up ideas such as a shared school for children of both communities to foster reconciliation (IP8). One interviewee recalled that this time around, it was also church women who mobilised for peace and spoke out loudly early on, which likely helped to direct the government's attention to the importance of resolving conflict in the first place (IP26). One report mentioned the possibility of the church being very influential but pointed out limitations regarding funding as a hindrance to that (IP8).

### 5.2.2.6. Media

Media houses – by trend – were described to have had a positive influence on peace, being "*mouthpiece of the local communities*" (NAM98, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet) and relaying information to people via social media, newspapers and radio stations. Youth, in particular, were listening attentively to what they shared about local proceedings. A particular contribution to peace, school children's parents pressured the government to act by calling for

peace on local radio stations (IP9). On a few accounts, however, interviewees cautioned about media reporting as sometimes distorted, possibly due to the unethical interference of politicians who also hold shares in large media houses (IP27).

### 5.2.2.7. Institutions

The Chesongoch missionary health facility and schools in both Elgeyo-Marakwet and Baringo benefit local inhabitants in manifold ways and were described in NAM participants' discussions to be influential institutions. The hospital run by the Benedictine sisters in Chesongoch represents the most sophisticated medical care unit in the wider region, and its services are asked for by members of both communities. Besides offering medical services, it was described as a place where people from all over the Kerio Valley would meet and interact, the latter being said about schools, too. School infrastructure is unequally distributed across the region, with schools being rarer in large parts of Baringo.

### 5.2.2.8. Traders

Traders – businessmen and women – were described by members of NAM as potentially influential to peace, either in a good or bad way. Some traders were said to engage in firearm and ammunition trading and may thus have benefitted from conflict. Others suffered because their business opportunities were diminished when insecurity was still ongoing.

Besides specifying whom they perceived to be the most influential actors for peace, interviewees frequently highlighted the importance of actors joining forces (IP13). Peace was described as a concerted partnership of many actors (IP8), who, if united, would contribute each in their own best way possible (IP15):

> "*Actually ,this is just like the kitchen pillars (..) if that one is not there, the other one will not work*" (IP13, 129)

In the course of NAM, the influence of various actors was continuously described as potentially either contributing to or contradicting peaceful developments, depending on situational circumstances:

*"All of these ones can go the other side and the other side depending on the situation. Yes, like the media can be facilitators of inflammatory statements that can bring discomfort to the community (..) and it can be elements of peace on the other side"* (NAM9, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet)

## 5.2.3. Most influential actors to sustain peace

Partly in contrast, when asked about those essential to sustain and expand efforts for peace between formerly warring communities in the future, the following actor groups were highlighted as particularly influential by interview participants.

### 5.2.3.1. Politicians

People's high respect for and willingness to accept politicians' lead (IP11) makes for a crucial role that leadership can play in peace proceedings: "*the community (..) you enter through the leaders*" (IP26, 130); "*very important for that matter, for peace, for any development, the political class need to be involved*" (IP2, 36) as "*the person who actually persuades the people is the political class*" (ibid.).

### 5.2.3.2. Pasture committees

Upon the government's request, supervised by counties' administrations and led by area chiefs, pasture committees were formed to make sure that animals' movements and possible border-crossings were subject to coordinated agreement, possibly including seeking permission from landowners prior to entering (IP12):

> *"we had to form peace* (a.n. pasture) *committees to guide the herders where to grass and where no. And maybe seek permission from the other side"* (IP18, 6)

> *"That one can actually help to reduces that tension because you'll find that when your neighbour crossed to your home with livestock and nothing like asking you for permission to, it creates conflict"* (IP3, 97)

Meetings took place frequently to assess the situation, usually every other week or so. "*Per month and per sublocation, we have five grass committees. Some location of around, a population of around 4000*" (IP18, 8), a Pokot man explained the proceedings:

> "*Those are the people who will give us direction on how the grass shall be grazed and help the herders to know if they graze there they will not tamper with people's crops*" (IP18, 8)

Through community-based pasture committees and active peace monitoring (IP17) that deal with cross-border issues, "*it is possible that peace can be sustainable*" (IP5, 110), a Marakwet said. He also cautioned, however, about their potentially low durability as it was unclear whether those committees would continue to exist "*when the government relaxes*" (IP5, 116), noting they only came into being after pressure exerted on local leadership by the government. Some interviewees reported that their most recent decision was that "*whatever happened should be forgotten*" (IP18, 165), meaning that stolen animals now belong to their new holders. This may be a challenging idea to sell to someone who has had only a single cow which had then been taken away (IP18). For now, if anything were to come up threatening to reintroduce any insecurity eventually, "*we handle it*" (IP3, 97), a Marakwet official expressed an optimistic view.

### 5.2.3.3. Community actors (women, youth, elders)

#### 5.2.3.3.1. Women

Women and girls were particularly vulnerable and heavily affected by the insecurity. Due to safety concerns, their free movement would be limited. In many cases, women were unable to continue doing their businesses or even access the markets in order to obtain provisions for their families (IP12). At the same time, many described women as highly influential peace actors. As mothers or future brides to raiders, they could advocate them for peace (IP5, IP8, IP20, IP24, IP25):

> "*Through the women, peace can prevail*" (IP25, 116)

Some women, however, were protecting warriors that brought home stolen animals, an interviewee pointed out. Thus, changing women's voices "*to positive*" (IP24, 229) might be crucial so they would engage in supporting peace rather than raids.

A female interviewee spoke about being a member to a group of women where they had conversations about the importance of peace, sometimes together with women from the other community. They discussed the significance of conveying a message of peace to their families so "*it shall not be your child who is coming with a gun (..) killing another person. It shall not be your child who is crossing over and (..) taking someone's goats or* cows" (IP10, 114).

Apart from women's potentially crucial moral lead, many interviewees emphasised the importance of economically empowering women (IP4, IP5, IP8, IP9, IP10, IP11, IP17, IP25). Donors should help fund women's businesses, new ones and those that had been ongoing until conflict brought a halt to secure border-crossings, some suggested. Table-banking schemes, merry-go-rounds or microfinance loans to support women's businesses, such as, for example, fruit and grocery sales, dairy farming or rental services, could be beneficial and likely to prosper (IP8). Moreover, business collaborations involving both Marakwet and Pokot women could strengthen peace efforts by advancing cohesion amongst communities (IP8) and help reduce mistrust while benefitting individual women and their families (IP5, IP9).
An interviewee recalled an organisation that already in the past used to mobilise women from both communities to do business together – 'Kerio Valley women for peace', sponsored by the catholic organisation Caritas. It was active until 2016 when conflict interrupted its work (IP5). According to one interviewee, government loans were already available at low-interest rates to women's groups and youth to support starting small businesses (IP11).

In agriculture, women's groups could be supported to become innovative farmers and, as such, role models to others (IP8), if they were given inputs and knowledge, for example regarding crop management and business skills. In that case, they could start small businesses (IP9, IP25) or move around and create awareness, inspiring others to replicate their success (IP8).

### 5.2.3.3.2. Youth

Conflict behaviour in the area was widely associated with youth members of the communities. Lacking meaningful livelihood options, some youth turned to illegal activities such as raids. Several interviewees, therefore, crucially called for youth to be empowered and engaged in agriculture or elsewhere (IP3, IP11, IP12, IP13, IP18, IP24, IP25):

> *"Whether there is rain or no rain, they need money and employment (..) they need to be given activities to be busy (..) sports (..) maybe the boda boda riding to get money or other income-generating activities"* (IP25, 182)

> *"To my understanding, this group, when they say we have rejected, we don't again want to go to fight, and when they don't go to fight, then peace automatically comes. Or these are people when they change their habits when they change their activities (…) if they change then peace prevails"* (NAM16, male participant, Baringo)

An interviewee suggested that youth from various communities – Pokot, Tugen, Turkana – should become ambassadors of peace and move around all neighbouring counties to preach peace (IP19). Particularly those who had been warriors and were now reformed needed long-term engagement, e.g. with forums and training on pasture management (IP12).

### 5.2.3.3.3. Elders

> *"Another reason that can bring peace here is we use the capacity of the old people"* (IP5, 54)

Especially male elders "*are still the ones who are being consulted by the young people. What are we going to do, what shall we do? Then they give directions*" (IP5, 56). If they "*can take* (a.n. the) *lead then join with the women and talk, then the boys will know this thing is serious*" (IP20, 149). Elders were described to hold much power, and as they were nominated by the people themselves (IP7), they could "*come together and agree on moralities (..) Simple but effective*" (IP12, 165) or "*report you to the government if you do some mischief around*" (IP20, 127).

A few interviewees, therefore, suggested to engage a council of elders before going to the police for conflict settlement – reporting at first to the most senior man within a community is a typical setup in Africa (IP27). However, elders need to be empowered to be able to contribute meaningfully (IP5). The government ought to support the facilitation of elder's meetings and work because "*these elders who are initiating peace, they do it through their own efforts. We need to (..) give them transport, give them some small facilitation, small enumeration*" (IP27, 67).

Their contribution would also include preparing possible solutions for the eventuality of renewed conflict, together with other stakeholders:

*"if anything happens, there will be way of solving it. It will be very important. Rather than just staying and assuming it is peace"* (IP12, 161)

### 5.2.3.4.  Professionals

Professionals**,** well-educated locals – e.g. teachers, civil servants or soldiers working for the government – many of which have in the past left the area for safer places, should return to get employed by the government. Working within their communities, they could then play a critical role (IP9) and, as "*pioneers of elites of this land*" (IP12, 131), "*slowly (..) try to enlighten others*" (ibid.). People would likely want to follow professionals' lead because they represent the merits of government employment – reliable provisioning of food and money, even in times of crisis. As role models, professionals could convey to people, amongst other things, the value of education (IP12, IP13).

One interviewee cautioned that talking to and sensitise some professionals might be necessary. Working abroad, some might have been sending money back to their communities for support: "*And that money goes into buying weapons*" (IP27, 148).

