

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

TOPIC

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL EFFECTS OF MARAKWET-
POKOT CONFLICT IN TOT DIVISION.

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OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN RURAL SOCIOLOGY
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

OCTOBER 2010



Declaration

This is my original work and has not been presented in any other institution or forum for any other award or favour prior to this declaration

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University

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(Prof. Preston Chitcro)

Declaration

This is my original work and has not been presented in any other institution or forum for any other award or favour prior to this declaration



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Acknowledgement

I am grateful to my supervisor IVof. Preston < "literc for whose effort saw me this project.

Dedication

I dedicate this project to my family (wife and children) for their moral support while I was working on this project.

litis study sought to investigate the effect of Marakwet-Pokot conflict on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet in Lot Division (along the Kerio Valley). The Marakwet-Pokot conflict has visited untold sufferings to the people of Kerio Valley for a long time, including collapsing traditional socio-political institutions of peace-making like *knkwo* and administration of oath-taking ceremonies (*miimn* or *ntliss*).

The objectives of the study included determining the nature of Marakwet-Pokot Conflict in Lot Division, identifying existing socio-political structures of the Marakwet living in Lot Division, exploring the effect of out-migration on socio-political organization of Marakwet living in Lot Division, and finding out the emerging coping mechanisms adopted by the Marakwet as a way of preserving their socio-political organization in the face of the violent conflicts in the region.

The study targeted 100 respondents. There were 80 randomly selected general informants and 20 purposively selected key informants comprising of provincial administration officials, heads of police divisions, leaders of CUOs, NGOs and church-based organizations were targeted as key informants. Questionnaires/ interview schedules, key informant guides and FGD questions were used to collect the data. The quantitative data was then analyzed using SPSS and described using descriptive statistics, whereas the qualitative data was summarized and interrelationships among variables were noted.

The study found out that Marakwet-Pokot conflict has disrupted Marakwet socio-political organization in many respects. There is more involvement of external forces and women in resolving the conflicts than before. The council of elders have been touted as having good experience on how to resolve conflicts, enjoying supremacy and the capacity to enforce forceful decisions, or having the necessary skill and qualifications because they were the custodians of curses. However, their declining capacity in resolving Marakwet-Pokot conflict, thereby paving way for external forces, is a reflection of the breakdown of Marakwet socio-political organization as a result of the rattle-rustling conflicts.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASAL.....Arable and Semi Arid Lands

CoK.....Government of Kenya

KIIRC.....Kenya Human Rights Commission

KVDA.....Kerio Valley Development Authority

NCCK.....National Council of Churches of Kenya

NGO.....Non Governmental Organization

SARDIP.....Semi Arid and Rural Development

Programme

SNV.....Netherlands Development Organisation

Chapter J:

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Marakwet Pokot violent conflicts that are synonymous with cattle rustling activities have been at the centre stage of Marakwet and Pokot history in the 20th century and in the years leading up to early 21st century. These have had many consequences, especially on the socio-political organization of the two communities. These in turn led to stagnation and standstill of development in all the areas occupied by the two communities, in addition to marginalization by previous Kenyan governments.

The socio-political organization of the Marakwet spans a long period of time catching up with indigenous technological innovation as exemplified by Marakwet water furrows that date as far back as more than 400 years ago (Soper, 1983). The society has had strict traditional political organization that was democratically governed by council of elders (*kokwo*), who had absolute power on decision making. This rule was more or less governed by stable traditional beliefs and practices that are still more or less observed today. Interestingly, the Marakwet socio-political re-organization has been shaped by many factors including the entry of colonial rule and pressures of modernity.