Asked about their perceived most important peace actors, most commonly, interviewees' listed more than one of the above-mentioned actor groups, frequently also referring to the importance of their combined efforts:

*"If we want to get a successful discussion in on issues of cattle rustling, it is not going to be a one-man show. All parties must come on board. The political leaders, the professionals, the Kenya police, the village elders. It's a multi-stakeholder* (a.n. effort)" (IP27, 162)

## 5.3.  Enabling factors to the Chesegon Peace Accord

## *Attitudes*

### 5.3.1. People aspired conflict resolution

One of the reasons why putting a halt to raids and cattle rustling had been so difficult before the Peace Accord was signed was that frequently "*those who go to war, either to maim or kill*

*are treated as heroes*" (IP27, 6). An interviewee explained that distinct interests were involved in these practices because owning large numbers of cattle is considered a sign of wealth and prestige. However, after years of fighting, suffering and attacks, most people's attitudes toward conflict had begun to change substantially and eventually enabled peace to gain ground:

> "*Because, you know, you are tired (..) So because they have fought themselves for a long time, they are tired*" (IP4, 124)

> "*So it reached a time when the people realised even if we fight we can't have a winner in this kind of eh fighting*" (IP3, 51)

> "*But we realised that community going downward because of this insecurity*" (IP18, 4)

Most of both communities' members had come to generally support peace (IP16) and realised the extent of their suffering (IP12) and the losses that conflict had endured them (IP10). Many lives had been lost (IP3, IP5, IP9), women and men remained widowed, young children were orphaned (IP4, IP10, IP19), and large numbers of livestock were lost due to conflict (IP21):

> "*It is the same from both communities. This one has lost, and the other side has lost (..) Everyone was longing for coming together*" (IP4, 246)

During times of fighting, some families whose relatives resided amongst the respective other community had also been separated: "*And it is them who really, some of the people who championed for this peace process. And then also school going children. There were children who were schooling from this side*" (IP9, 67). Their parents, e.g. through local language radio channels, are said to have been calling on the government to support peace meetings and the like (IP9).

According to some interviewees, even criminals themselves ceased to support conflict: "*They have changed to peace because they also lost much*" (IP21, 55). Moreover, "*if there is a small percentage of those who don't like peace, may god deal with them*" (IP20, 87).

*Institutions*

## 5.3.2. Political will to end violence

Many interviewees highlighted the importance of favourable political will for resolving conflict and the need for all political parties and local stakeholders to be involved, consolidating and solving even minor issues together (IP12, IP27). For the most part, interviewees expressed confidence that the will to support peace was currently on all levels strong. Both counties' MPs were described by their constituents as "*doing a lot of work*" (IP4, 170).

"*New leadership who supports peace*" (IP13, 66) was brought in and "*the MP of this area (..)* *right now supports peace, so this area (..) is now peaceful*" (IP11, 68). One interviewee remained doubtful: "*The national government is willing. But the politicians are not willing*" (IP27, 109); "*if the politicians were in support of the government, then it would be very easy to, very easy to have this issue of insecurity or the issue of cattle rustling coming to a close*" (IP27, 111).

Whereas several interviewees assumed an earlier lack of commitment by officials to firmly resolve the issue of conflict (IP26) – saying the government was "*far away*" (IP18, 215) and their "*security detail laxity*" (IP16, 67) did not prevent frequent attacks from taking place in the Kerio Valley – most agreed that the government has started to pay more attention to rural areas and criminals were increasingly aware that "*the government will be coming for me*" (IP18, 213) strongly in case of wrong-doing: "*In fact now we are classifying this a purely theft, not at a cultural affair (..) there is no law which supports you actually to steal animals from the other person*" (IP22.1, 94). Most interviewees considered the government's willingness to respond to any insecurity with swift security action decisive, as they would not allow criminals to hide behind the community's collective responsibility any longer.

### 5.3.2.1.    *A shift in approach toward individual responsibility*

Instead of treating conflict as a community issue as it had been done before, the government had recently begun to seek implementation of a law holding criminals responsible individually for their wrongdoings (IP1, IP2, IP5, IP6, IP11, IP20, IP24):

> "*If I commit a crime I am held responsible (..) it's me and me alone. So it's no longer the community. That really helped*" (IP20, 121)

"*Not everyone knows the law*", possibly due also to illiteracy, a Pokot explained. However, leaders were actively spreading the word and helping to raise widespread awareness of it amongst members of their communities (IP20).

While crime was still treated as a community affair, the political class had been able to claim, for instance, that "*our people are being targeted*" (IP2, 48). More recently, the government had been "*taking it tough, no longer allowing the political class to do that*" (IP2, 48), profiling individual criminals and taking them into custody (IP2).

### 5.3.2.2. Determination to militarily intervene and criminally prosecute misconduct

Most interviewees considered the stop that had been put to violence after the Chesegon Peace Accord due to the national government's rigorous and forceful security initiative in the late first half of 2019 (IP3, IP26). Through an "*intervention from the highest offices*" (IP12, 13) – such as the Deputy President's – conflict resolution "*became a (..) national thing*" (ibid.). It added an earnestness that local leadership alone may not have achieved (IP12). Many interviewees confirmed that the governments' recent decisive willingness to tackle insecurity has had a profound impact on proceedings in the Kerio Valley. Only when "*they took over this issue without even stakeholders, this thing came to an end*" (IP26, 9). Peace committees had been installed early on, but people were not open to peace talks until "*the government switched the game on board (..) now they accepted to dialogue*" (IP9, 108). However, it "*is one thing of bringing peace and now sustaining peace. The leaders enabled us to have peace. Now to sustain it (..) other factors* (a.n. improving the livelihoods of people) *will contribute*" (IP20, 83), an interviewee emphasised.

In Kenya, "*the President of the country after receiving information (..) he himself decides what to do (..) So it depends upon the President*" (IP13, 64). So it is "*for the President to ensure there is zero cattle rustling in this country*" (IP27, 77). "(W)h*en you just put a policy and don't follow it, nothing changes*" (IP13, 149). By contrast, policies such as the recent disarmament initiative or Probox had been implemented decisively, thus marking a change in approach by government forces (IP13). In addition, crucially, *"the political class need to be involved. It is for the government to implement, but you find the person who actually persuades the people is the political class"* (IP2, 36). According to an interviewee, the national government had discovered even before it was "*members of parliament who were fighting*" (IP24, 145) and fuelling conflict, so they knew all along "*the problem is with the leaders*" – peace workers had been reminding them of it. "*If the government would be so serious this deal would have stamped out long, long time ago*" (IP5, 14), one interviewee reported, but before "*they were not also even listening*" (IP24, 147).

Promoting a strict anti-violence policy, the government was described to have recently put heavily under pressure those politicians who had previously been known to incite rather than engage in peace-building behaviour:

"*The government took action, decisive action*" (IP16, 39), consisting mainly of the following:

### 5.3.2.2.1. Targeting the political class

By mid- 2019, the government had closed in on any wrongdoers, also amongst the political class (IP5, IP16). They "*took hard on the politicians (..) that they should also have a hand in (..) helping their community to attain peace*" (IP2, 26). Calling on Marakwet and Pokot leaders and area MPs, the government issued them a warning (IP26). If they were to be found guilty of incitement, they, too, were to be held legally responsible: "*If you are the one, if you are a politician and you want to inflammate issues that are likely to provoke a situation that will affect the community, you are picked, and you are taken*" (IP5, 38).

Hence, under some pressure exerted by the government, political leaders came together and eventually accepted to own peace (IP5) and paving the way to the Chesegon Peace Accord (IP17, IP19): "*the political leadership both from Marakwet and Pokots they have actually embraced the peace initiative (..) And that's why it's calm. People listen to their leaders*" (IP3, 49).

### 5.3.2.2.2. Targeting 'bad' business

Likewise, the government sought out and prosecuted those supporting conflict behaviours behind the scenes, for example, the people involved in the selling and buying of loot (IP2), and those connected to weapons and ammunition sales (IP4, IP5, IP13, IP17, IP24):

> "*If the government now are taking these people, who else (..) will do these businesses (..) it is done all over (..) the bad culprits are being removed from the people, the good ones remain*" (IP13, 96)

### 5.3.2.2.3. Use of Probox

"*Everything changed*" when "*the president brought Matiang'i, as the head of the security*" (IP24, 151), some interviewees reported. Backed up by the President's strong support, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Interior Fred Matiang'i initiated "*the strategy of Probox*" (IP13, 157), a car moving around and picking up previously identified criminals "*one by one to*

*be taken to custody*" (IP2, 26). Some of those were even said to have mysteriously disappeared and, after some time, found dead (IP5, IP8, IP9, IP24):

> "*That one alone silenced everybody*" (IP24, 13)

> "*Yeah they used a small car that was going round to pick on the inciters. And after the inciters were picked, peace was around*" (NAM153, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet)

According to some, the government's direct dealing with criminals and resulting fear of similar consequences amongst those who remained made this attempt at peace so successful: "*Whoever is doing this, they look for you up to your family and you are killed. You are shot dead. So that is why some of the youth stopped*" (IP14, 50).

The government eventually managed to seal the loopholes (IP2), and most lawless individuals were punished for their crimes (IP1):

> "*Right now anybody can not just wake up and woke a gun here. The government took a very strong security measures to ensure that those people were profiled as criminals*" (IP3, 83)

The division of a Baringo administrative location into three smaller units also helped to gain oversight on proceedings: "*you know now your people almost by names. So when you are told somebody is engaged in crime you exactly know who is*" (IP18, 211).

The few culprits who were not taken got sufficiently scared to quit their criminal activities regardless (IP3, IP13, IP16).

### 5.3.3. Peace meetings

At the beginning of 2019, a series of meetings took place, at first in Nairobi, through intervention from the Deputy President's office: "*I think for this one a strength came from the above*" (IP12, 17). It brought back a clear message of peace to the Kerio Valley and resulted in leaders of all levels at first uniting amongst themselves (IP4, IP12) and later on moving around, calling for barazas and preaching peace to their people (IP3, IP4, IP7, IP9, IP10, IP19). There had been cross-border peace committee meetings even before, initiated by the

communities themselves, but due to the still high level of insecurity in the region and lack of government support, they had been paused for a while (IP3, IP9).