The first white man to enter lower Marakwet country was Hyde Baker in 1900. He established a post at Kolloa Hast Raringo but his penetration attempt was rejected by the locals as exemplified by the massacre of 12 Nubians and Sergeant Major sent by Baker in June 1900 at Indo (part of the study area). The colonial government executed various punitive actions of various magnitude to pacify the locals but not much came out of them, therefore, this killing and arrogant nature of the locals to the colonial rule was further exemplified by robbing of Ali bin Saleh and his caravan in 1904 and the raiding of the Pokots in 1903 as reported by W. J. M. Collyer of Baringo (GoK, 1924). Other incidents in the early colonial rule that demonstrate the nature of Marakwet socio-political organization was the refusal by the Marakwet to pay hut tax in 1910 to A. Bruce, DC Baringo, and the murder of a Cheplulel Pokot in 1911 with impunity.

With the entry of the colonials brought with it other activities that have since engaged the Marakwet. It started in the African Inland Mission that was later established at Kapsowon and has extended downwards to other areas of the district. The missionaries brought with it education that engaged some Marakwet youth and even adults in the colonial period. By 1959, there were very many families who had either enrolled for school or for church missions leading to their happy marriages (Kihoro, 2017).

According to the Kenya Land Commission Report (1971), the Marakwet socio-political life and history has not been clear but what shaped the lives of the Marakwet people then is the issue of their land being taken from them by the colonials. The issue of boundaries with the Pokot has been contentious in live evidence given (CoK, 1911:1961). The Marakwet wanted certain portion of the Marakwet reserve given to the Suk (Pokot) by the people of Cherangani and Sambirir locations to be returned back. In the case of Marakwet-Pokot conflict, the central pillars of engagement have been the scarce resources in the region and the ability to show supremacy by acquisition of the same. The boundaries issue has been the subject of conflict, especially in regard to grazing lands and watering points. The Marakwet used to be the supreme power before the acquisition of modern guns by the Pokot after the entry of the colonials that also affected the socio-political organization of the Marakwet. The colonials imposed River Kerio as the boundary (GoK, 1912).

After independence events changed; the Marakwet began going to school half willingly, half by force. They were administered together with the Kisiyo and the district was called Kisiyo Marakwet. The district headquarters was in Kericho. The partition of the Marakwet together with the Kisiyo has also shaped Marakwet way of life because over time the Kisiyo felt that they were superior to the Marakwet. This notion was largely perceived by the professionals and exacerbated by politicians and was exhibited in resource allocation and opportunities. Good schools, roads, hospitals were channelled to Kisiyo that this led to Marakwet petitioning to have a district of their own hence the creation of Marakwet District in 1994. The Kisiyo are purely agriculturalists while the Marakwet are agro-pastoralists. The Kisiyo are described as a hardworking people according to colonial

reports (CioK, 1959), but there was still low scale cattle rustling Inriwech them in the period leading up to the independence of Kenya in 1963

Marakwet used bows and arrows, whereas the Pokot used spears that were less effective in killing an enemy from afar. This has since changed with the Pokot acquiring guns in the name of home guards in 1970s and used the weapons to raid Marakwet for the first time in 1970. The Pokot dominated power while acquiring better weapons until 1992 that they staged a big surprise raid on the Marakwet (Kamenjin, et al, 2003). The Marakwet after periods of displacements forming internally displaced persons tried to acquire guns for self-defence until probably after 1997 that they had accumulated many of them that the power almost became balanced with the Marakwet raiding Pokot and the Pokot doing the same to the Marakwet leading to massacre of Kakipsing'ar in 1998 in West Pokot District and of Murkulwa in 2001 in Marakwet District. These massacres marked a turning point in the displacement of both communities shaping the lives of professional Marakwet who decided to move out of the district. They have since settled in ADC farm in Trans Nzoia District *alias* Kamendi and around Kiplombec in Eldoret Town. Others moved to Kapcherop and Kapsowar within the district buying many plots of land and aiding in the growth of the towns. This too has shaped the socio-political organization of the community.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Marakwet-I'okot conflict has led to adverse sufferings to the people of Kerio Valley for a long time. Many lives have been lost through violent conflicts, properties of inestimable value destroyed, very many livestock (i.e. cattle, goats, sheep, donkeys) were stolen, many people were internally displaced, farms were left fallow, there were abrupt closure of schools and other effects that threatened harmonious co-existence as exemplified by the words of lion John Marinuoi, Member of Parliament Marakwet East at the time: "Where will my people go? Their houses and stores have been burnt. What will they eat?" (*UnifyMillion*, 2001).