Leading up to the Chesegon Peace Accord, however, peace meetings were held all over the region (IP10, IP11, IP12, IP16, IP19, IP22.1, IP24), and seminars with warriors, and youth, that were aimed at talking to and empowering them (IP3). These meetings helped people to realise they were "*fighting for nothing*" (IP14, 57). A few weeks prior to the signing of the peace agreement, a big meeting took place in Eldoret with participants from Baringo, Elgeyo-Marakwet and West Pokot (IP9, IP12, IP14, IP24) where issues such as how to deal with stolen livestock were discussed – "*if you see your cow coming that was then. This no longer your cow*" (IP18, 173). On that occasion, it was agreed upon that bad-mouthing one other was to be strictly avoided to prevent flare-ups of emotion (IP14). Some interviewees further reported on an agreement reached that intended the Pokot to request permission from a Marakwet council of elders when, during times of drought, they wanted to cross over and graze their animals on Marakwet land (IP10, IP13, IP19).

> "*Now after those series of meetings, consultations, everything, fighting came to an end*" (IP3, 91)

Several interviewees emphasised the importance of an inclusive approach – equally involving both communities (IP17, IP25) and all community members – when coming together to discuss matters of peace and support:

> "*We come together, we don't streamline people. When we say peace we don't pick specifically so and so should come. (..) everyone decides what should be done (..) nobody will be left out*" (IP18, 185)

### 5.3.4. Traditional rites of conflict resolution

Before increasingly high rates of firearms present in the region had led them to suffer their virtue (IP8), the council of elders' meetings and traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution were often able to soothe bad blood by sitting down and discussing, finally settling, dispute. Back then, heeding the losses, elders had decided on appropriate compensation or penalty payments, thus also aiming to prevent conflict from arising in the first place:

> "*Elders will be coming to ask, you saying this soil is ours. Please pick some of the soil, and you raise it up. And say, if this is not my land, this soil should consume me. And you'll definitely know before long*" (IP27, 133)

Sometimes celebrations took place that included animal sacrifices and curses spoken in the direction of potential future raiders (IP27):

> "*That one works well (..) fear of the death is very dangerous*" (IP11, 152)

Some interviewees referred to such an event as having happened around the time of the signing of the Peace Accord, which contributed to pacifying the formerly heated situation. Elders – "*culture custodians*" (IP25, 68) – administered an oath by the river. An animal was slaughtered, and its meat eaten. "*Then they said if somebody eats this meat and then goes ahead to steal, that person will die. And that caused a lot of fear*" (IP11, 17). Indeed, others confirmed that "*most of them have lost their lives (..) There were people who were very serious raiders, are no longer with us. They die mysteriously*" (IP27, 139); "*So those who tried actually are no more, they died. You just die mysteriously. It's a very strong belief*" (IP25, 70).

## 5.4. Requirements to sustain the peace

*Attitudes*

### 5.4.1. 'Healing' and psychosocial support

Over years of fighting, many people have suffered terrible losses of lives and livelihoods, and many may still be in a lot of pain (IP5, IP10, IP16, IP24, IP26, IP27). Many interviewees, therefore, emphasised the "*need to deal with the trauma (..) people went through*" (IP16, 152), *"they require some psychosocial support"* (IP16, 158). Some of them cautioned not to underestimate the psychological trauma that years of violence and death have caused and warned about possible implications for the future:

The "*pact in Chesegon, the peace deal agreement, I think they said anything, the whole what you have done we forget (..) But that was not enough, it´s about now healing (..) it´s a personal issue now*" (IP26, 188). A psychological debriefing "*can be the biggest healing process and the biggest thing that can bring peace*" (IP5, 126). Helping people accept their losses was repeatedly described as a decisive step toward healing war wounds and strengthening peace for good (IP15, IP24). "*It will take time (..) to heal*" (IP16, 150), an interviewee explained, but without any form of support, the healing process would be slow (IP26, IP27). Such unresolved

grief weighing on people´s minds was also considered to increase the probability of tensions boiling up again (IP24). Providing people with opportunities for psychosocial support was therefore considered particularly important to prevent any bottled-up pain from erupting anew sooner or later. Without counselling, people who lost loved ones might harbour feelings of hatred and were considered more likely to eventually seek revenge (IP10, IP27):

> *"There are so many widows within this region (..) when the children are grown (..) what will this lady be telling this young men when he grows up? She will say Marakwets killed your father (..) equal on the other side will be saying (..) Pokot has killed your father (..) This young people will be growing with a lot of bitterness"* (IP27, 174)

So far, people´s need for psychosocial support has been neglected by the government of Kenya (IP5), with people from both communities lacking adequate opportunities for counselling. Not even after the gruesome events of the Murkutwo massacre in 2001 was there any such support, although it would have been much needed also back then. Seeing that "*there are people who have scars*" (IP26, 188), on both sides, *"psychosocial support has to be done but it´s not happening, there is no follow up (..) Nobody does the follow up to see to it that these people get healed"* (IP26, 227).

An interviewee explained that no official structures exist for this kind of work, but quite possibly, it could be done with the help of churches or philanthropists, with the government merely chipping in (IP16).

Additionally, identifying those bereaved, "*of course, we will be talking about people who were killed and animals that were stolen*" (IP18, 189). Supporting those who lost to conflict with financial means would help to some extent, prevent their suffering even further:

> *"I know we can´t compensate life but we can compensate their livelihoods, the cattle (..) lost"* (IP26, 184)

In addition, two interviewees made out difficulties in overcoming people´s condemnation of community stereotypes. Over time, people opened up more and appreciated that bandits were individual wrong-doers and did not represent the whole (other) community (IP16). However,

some people may not be ready to forgive yet, in which case time and a continued dialogue forum would help the forgiveness process (IP18).

## 5.4.2. Re-introduction/ support of means of inter-community interaction

Except for some years of intense fighting, the interaction between Pokot and Marakwet communities used to be lively and manifold. People were living together. They intermarried, traded goods, and children went to school on the respective other side. Most interviewees considered it particularly important to re-introduce opportunities for members of both communities to come together and interact. Examples given included the hospital in Chesongoch, which used to commonly receive patients from both communities (IP4, IP6, IP9, IP13, IP17), regular joint prayers (IP3, IP4, IP10), school children starting to cross over again (IP4, IP5, IP6, IP8, IP10, IP11, IP12, IP13, IP16, IP17), markets reopening in both Baringo and Elgeyo-Marakwet (IP3, IP4, IP6, IP12, IP13, IP18, IP19, IP20, IP21, IP22.2, IP23, IP25), meetings, cultural activities and sport events (IP2, IP10, IP12, IP13, IP17, IP21, IP25) as well as previous or planned shared farming activities along river Kerio (IP2, IP4, IP7, IP8, IP9, IP12, IP14). Only after the Chesegon Peace Accord, interaction had begun to increase, and free people´s movement started to resume. In the years leading up to the peace agreement, all of the above had been put on hold due the insecurity when people feared being outside their own houses after hours (IP3, IP4, IP9, IP11, IP17).

However, there were still "*a lot of fears. People have not developed that trust for one another*" (IP5, 80). Especially in areas severely affected by conflict, where many people lost their lives, there was still some reluctance in terms of free interaction (IP9), and people have yet to start trusting one another (IP6). To go back to former levels will require time (IP16) and effort, possibly by the government, local leadership or communities themselves. Supported by external partners, they are to facilitate social gatherings, joint activities, such as essay writing at school (IP12), music, dances (NAM) or competitions and tournaments for the youth, like athletics or soccer games. Engaging especially young people in such activities, for one, aims to prevent idleness (IP21) and offers some appreciation or reward (IP17) as well as it seeks to re-connect them with their counterpart peers:

> *"They go for sports together (..) And that one also brings peace because once develops friendship with another person (..) they are talking. That brings peace"* (IP13, 124)

> *"I remember one time we had a competition with the local boys who had not gone to school. They compete, the winner goes home with cash, a cow, a goat"* (IP12, 157)

> *"If we could have something in common, that we be doing together (..) it would contribute a lot"* (IP10, 138)

Repeatedly, common marketplaces were stated as essential points of interaction where people come and do business together (IP17, IP21), contributing as well to pacifying the region as, according to some, is trade in general (IP13, NAM): *"The frequency of conflict, it has gone down, that´s because of a common market"* (IP22.2, 69). Bringing goods to the (a.n. Kolowa) market for sale and interacting there with one another was described as a "*factor that has brought peace (..) this market here, it has helped a lot*" (IP10, 98). Importantly, markets support members of both communities and being able to trade their goods was also considered equally beneficial to both communities (IP10). At Kolowa market, for example, Marakwet women bring farm products – crops, fruits and vegetables – when they return in the evening, they take home livestock, meat or milk, as well as money (IP4, IP10, IP13).

Many interviewees considered common infrastructural facilities, particularly schools situated in the border region of Baringo and Elgeyo-Marakwet where children from both communities can attend classes together, to be connectors for peace (IP8) or "*a peace kind of institution*" (IP12, 85). Some further recommended animated student exchange, a "*sign of peace and conflict resolution*" (IP16, 6). Accordingly, schools had been founded in the past with the explicit intention of attracting students from all over the region, such as, for example, Queen of Peace Chesongoch Secondary school, which was founded shortly after and in response to the 2001 Murkutwo massacre (IP5).

Several interviewees suggested the potential of joint agricultural projects (IP4, IP6, NAM). Working jointly, using the same farmland and water resources, was repeatedly referred to as an essential means to increase interaction and foster the feeling of "*togetherness*" (IP7, 152) amongst communities. It would also serve to support local livelihoods and food supply. Once communities have been persuaded to back up the idea entirely, several interviewees expected joint farming to lessen the severity of conflict significantly (IP2):

> *"all of us will be farming together, and we do away with the (..) way of cattle rustling and stealing"* (IP2, 26)

Some years back, people used to farm (IP4, IP8, IP10) and graze their animals together (IP12). Also, previous farm projects in the border region between counties Baringo and Elgeyo-Marakwet were described to have successfully benefited both communities with ample yields before they were interrupted due to conflict around 2015 (IP9).

## *Structures*

### 5.4.3. Infrastructural development

Many interviewees emphasised the need to prioritise infrastructural development in Baringo (IP2, IP5, IP22.1), opening up the bushy spots, building schools and roads (IP2, IP9, IP11, IP16, IP17, IP21, P22.1), reviving the Kolowa irrigation scheme and supporting other schemes in the region, enabling people access to electricity and "*anything that really is required actually to improve the lives of those people*" (IP22.1, 92). In particular, "*because of climate change, we have to get prepared*" (IP22.2, 160), a Baringo official pointed out, to make infrastructure climate-proof by design and thus help people build up resilience to adverse climatic developments (IP22.2).

#### *5.4.3.1. Roads for accessibility, security and transport*

It is the government´s duty to ensure security in the region (IP5) so others "*can walk there comfortably*" (IP22.1, 139). With insecurity, "*you may find that in that locality you may not have teachers (..) So sometimes you need the peace to be there so that these other people now be able to move in there and support*" (ibid.). In that regard, many interviewees highlighted the need for government efforts to open up formerly bush roads, which would allow for agricultural produce to be transported from around river Kerio (IP17, NAM) – *"if (..) they get good roads they will be selling their farm produce to other counties"* (IP11, 124) – and to enable communities to mingle with ease (IP2) – "*so the two communities are today able to able to meet and (..) come together*" (IP2, 26) – thus possibly reducing the number of incidents in future (IP22.2). According to a Baringo official, efforts to open up the area had been successful already (IP23). Other interviewees, however, did not back that up.

A long-term approach is required, another Baringo official explained, to send a strong signal to communities that for a long time felt left out (IP26) and marginalised (IP22.1, IP23). To offer these people a real perspective on the development of infrastructural elements would help them to feel "*ok we are part of puzzle of the other communities, and you* (a.n. can) *expect some changes actually to occur*" (IP22.1, 205).

Ensuring easy access to all areas (IP2, IP11, IP17, IP26) and equipping local security forces with adequate vehicles – not all members of, for example, the Ngoron security division have

cars at their disposal but instead, have to rely on motorbikes (IP11) – was referred to as potentially highly influential relating to security concerns. An interviewee expressed his belief that upon completion of laying tarmac, "*it will be very easy for security agents to move around and monitor the situation*" (IP3, 89). Some stretches of road work (laying tarmac) were reported to have been finalised already – such as the Marigat- Chemolingot- Barpello road (IP11, IP22.2, IP23), others were said to be ongoing – such as the stretch of road passing Tot and connecting to West Pokot (IP11) – in the planning stage or at a standstill (IP12) – such as the road connecting Chemolingot to Nakuru which was supposed to be continued via Tot.

Indeed, opening up the area for reasons of security was an argument repeated by several interviewees. They said it would help to have more police stationed in the Tiaty region (IP3, IP18, IP19). Establishing a police post in Ngoron, for example, would be particularly important to scare away potential criminals or enable immediate government response in case of an attack (IP19):

> "*If this area is opened up, we have so many roads, we have enough police, there will be peace*" (IP11, 160)

One interviewee offered a somewhat contrary opinion on regional security resources. He explained that already vast amounts of money were being used for security personnel and proposed that "*this money could be converted for development in that area, things would (..) change*" (IP17, 165).

### 5.4.3.2.    *Water management & irrigation*
Investment in irrigation infrastructure – either using pumps to supplement water from river Kerio or water coming down from Elgeyo-Marakwet´s Highlands – to address the issue of water scarcity in parts of Baringo´s Kerio Valley was repeatedly referred to as one critical measure for advancing development and peace in the region (IP16):

> "*a lasting solution to (..) this conflict I just think people get enough water, especially in Tiaty*" (IP3, 43)

> "*Building water pans, piping water from Marakwet to Pokot villages (..) water for peace*" (IP24, 219)

It is the government´s responsibility to provide water in Tiaty. If they do not, "*the conflict will continue*" (IP7, 69). Possibly, the government realised the gravity of the situation but has not acted on it yet, an interviewee suggested (IP7). Other interviewees called on county and national governments to support and work closely with NGOs, development partners or external sponsors to arrange for sufficient means of irrigation and push together for the common goal of securing water supply for all people (IP3, IP5, IP11, IP22.1). If Pokot had enough water, it might stop them from "*moving up and down and attacking other communities because there is no water*" (IP3, 73). Water coming down from Elgeyo-Marakwet´s Highlands, for example, could be conserved and, if done correctly, serve Marakwet and – via pipes – Pokot communities during the dry season (IP7, IP15, IP17, IP25):

> "*If we do proper conservation in the Highlands for people to get enough water for irrigation, for their livestock and domestic use, there will be no conflicts*" (IP25, 168)

One interviewee remarked on the advantages that a piping system leading from Marakwet´s Highlands through Tot Mixed Day Secondary School situated at the two counties´ borders and going on to Tiaty could have had: "*nobody would interfere (..) when you interfere it is like affecting the school*" (IP16, 18).

In addition, interviewees reported an urgent need for more generators along river Kerio to pump water, drill boreholes (IP3, IP17) and build dams (IP11, IP17) or water pans (IP11) to provide water for humans, livestock and small irrigation in the Tiaty area (IP12):

> "*If now we have enough supply in those boreholes people will not go the river Kerio. They will just use their water, then they will not have conflict with the Marakwet*" (IP11, 108)

> "*If we would have some water points towards the hills of Tiaty I am very sure it would balance even the number of animals crossing to the side of Marakwet*" (IP12, 49)

One interviewee saw advantages in setting up larger water harvesting structures rather than several more minor inventions: "*Even if there´s a drought, those water facilities could still be able to hold some water. And that´s the kind of thing we should be talking about (..) huge water*

*facilities, which can survive a whole year, even dry season"* (IP22.1, 147). Big dam projects like the one the government intended to construct in Arror could have helped a lot to ensure people do not have to rely solely on livestock, thus depicting part of a "*solution to the current problem we have in Kerio"* (IP3, 45). Those plans were said to be on hold, however, and prospects on other dam projects considered a possibility but uncertain: "*we don´t know yet. We are yet to see if it will happen*" (IP7, 81).

Lack of water was widely considered an essential constraint to agricultural ambitions in Tiaty, and providing a reliable water supply therefore crucial in advancing any such initiative. With enough water resources available for irrigation, Pokot could engage more in agricultural activities and even grow pasture for their animals, described to possibly advance stability in the region (IP11): "*Like the way it happened in Turkana. The Turkana were fighting with the Pokot until they got enough water to do farming"* (IP3, 43).

No irrigation scheme served residents of Tiaty (IP10) at the time of the interviews, and while some interviewees mentioned plans to revive the existing but damaged structures in Kolowa, they also thought that "*implementation may still take long*" (IP2, 96). According to one person, such plans to reopen did not exist just yet (IP16).

Besides water being a crucial necessity for humans, livestock and agriculture – *"when there is water, you have food"* (IP13, 159) – some interviewees described irrigation projects as useful to increase interaction amongst communities (IP22.1). Using the same source of water would connect communities "*and it will bring peace better*" (IP7, 152) as a source of "*togetherness*" (ibid.) Furthermore, one interviewee reported that reformed warriors could get employed to work in irrigation projects, as was done by Christian Impact Mission elsewhere. Being engaged, for example, in water harvesting, some of them "*confessed that they have changed totally*" (IP22.1, 79).

### 5.4.4. Diversification of economies

Across both communities, interviewees agreed on the great need for members of the Pokot community to diversify their economic activities (IP3, IP4, IP9, IP13) and, in addition to relying on keeping livestock, pursue as well alternative livelihood options (IP1, IP2, IP3, IP9, IP10, IP11, IP15, IP16, IP18, IP22.1, IP22.2, IP24):

> *".. you can create opportunities, add opportunities. More opportunities apart from pastoralism (..) opening other alternative livelihoods. I think in such a way we shall be contributing so much to the peacebuilding"* (IP22.2, 172)

Some suggested beekeeping and the harvest and sale of honey as a way well applicable to earn a living (IP4, IP9, IP10, IP11, IP23), complementing agriculture and livestock keeping as common means of securing a livelihood in the Kerio Valley (IP4). Especially for local youth, one interviewee explained, it could potentially change their lives and empower them (IP18).

Local demand for honey was said to be high as not everyone around had beehives. Or else, honey could be transported to further-away markets like Eldoret or even Nakuru (IP4):

> *"They have very good opportunities, they produce the best honey, I think in the world, in Kenya"* (IP23, 176)

To start a business, many would need government or NGO support. Participants of NAM, therefore, suggested making grants available that come with low interest rates for registered women or youth groups who want to start small- and medium-sized enterprises, which an interviewee described to be already available (IP11).

A single mention each went to the possibility of rearing fish in bowls, in reference to allegedly successful attempts dating back to the 1990s (IP4) and training people in craftmanship skills for currently *"when you want to build such a house you invite someone from far"* (IP18, 31).

### 5.4.4.1. Away from purely pastoral livelihoods

Pokot children routinely grow up knowing they are expected to look after animals (IP4, IP18). Several interviewees mentioned that Pokot might be interested in changing their minds about it (IP9, IP13, IP18, IP23) because of the difficulties they already encountered to ensure enough pasture for their animals (IP23) and conditions getting worse under the influence of a changing climate (IP13). Some were said to have already abandoned keeping livestock and instead turned to work on a farm (IP9).

A Baringo resident suggested that while such a change was going to happen eventually, it would take long for Pokot people to consider other options – *"because they have always known having cows is being wealthy"* (IP18, 239) and "*you cannot tell him do away with cows without giving them an alternative"* (ibid.). A recent period of drought that members of the Pokot community lost a high amount of cattle heads might have left them more open to the thought of destocking than they were before that event: *"I think this is the right time now to tell them we will no longer have cows"* (IP18, 245), a Pokot man explained. Or rather *"we will not have so many. Because we don´t have grass, we don´t have enough water. So it is time to change to other things"* (IP18, 247), "*possibly agriculture"* (IP18, 249) or rearing goats and

camels, instead of cattle, as these are more resistant to drought (IP18) and, as is the case with goats, decisively more fast-growing (IP4).

Repeatedly, interviewees also referred to the pressure that Pokot´s large livestock herds put on already depleted grass resources in the Kerio Valley and the distress insufficient pasture capacities signified for pastoral livelihoods – "*they have like 100 cows (..) they have no pasture, so they die*" (IP20, 8). Some interviewees, therefore, suggested that Pokot pastoralists destock to obtain a more sustainably balanced ratio of animals and available pasture (IP1, IP4, IP7, IP9, IP22.2). Others proposed selling animals earlier to prevent losing them due to drought (IP20, IP22.1, IP24). What is more, the indigenous breeds of cattle, such as, for example, zebus – well-liked and predominant in most of the Kerio Valley and particularly in Tiaty – were described by many as unproductive. Another frequent suggestion, therefore, was the use of improved breeds (IP1, IP4, IP7, IP16, IP17, IP20, IP22.2, IP25, IP27). These are animals with higher milk yield but unable to move long distances, unlike indigenous animals – "*cows that can be able to run marathon*" (IP27, 23). For that reason, improved breeds will not easily get stolen – people "*steal only indigenous animals"* (IP25, 118).

Two interviewees suggested 'zero grazing', as an integrated way of rearing cattle (IP15, IP23), thus anticipating potential ownership disputes or animals roaming and wandering off, which might provoke conflict. One of the two further proposed establishing the official post of veterinary supervisor – managing a number of animals at a local level, for example, ten animals/person – and officially registering animals and their owners, to lessen the tensions (IP15).

### 5.4.4.2. Agro-pastoral livelihoods

A majority of interviewees suggested that Pokot, to an increasing degree, should engage in either crop or vegetable- farming (IP2, IP3, IP4, IP10, IP11, IP13, IP20, IP22.1, IP26) or the cultivation of grass (IP3, IP7, IP11, IP13, IP18, IP19, IP22.2, IP25, IP26, IP27) as most Marakwets do who have widely embraced agriculture. In that regard, some proposed that external stakeholders such as NGOs or development partners should team up with public institutions in Tiaty and, importantly, do some capacity building – "*How can it be grown, what can be grown, what are the benefits?*" (IP3, 59) – to push agriculture for subsistence food production (IP2, IP3, IP4, IP5, IP16) as well as for agribusinesses as an income-generating activity (IP3, IP10, IP11, IP23, IP26). Besides reporting a demand for training on agricultural skills, methods and knowledge (IP1, IP10, IP17), many interviewees stated the importance of supporting Pokot with material resources such as seeds, machinery and other equipment (IP2,

IP3, IP11, IP17, IP18). A Baringo official described the county government's efforts to train farmers and support demonstration sites and water harvesting structures. However, these initiatives have not been used to scale for lack of enough resources but they are said to signal to people already the feasibility of agricultural activities in the area (IP22.1).

In previous years, Pokot used to rely on livestock products and feed their children meat and milk. More recently, they started to feed them farm produce, too (IP9):

> *"Animals alone can´t sustain human needs (..) leaders are now trying to bring in the issue of agriculture so it will supplement the human needs"* (IP13, 8)

An interviewee suggested the potential importance of some dietary changes and the value of nutritious crops that were more common in the past. Before maize took over, sorghum, for example, was widely found (IP2).

Because of conflict, farming activities have been impaired for some time (IP7) or even come to a halt altogether (IP8). Interviewees´ opinions on whether people, after the signing of the peace agreement, were still reluctant (IP7, IP22.1) or ready to resume farming immediately (IP2) differed.

### 5.4.4.3. Agriculture´s expected contribution to peace

In many ways, support for agricultural activities was expected to help advance the bid for lasting peace in the Kerio Valley (IP2, IP11), combined with other factors (IP24). With "*agriculture (..) introduced as means of livelihood (..) there will be peace in this area*" (IP11, 126). Interviewees called agriculture a solution (IP9), the best way to address conflict (IP8, IP25) or thought it was key to pacifying the region:

> *"We see that that one will elevate us more than anything else"* (IP4, 81);
> *"if agriculture-wise, we succeed, then conflict will not be there"* (IP4, 85)

> *"a little farming, I think it will change their live*" (IP26, 65)

> *"The agricultural activity is going to help a lot and transform the people, economically, and help bring peace"* (IP2, 108)

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### 5.4.4.3.1. Improved food security

Increasing agricultural activities and improving food security in the Kerio Valley is expected to benefit peace (IP7, IP14, IP20):

> *"When we have lot of (..) food here, I think the whole conflict will cease"*
> (IP1, 323)

> *"When there is plenty of food that war will not be there"* (IP4, 83)

> *"If these guys get food they will not be bothered to steal"* (IP16, 93)

People who are food insecure are more likely "*tend to steal from other people*" (IP10, 227); *"once people are not hungry, they can understand issues. But you cannot tell a hungry man that don´t steal"* (IP25, 152). It "*will do great to peace*" (IP13, 180) for Pokot to initiate and engage more actively in crop growing, a Pokot man explained, to supplement family food supplies and animal fodder (IP13).

### 5.4.4.3.2. Diversity of livelihoods abates tensions

With Pokot being less dependent solely on livestock to generate income, tension was expected to ease between Marakwet and Pokot communities (IP2, IP3, IP11, IP22.1):

> *"other activities like growing crops that can give them more money .. it will*
> *also solve this. (..) that has been the source of conflict in this region"* (IP3,
> 95)

Crops – unlike animals – cannot be stolen and taken away but, if sold, generate income all the same (IP7):

> *"With the crops it´s not like the cattle. You can´t drive the crops, so it is for to a cattle*
> *rustler having some vegetable, some maize is not of any interest to them"* (IP22.1, 31)

### 5.4.4.3.3. Agriculture as a unifying factor and preoccupying activity

By many, agriculture was considered a potentially important unifying activity (IP19, IP26), able to create coercion amongst communities and thus an important groundwork for peace (IP22.2):

> *".. if we could have something in common, that we be doing together with our sisters in the other side, it would contribute a lot. For example farming together"* (IP10, 138)

A few years back, a shared agricultural project along river Kerio was described to have already contributed much to a previously harmonious state (IP10).

Many interviewees further agreed that with their minds on agriculture, people would be busy (IP4, IP13, IP14, IP20, IP25). They would not have as much time available for fighting (IP4, IP20). As such, agriculture would present itself as a solution to the "*issue of idleness*" (IP20, 137) and result in better living standards at the same time (IP4). It worked well in past years, "*because when people are busy, when someone is earning a living, that person is peaceful*" (IP25, 58) and the "*issue of conflicts, very minimal*" (IP26, 79).

### 5.4.4.4. Fodder options

Interviewees repeatedly referred to the importance of supporting Pokot communities in addressing the issue of pasture scarcity (IP24), be it from the government, NGOs or any well-wisher (IP13), thus potentially contributing importantly to improve the situation of peace in the Kerio Valley (IP1, IP8, IP13, IP14, IP19, IP22.1, IP25):

> *"these animals when they also move from one place to another, this is where the problem starts. So it is better that (..)* (a.n. Pokot) *can have their own field resources"* (IP22.1, 171)

> *"if they have pasture, it might be the solution"* (IP1, 410)

Limiting factors are water (IP7) as well as a lack of resources such as seeds and knowledge – "*nobody knows where even the seeds are, where can we get the grass seeds or even how are they planted*" (IP13, 171). Interviewees therefore suggested to empower Pokot to grow their own grass (IP3, IP7, IP13, IP19, IP22.1, IP25, IP27) – which they could also sell (IP18, IP26) – and train communities on pasture (IP12) and rangeland management (IP24). If an organisation were to come in and suggest "*now let´s plant grass*" (IP13, 171), it would serve to mobilise people and their minds would focus on a common peaceful activity (IP13). In that case, "*every energy from everybody*" (IP7, 55) would be *"coming in (..) When they say in a*

*public baraza, let us plant together pasture for our preparation of that month of dry seasons, they will do that*" (ibid.).

Pasture reseeding, according to a Marakwet official, wouldn´t prevent conflict from happening altogether but "*ease tension for fights from conflicts over pasture*" (IP25, 166). Similarly, a number of interviewees – from Elgeyo-Marakwet – suggested fodder conservation, mainly making hay, in times of abundance to prepare for the annual dry spell (IP3, IP7, IP8, IP17, IP27): "*we have not had that mitigation strategy*" (NAM185, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet). If the government were to support that by bringing machines to the Valley, people could make better use of the abundant time of the year and build up stocks for times of scarcity. One interviewee particularly emphasised promoting women´s group in that regard (IP8).

## *Institutions*

### 5.4.5. Continuity of political commitment

Many considered the government´s and local leadership's continued and unified commitment to peace as key to keeping peaceful relations in the Kerio Valley (IP4, IP14, IP16):

> "*we need strong political will from all arms of the government (..) if these people are not working amicably or they don´t work hand in hand, you find that it´s all useless*" (IP25, 164)

What is more, some issues "*actually require(s) some collective response for both the counties*" (IP25, 152) and as such concerted efforts, for example regarding cross-border sensitisation or dialogue, as well as project funding (IP14). Importantly, security operations dealing with raids would have to remain firm and decisive to prevent future fighting:

> "*If there is an incident in Pokot, incident in Baringo, incident in Marakwet and they deal with it decisively, it will end. If they don´t, incident 1, incident 2, 3. We shall go back to the same*" (IP16, 55)

Authorities would have to act quick to handle those who are disturbing peace, an interviewee explained, being supplied with information from the general public on any possible criminal

conduct (IP13). Similarly, "*for peace to prevail the government must first of all accept to open up the land of the Pokot*" (IP5, 46), which would require "*the commitment of the government to use massive resourc*es" (IP16, 93). Without that commitment, criminals might simply sit out that 'spotlight' period and resume their wrong doings after some time (IP5). Because, if "*the area is (..) hostile, people tend to be also hostile*" (ibid.)

### 5.4.6. Comprehensive education in all of the Kerio Valley

Almost unanimously, interviewees stressed the great importance of advocating for education in regard to peace in the Kerio Valley (IP1, IP3, IP4, IP5, IP6, IP7, IP8, IP9, IP10, IP11, IP12, IP13, IP14, IP15, IP16, IP17, IP18, IP19, IP20, IP21, IP22.1, IP22.2, IP23, IP24, IP25, IP26, IP27). Education could forfeit outdated cultural beliefs (IP9) and "*somebody who is educated can (..) solve issues (..) through dialogue*" (IP25, 42), "*probably when education comes in they will get to know other ways*" (IP21, 83).

It is a long-term project, many agreed, but *"it will really help"* (IP10, 252) to "*open people´s eyes*" (IP10, 250) or minds (IP1, IP15):

> "*People need to be taught and taught and taught for a quite an amount of time. Someday, eventually, everybody will get the knowledge. Those who have gone to school are more likely to also send off their children to school. So as we increase the number of people who are going to school we hope that in future their children will not be left out*" (IP13, 32)

Referring to Tiaty, where school enrolment rates were comparatively very low, education was repeatedly described as key (IP3, IP12, IP23) or a *"key factor to bring down this challenge"* (IP18, 225). Three interviewees therefore suggested that work should be done to sensitise Pokot to the value of education (IP4, IP25):

> "*So it´s high-time young people must be encouraged, the community must be educated on the need for the children to go to school*" (IP3, 35)

Others called on the government to invest in the educational system (IP25) or implement more firmly a law stipulating compulsory education for all children in Kenya (IP4, IP5) so to "*ensure attendance of every boy and girl*" (IP22.1, 92):

> "*All children must go to school (..) It is a tall order but I think that might be one of the solutions we have to apply to be able to sort out that problem*" (IP22.1, 92)

The Catholic Church of Eldoret diocese had already started primary schools in East Pokot to reduce the number of children out of school, an interviewee explained (IP5). NGOs could further help to put more children in school (IP17). Bringing together pupils from different localities in common schools – as it was common before the most recent period of violence – would help to erode outdated and harmful cultural practices, some interviewees emphasised.

People would refrain from attacks when their own children might be endangered, some pointed out (IP4, IP8, IP16), so *"children should be put to learn in this schools, together"* (IP4, 234). If they were attended by pupils from across both communities and possibly situated around river Kerio – in the border region between counties – schools could serve as "*peace connectors*" (IP8, 134) and *"eventually (..) strengthen co-existence"* (NAM41, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet). In that regard, recent government efforts to encourage and set up day-schools were highly appreciated, a male member of Marakwet community explained during NAM (NAM42).

## 5.4.7. Uphold the rule of law

Politicians and local leaders need to be held accountable for their actions (IP23) and statements, irrespective of party affiliation. In case of misconduct, they mustn´t be treated "*not (..) like equal Kenyans*" (IP27, 210) or "*like they are more Kenyans*" (IP27, 115) but prosecuted in a regular fashion without being treated preferentially. Rectifying this grievance – referring in particular to politicians who encourage cattle rustling but fail to be held accountable – is described to be crucial for peaceful development (IP27).

## 5.4.8. Discourage elements of local culture that are harmful

Certain elements of local culture – such as, for example, the perceived inferiority of the girl-child, the high numbers of animals required for the paying of dowry or female genital mutilation (FGM) – were widely considered harmful. Confronting those elements was stated to be important by many:

> "*We need to do away with those bad cultures*" (IP2, 40)

A few interviewees reported that female genital mutilation, while already illegal in Kenya, was still "*very rampant in this county (..) it has always been there (..) people have not taken it seriously*" (IP25, 211). They called for efforts to effectively abolish the practice. Also, "*FGM also contributes to conflict*" (IP11, 35). Girls who had been mutilated would be considered adults and, instead of going to school, might be married off easily (IP23). "W*hen you marry a girl who has been mutilated, you pay a lot of animals*", more than for a girl "*who has never been mutilated. So boys, you find boys now go to the bush to steal in order to pay bride price*" (IP11, 35).

A Marakwet official reported a downward trend for FGM due to "*a serious discussion among the men to accept women who´ve not been circumcised* (IP27, 43). Similarly, a Baringo official described his offices´ recent approach to fight FGM, targeting girls and encouraging them to insist on their chance for education. According to him "*girls now are saying no we don´t want, we don´t want blood cows. Don´t bring me 50 cows that you have stolen.. where did you get 20 cows, have you worked for it?*" (IP23, 57):

> "*So if the girls say no (..) it will make it nonsensical, nonsensical for you to steal 50 cows because the girls said we don´t want*" (IP23, 71)

Many interviewees agreed on the importance of sensitisation and called for increased efforts in working with local communities about the "*issue of value of life*" (IP27, 63), the "*issue of raids*" (ibid.) or the "*issue of dowry*" (ibid.). Eventually fewer animals could be accepted as bride price so people won´t end up having to steal to be able to acquire them or the system of dowry could be reformed altogether:

> "*If we want this young generation to live well and minimise conflict (..) maybe it even means the issue of marriage is not backed on animals*" (IP27, 43);
> "*(w)e must think of now an element we don´t need to praise a women in terms of cows, in terms of goats*" (IP27, 61)

People would realise they "*can pay that dowry in other terms maybe using money, not necessarily using animals. So you´ll not go to steal some goats from across*" (IP11, 128).

On some accounts, interviewees cautioned that present day peace treaties may lose some of their relevance after a few years when a new generation of youngsters would come looking for resources or possibly fights (IP25):

*"Even as we say cease-fire today, the problem has not been solved (..) in the families
that they come from (..) this a young boy, a young girl. What will they do when they
grow? They know this* (a.n. raiding) *is a sure way* (a.n. to acquire livestock)*"* (IP27,
79)

A few interviewees, referring to the Pokot´s nomadic lifestyle, suggested the national
government should proceed with the demarcation of Pokot communal land to "*assist even to
sustain this peace*" (IP6, 91). In parts of Kenya where most of the land had already been
demarcated "*the war is not there. It´s very minimal*" (IP17, 155), a Marakwet man reported. It
would require efforts by the government to open that part of Baringo and deploy enough
resources towards irrigation, building schools, health centres and churches for Pokot
communities. If that were to succeed, they would likely leave nomadic life behind (IP16).

## 5.4.9. Spiritual guidance and the role of the church

Interviewees described manifold contributions to peace by churches and faith/religious
practice. Religious leaders could preach about the sins of killing or committing crimes (IP1,
IP9), communicate the bible´s blessing of peace makers to their congregation (IP23) and call
out for all people to embrace peace (IP4, IP5, IP19):

> *"the church can bring the change because (..) the pastors (..) can preach to
> those people the importance of living with peace"* (IP19, 38)

In Elgeyo-Marakwet many more churches were to be found than in Tiaty (IP21), where vast
areas go without one at all (IP5, IP11, IP19) and Pokot have to go as far away as Kitale or
Eldoret to attend a service when conflict prevents to sit together with Marakwets along river
Kerio in a religious setting (IP18). "*Because of that exposure to the church a number of people
in Marakwet have started discarding some of their (..) outdated and negative cultural practices*"
(IP9, 163). A few interviewees therefore pleaded to build more churches in Tiaty area, too
(IP11, IP21), and advance the religious empowerment of people (IP5), encouraging them "*to
live in that love, to live in that unity*" (IP15, 5).

Besides, churches were mentioned to be involved in other important work:

> *"There is a program the church is planning to do, to put some therapy on
> people who lost their people. And to do some restocking program to people
> who lost their animals to the insecurity"* (IP5, 128)

An interviewee also suggested that churches "*should be involved in the development programs that come around in the area so that they make sure that people get to go to church, people get to go to school*" (IP16, 101).

### 5.4.10.    Disarmament

A great number of interviewees stressed the importance and urgency of successful disarmament to stabilise and sustain peace efforts in the Kerio Valley (IP4, IP5, IP8, IP17, IP27). A man even called it a "*permanent solution to peace in this region*" (IP2, 30). Similarly, this view was shared by many:

> "*If these weapons can be collected from the wrong hands we may actually experience some long period of stability in the region*" (IP3, 21)

> "*That one now* (a.n. disarmament) *can also make this peace to sustain*" (IP6, 175)

> "*So if the government now can come confiscate these guns I think this will be a lasting solution*" (NAM192, male participant, Elgeyo-Marakwet)

> "*But if you can get these firearms from their hands then we will live peacefully*" (IP23, 86)

Or, in a slight variation: "*"we cannot say we are together, we love each other and we still have the guns in the houses*" (IP26, 41).

Vice-versa, many further pointed out the significant threat the continuous presence of illegal firearms represented to keeping the calm in the region (IP3, IP4, IP8, IP17, IP27).

After the last election a policy had been installed so "*no civilians should be allowed to have guns (..) only the trained police officers who are mandated to the security of people*" (IP13, 143). This latest government initiative, an amnesty to voluntarily hand in illegal firearms (IP3, IP17, IP26) was reported to be followed by more strict, forceful measures should it fail to present a sizable number of weapons (IP11, IP23). While many interviewees stated that widespread disarmament had not been successful yet, most of them expected efforts to

succeed eventually, if conducted genuinely (IP2, IP3, IP4, IP6, IP8, IP11, IP13, IP14, IP18). Amongst the reasons given for anticipating success were locals who were expected to assist with disarmament because they were fed up with the insecurity and no longer willing to tolerate it amidst themselves (IP14) and the assertiveness of operating security forces (IP11, IP13, IP18, IP27):

> *"The locals say, I don´t need those guns because if government come for me, it will be more disastrous"* (IP27, 53)

A Marakwet official, however, voiced his concern that lack of political support for disarmament efforts might hinder any real progress in that regard: "*The people who are supposed to support disarmament are the political leaders. But the political leaders are not willing to support disarmament because they think they will lose, they will lose votes"* (IP27, 83). More optimistic, a Baringo official described some of the difficulties involved: "*It is a tedious exercise. It involves a lot of money. It involves a lot of good will again from the leaders. But as a government we want to spearhead this time round. We want to get it right*" (IP23, 84).

One interviewee cautioned on the government using excessive force – "y*ou know, when the government uses brutality, we´ll not get any positive impact*" (IP26, 43). Instead the government should buy guns for a fee as some people "*may have sold their livelihoods to get one for their protection" (*IP26, 45), he as well as another interviewee suggested. Compensating people´s loss would be an important aspect. What is more, to give up their guns people would require their government to deliver security to the region (IP16, IP26) and perform a uniform disarmament initiative across all of the region (IP27), else people would probably still feel hesitant to hand out their guns for fear of being left unprotected:

> *"This guys will say, when we do surrender, what about our friends, will they surrender?"* (IP16, 49)

Besides regional efforts to remove illegal firearms, some interviewees referred to the issue of border security and suggested *"the government should be able to take care of (..) boundaries by putting in very strong security mechanisms"* (IP27, 87) and seal the porous borders Kenya has with neighbouring countries Somalia, Uganda and Ethiopia to prevent firearms from entering the country that way (IP7, IP16).

# 6. DISCUSSION

Based on the present research, table 3 shows evidence for existing elements promoting Positive Peace and factors impeding the development of Positive Peace in regard to '*triggers of conflict*', '*attitudes*', '*structures*' and '*institutions*'. Also, considering the balance between promoting and impeding factors, an assessment of the development of Positive Peace is given.

## 6.1. Triggers of conflict

After the signing of the Chesegon Peace Accord in July 2019, the common conception among those interviewed was one of 'peace' in the Kerio Valley. While some interviewees expressed reservations about the its consistency in the long run, no one failed to describe the state of affairs in the former area of conflict as currently peaceful. Following a deadly period of violence from 2015/2016 onwards that many thought had been the worst one so far, the absence of raids and shootings – thus a negative peace – was welcomed with relief by those interviewed.

However, "*(s)topping or averting conflict is not an end in itself*" (Institute for Economics & Peace 2020, 5), but to set the stage for Positive Peace and "*human potential to flourish*" (ibid., 6). To achieve this, the Institute for Economics & Peace in its 2020  Positive Peace report prompts a comphrehensive view of concerted, systemic actions, matching interviewees´ calls for broad and durable solutions. Along the same lines, Johan Galtung argues that a ceasefire is only part of a larger process of establishing peaceful relations: *"The goal is to build a structure based on reciprocity, equal rights, benefits, and dignity (..) and a culture of peace, confirming and stimulating an equitable economy and an equal polity"* (2012, 1). To that effect, while importantly being credited by most interviewees to have resulted in putting a halt to a cycle of violent attacks, to a large extent, peace actors' contributions were yet to be accompanied by and integrated within a wider environment of measures able to transcend beyond the short-term reduction of physical violence. What is more, past triggers of conflict continued to exist, widely unfettered by recent actions. Essentially, triggers revolve around a nexus of dispute over resource use, disingenuous political leaders, cattle raids for cultural and increasingly also commercial reasons, and factors such as, for example, poverty, inequality and food insecurity that most often disproportionately put Pokot at a disadvantage over their Marakwet counterparts.

Table 3: Assessment of development of Positive Peace (own work)

| | Evidence for Positive Peace (+) | Factors impeding Positive Peace (-) & outstanding fields of action to achieve Positive Peace (⇨) | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Triggers of conflict* | no evidence beyond absence of war ('Negative Peace') | - lack of long-term perspective (see Shields, 2017)<br>- lack of holistic approach (see Galtung, 1969 in Millar, 2021) | |
| *Attitudes* | **+** consolidation of peace actors' efforts<br>**+** inter-community *'cooperation'* (see Galtung, 2012) and joint activities: trade, church groups,..<br>**+** communities' aspirations and engagement for peace/ vigilance for signs of violence | - unresolved traumata related to past experiences of violence<br>⇨ psychosocial 'healing' to "*repair fractured relationships*" (Shields, 2017, 6)<br>- adverse stereotypes and animosity between members of both communities<br>⇨ addressing "*social constructions and cultural stereotypes that identify some communities as inferior to others*" (Wambua, 2017, 32)<br>⇨ enhancing social cohesion (see Institute for Economics & Peace, 2020) | |
| *Structures* | no evidence | - unequal availability & accessibility of natural, economic, material and political resources: structural inequality produces negative peace outcomes (Millar, 2021)<br>⇨ addressing inequalities and counter marginalisation (Wambua, 2017)<br>⇨ support for infrastructural development & diversification of economies in Tiaty | |
| *Institutions* | **+** peace meetings and monitoring<br>**+** community-based pasture committees<br>**+** traditional rites of conflict resolution and prevention<br>**+** 2019's political will and dedication to end violence | - political neglect of regional development<br>⇨ inclusive and just approach required<br>⇨ political support/ subsidies for institutions of conflict management (see Diehl, 2016)<br>- alleged cases of political corruption/incitement and politician's preferential treatment in front of the law<br>⇨ structural reforms, e.g. in distributing political power resource (Wambua, 2017) and comprehensively establishing rule of law<br>⇨ determined disarmament<br>- fragmentary educational opportunities<br>⇨ comprehensive education in all of the Kerio Valley<br>- elements of culture (e.g. high numbers of animals for dowry)<br>⇨ community sensitisation<br>⇨ expansion of ecclesiastical & spiritual guidance in Tiaty | |

■ Evidence for elements of Positive Peace/ existence of factors impeding development of Positive Peace

■ No evidence for elements of Positive Peace/ existence of factors impeding development of Positive Peace

## 6.2. Peace actors

Interviewees widespread opinion was that fighting in the Kerio Valley eventually had ceased as a result of consolidated efforts by main actors for peace *national government*, *(local) politicians*, *communities, elders, NGOs/FBOs* and *Churches* (specifically also *women's church groups*) – members of the network appraisal meeting further referred to *media* (*houses*), *institutions* and *traders* as having been importantly influential to this peace. Most commonly, interviewees considered it their combined efforts to establish peace that had culminated in the event of the signing of the peace agreement, often highlighting the weight of the national government's decision to intervene. Government's moral appeal as well as military actions were widely considered pivotal to the Chesegon Peace Accord. Correspondingly, 'the government made peace' is a view shared by many. To keep that peace and sustain it into the future, communities' role becomes more pronounced. While *politicians'* continued attention and support were still considered a requirement for peace by most interviewees, and it was suggested by some that well-educated *professionals* should return to their places of birth in the Kerio Valley to serve as role models, members of civil society – particularly *women*, *youth* and *elders* in their various community functions – are attributed critical positions to build resilience against future stress.

## 6.3. Attitudes

Peace research scholars widely recognise the quality of social relationships as a central element to achieve Positive Peace. Their arguments underline the importance of a number of attitudinal aspects in that regard. Wambua, for instance, points out the importance of addressing "*the prevailing social constructions and cultural stereotypes that identify some communities as inferior to others*" (2017, 32). Shields emphasises the need for "*putting mechanisms in place that can repair fractured relationships*" (2017, 6) after fighting has come to an end and, along the same lines, Diehl argues that Positive Peace "*refers to the existence (or at least possibility) of close relationships or societal prosperity exceeding that of simple negative peace*" (2016, 4).

Leading up to the signing of the peace agreement, a substantial shift in community members´ attitudes towards conflict had been observed. People in the Kerio Valley increasingly had started to refrain from exalting fighters and raiders, as they realised the full extent of both their communities´ suffering and loss. Acknowledging their losses, too, even former raiders had ceased to back conflict and aspired fighting to end. Instead, people had become widely

appreciative and supportive of keeping the calm and vigilant for example towards illegal gun ownership that might have posed a threat to it. Communities' latest engagement for keeping the calm, as well as resurgent, though hesitant, modes of inter-community interaction and collaboration – for example, trading agricultural produce or women´s church groups – did bode well as a starting point for the renewed and active harmonisation of healthy social relationships. Along the lines of Johan Galtung (2012), direct Positive Peace – *cooperation* – forms part of the larger image of Positive Peace. While further improvements in that respect over time were widely predicted, they were seen to depend on support and funding, by the government or external partners. So far, little had been done in that regard and, what is more, after past experiences of violence, many in the Kerio Valley had been left traumatised or in pain over their extensive losses. Failure to engage with these traumata and still existing adverse attitudes – harmful community stereotypes that encourage feelings of mistrust or antipathy – saw as a result long-standing troubled relationships across communities linger on. While immediate dealings were calm, a lack of efforts to rehabilitate strained social relationships in the long run left local communities vulnerable to renewed flare-ups of violence and an increased likelihood for acts of revenge. Offering psychosocial support to those in need and education to forfeit outdated cultural beliefs were expected to foster 'healing' and increase social cohesion, albeit neither appeared imminent.

## 6.4. Structures

Due to its remote geographic location, political grievances and historically dissimilar development trajectories – starting in approximately the 1980s, schools, churches and missionary work had been established in Elgeyo Marakwet but not in Baringo – parts of Baringo´s Kerio Valley and resident Pokot communities were widely considered to be in a marginalised position, far from public and political attention. At large, access to, for example, basic infrastructure, education, livelihood opportunities or spiritual guidance was markedly uneven across the region, as a rule to the disadvantage of Pokot communities. So far, unequal and insufficient attention had been given to economically and technologically support remote areas in Baringo´s Kerio Valley, causing further distress on Pokot pastoral communities already struggling with ecological hardship and poverty. Indeed, a range of authors find inequity and inequality contradicting Positive Peace outcomes (see e.g. Galtung, 2012; Millar, 2021; Wambua, 2017). According to Millar, "*structural inequality ensures that negative peace is the prevailing order of the day*" (2021, 646). On a similar note, analysing electoral conflict in Kenya and implications for the pursuit of Positive Peace, Wambua argues that addressing economic inequalities and "*countering (..) marginalisation of less developed regions in the country*" (2017, 31) are amongst what is urgently required to realise Positive Peace.

Once more, this reflects as well on the prominent role of national government and local and county politicians for peace. Their influence on peace in the Kerio Valley had been volatile in the past – both helpful and harmful – and continued to be hard to predict. The power position political leaders hold – legally but also being attributed a moral lead – enabled the late first half of 2019- security intervention to bring about an immediate end to fighting. Then again, also longer-term investments to confront as well structural causes of violence for the most part fall under their jurisdiction and purview**.**

By and large, these government investments were lacking, concerning, for instance, infrastructural development or livelihood diversification in Tiaty, Baringo. Apart from some stretches of road that had been built or were in construction already, progress did not yet include more comprehensive steps of action, notwithstanding their perceived relevance for peaceful development. A wide road network, for instance, to connect remote areas to their surrounding regions, could serve the dual purpose of expanding trade and traffic – thus strengthening the local economy which especially youth might profit from instead of turning to cattle rustling as a means of generating income. In addition to its practical value, investment in local infrastructure and public services would signal inclusivity to marginalised communities, an important symbolic countering also the moral risk involved. Government functions that are accessible throughout society can account for feelings of belonging and participation in a system (McConaghy, 2012). If, on the other hand, members of a society perceive themselves marginalised they "*are less likely to conform to the norms of the system*" (ibid.). Within just processes of peace and conflict transformation, multiple levels of society get the chance to engage and people "*participate in shaping systems that meet their needs*" (Shields, 2017, 11).

To remedy a particular shortcoming, the extension of agricultural production in Baringo´s part of the Kerio Valley – for subsistence farming that might benefit food insecure parts of Pokot population and trade, thereby potentially supporting local livelihoods – would require both material (such as irrigation infrastructure, seeds or machinery) and immaterial (trainings for capacity building) assistance by public institutions, together with external stakeholders. Alongside crop and vegetable growing, options to address pasture scarcity – cultivation of grass, fodder conservation or pasture management – potentially decrease Pokot´s dependence on livestock keeping as a sole means of generating income. What is more, promoting (joint) agricultural activities was expected to bring about a strengthening of communities' social fabric, thus adding as well to conflict mitigation.

## 6.5. Institutions

Institutions for conflict management, according to Diehl (2016), are amongst the core elements defining the desirable extreme end of Positive Peace. Indeed, with community-based pasture committees and peace monitoring, interviewees outlined instruments for the non-violent resolution of conflict around grazing land, also suggesting they were reliably subsidised. Past initiatives in that regard, having been initiated upon government request, were dependent on the government´s continued favour and commitment, whose advocacy was deemed uncertain to be sustained.

As opposed to the government´s perceived earlier lack of action in matters of security, the late first half of 2019 saw decisively strong political will to tackle the insecurity in the Kerio Valley. Interviewees widely agreed on the crucial importance the high-level determination had on ending the violence. Resulting from it, a forceful security initiative had targeted criminals, associated with raids, and bad businesses but also local politicians who were known to incite violence for their personal gain. In addition, around the same time, a series of peace meetings, talks and seminars had been held – instigated by the Deputy President´s office – alongside rites of traditional conflict resolution, led by councils of elders. The events had engaged in particular (future) youth warriors and signalled to local communities authorities' dedication.

However, a neglect of efforts for local development in Tiaty, the adverse impact of politicians' preferential treatment in front of the law, alleged cases of corruption and incitement and a reportedly widespread orientation of local politicians towards short-term electoral gains added to existing grievances, weakening trust in public institutions at the same time. According to a study conducted by the World Bank, "*improved governance strengthens development and improves living standards, not the other way around*" (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi, 2009 in McConaghy, 2012, 5). To that effect, to advance Positive Peace in Kenya, Wambua suggests "*structural reforms in the country, especially in the distribution of political power resource (..) to counter the zero-sum electoral processes in the country that on the one hand elevate some parties as winners while on the other hand relegating other parties, and their related coalitions, to being perennial losers*" (2017, 31). Although interviewees only to some extent directly verbally challenged political leaders to engage lawfully and responsibly to further a peaceful agenda, they agreed on their decisive position in promoting measures to support local people's lives and livelihoods, a variety of which were reported a prerequisite for sustainable peace. This partly contradicts the proclaimed weight civil actors' contributions carry, sustaining peace into the future (see 6.2).

Prominent amongst these prerequisites, confronting harmful elements of local culture – for example, the high number of animals young Pokot men were required to pay for dowry – and

education were considered powerful institutional levers for long-term peace in the region. Education for all children in the Kerio Valley, notwithstanding being envisioned by the Constitution of Kenya, appeared fragmentary. It remained unclear whether a lack of funding to extend more school infrastructure in Tiaty or sensitise Pokot parents to the value of school education or even vested interests served to keep the disparate status quo alive.

# 7. CONCLUSION

Concept and categories of Positive Peace, as proposed in the present work by Johan Galtung and the Institute for Economics & Peace, and inquiry about conflict triggers and peace actors offered a useful frame for assessing the characteristics of peace in the Kerio Valley. Keeping in mind the kind of attitudes, institutions and structures an orientation towards Positive Peace implies – "*High levels of Positive Peace occur where attitudes make violence less tolerated, institutions are resilient and more responsive to society's needs, and structures create an environment for the nonviolent resolution of grievances*" (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2021, 3) – findings show an ambiguous picture and mixed promise of developing Positive Peace.

Both attitudes and institutions domains had seen some encouraging developments already and were potentially perceived likely to do so further. Evidence did not support the development of Positive Peace in relation to elements of structures, notwithstanding their perceived importance for peace amongst participants of NAM and interviewees. Throughout, much was seen to depend on the uncertain continuity of adequate political support, regarding, for example, improvements to local infrastructure or measures to counterbalance inequalities between conflicting communities Marakwet and Pokot.

Considering the decisive yet inconsistent role politicians' held in the past, the realisation of that support and its consequences remain to be seen, as does the aftermath of the August 9, 2022 general election. Arguably for the first time since multi-party politics were re-introduced in Kenya in 1992, this election saw presidential candidates' campaigns mobilise predominantly on economic and social policy. Notably, the narrow winner, William Ruto – outgoing vice president to president Uhuru Kenyatta in the 2017-2022 legislative period – managed to present himself as an 'anti-establishment' candidate, appealing to voters across traditional ethnical divides. Many analysts agree that neither of the most promising candidates invoked overly on elements of ethnic division, unlike in past election campaigns that were associated with widespread violence. Reminiscent of the process preceding the Kolowa peace agreement of 2002, which resulted in more than a decade of peaceful interrelations in the Kerio Valley, communities' aspiration for peace at the time of data collection, and the recent political change at national level may prove conducive to longer-term peace in the region.

While individual politicians' transgressions have handicapped peaceful development on several occasions in the past, and may continue to do so further, support for local people's livelihoods – equitably directed at Marakwet and Pokot communities yet mindful of culturally diverse lifestyle choices and dissimilar exposure to pressures regarding their natural

environment – can be expected to advance societal resilience to conflict. Facilitation of community-led institutions – focusing on sustainable rangeland, peace monitoring or inter-community dialogue – and effective disarmament, as envisioned by several interviewees, promise to attenuate tensions further. More research is needed to better understand, and subsequently be able to address, barriers to the realisation of Positive Peace, most distinctly, at present, with regard to structures.

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# ANNEX

## Semi-structured interview

Thank you for agreeing to talk to me. My name is Nora Hein, I am a student of natural resources management from Vienna, Austria and currently writing my master thesis. My supervisor is Michael Hauser from ICRISAT, based in Nairobi. ICRISAT works on agricultural issues. They have been working in the Kerio Valley before on AVCD Projects, funded through US Aid. Have you heard about AVCD?

Together with Egerton University they are working to improve production and productivity of sorghum, millet, pidgeon peas, .. crops that do well under these environmental conditions.

I am here to learn about the current peace between Marakwet and Pokot communities, particularly the role collaboration in agriculture can play towards maintaining peaceful relationships. My research findings will result in a master thesis, which I will certainly make available to you, once it is finished. Are you interested in that? With your permission, I want to audio record this conversation. Furthermore, this is a confidentiality agreement, stating that the information you share will be reported anonymously and your confidentiality as a participant remains secure. If you agree to these conditions, please tick this box and sign here.

We have heard much about the peace agreement that was signed in July. (A*mongst participants of a stakeholder appraisal meeting, which took place in Chesongoch missionary on September 25*[th]) you were stated as a stakeholder in Kerio Valley´s peace process.

To start with, please describe, from your point of view, your contribution of working towards peace.

1. \_ **(concern on a personal level; analysis of the current state)**

   a. As recently as July 31st, the Peace Agreement of Chesegon has been signed. How does it affect you? (Personally/ in your profession)
   b. As …... (private/public/NGO/ FBO/..), how do you perceive the current situation of peace?
   c. How are things different now, compared to before the peace agreement?
   d. Please describe what interactions you see taking place since the signing of the peace agreement?

2. \_ **(how did it happen to be this way)**

   a. The Peace Agreement has been signed July 31st. Why do you think it was possible to sign a declaration of peace now and not, thinking back, at another (earlier) point in time?
   b. Which events or developments led up to the signing of this peace agreement?
   c. Who has mainly been driving peace? Which other actors were influential?
   d. What motives do you think influenced their actions?

3. \_ **(contextual factors)**

   a. In your opinion, what was the main cause of conflict between Pokot and Marakwet communities?
   b. Amongst the factors you have mentioned, which one, do you think, has the strongest influence on peace dynamics? Why is that?
   c. In your opinion, what is the influence of politics/culture/the environment/socio-economic factors/.. on peace in the Kerio Valley? ..

**4.   _ (how can peace be sustainable in the Kerio Valley?)**

a. On a scale from 1 – 5, how strong do you perceive this peace to be? (5, it is solid/ very strong. 1, very volatile/ something could shake it up easily)

b. And why that number? Why not ..?

c. What needs to happen in order to change to .. (improve)?

d. Which actors are mainly responsible for keeping the peace? Who is most influential in that regard?

d. Are all actors involved working towards peace as a common goal now?

e. Do you see anyone benefiting from conflict?

f. Do you think all actors have the right mindset now to sustain what has been achieved?

g. Do you see obstacles to this peace? Which ones?

h. What is needed for peace to be sustainable/ to strengthen the current peace?

i. Who would be the one or the ones doing this?

j. Do you see that happening already or perceive it likely to happen?

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