The change of government in Kenya in 2002, from the KANU Government to NARC Government, the conflict gradually decreased, a situation that professionals from the region linked to the political angle of the conflict. Although this may be short lived, there is a likely future after shock to the region that should not be ignored. From the beginning, the conflict was purely cultural raiding neighbours only for cattle without taking innocent lives, guided by rules and regulations palatable to both sides and exercised using traditional weapons, but today the acquisition of sophisticated weapons and the commercial tendencies of the conflict cast suspicion into the future of the violent conflicts. This has also collapsed socio-political traditional institutions of peace-making like *kukwu* and administration of oath taking ceremonies (*mumti* or *mils*).

The Marakwet-I'okot conflict has had many effects on both communities, one in fact being the socio-political disorganization of the Marakwet community living in Lot Division. There has been mass movement of the professional and economically able Marakwet out of the region as a result of the conflict, leading to collapse of the socio-political institutions due to emergence of new lifestyles, whereby those who moved and settled in urban areas only come occasionally to visit or to vote. Primary and Secondary schools experienced abrupt closures during the period while some schools had to be moved from their location along the valley and shifted to the rocky escarpment. Families moved out of their homes completely and have not returned back. The council of elders (the traditional) system of authority collapsed and the community turned to vigilance

(murar) in the evenings and at dawn and tribal communal norms, values, beliefs, etc. are no longer observed (NCCK. et al.. 2002).

Most of the researches into Marakwet-Pokot conflict have not delved into the impact of the conflict on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet and the attendant implications. Kamenju, *et al.* (2003) concentrated on the infiltration of small arms and descriptive understanding of the conflict relating the immediate causes and triggers to the poverty situation of the people. NCCK. *et al.* (2002) emphasized on the effects of the conflict on peace and reconciliation mechanisms, touching on the modern ways of sustaining it. "While the conflicts which have hit other regions of Kenya since the advent of multi-partyism and attendant political thuggery seem to have ebbed or at best cooled down, the holocaust in the Kerio Valley has defied both feeble and elaborate peace initiatives of the Government and NGOs respectively. The Kerio Valley conflict can best be likened to a dormant volcano mountain that suddenly turns active and intermittently spews out lava without warning". In addition, UNV (2001) has spent time analyzing the agricultural potential of the Kerio Valley in relation to the prevailing poverty situation and general insecurity. It is in the same way that the colonial administration observed according to GoK report (1933).

This study therefore sought to investigate the impact of the conflict on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet in Lot Division.

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

- i. What is the nature of Marakwet-Pokot conflict with respect to the socio-political organization of the Marakwet?
- ii. What are the existing socio-political relationships among the Marakwet?
- iii. What is the effect of out migration in Lot Division on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet?
- iv. What are the adaptive mechanisms adopted by the Marakwet in the face of the Marakwet-Pokot violent conflicts that have helped to preserve their socio-political organization?

1.4 Study Objectives

1.4.1 Overall Objective

The overall objective of the study was to find out the impact of Marnkwet—Pokot conflict on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The following were the specific objectives:

- i. To determine the nature of Marnkwet—Pokot Conflict in Tot Division with regard to the socio-political organization of the Marakwet.
- ii. To identify the existing socio-political structures of the Marakwet living in Tot Division.
- iii. To explore the effect of out-migration as a result of the violent conflicts on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet living in Tot Division.
- iv. To find out the emerging coping mechanisms adopted by the Marakwet as a way of preserving their socio-political organization in the face of the violent conflicts in the region.

1.5 Justification of the Study

The study findings will contribute to knowledge on the socio-political organization of communities facing related conflicts. In addition, the findings will be useful towards enhancing Government policy on disarmament and promotion of harmonious coexistence among the pastoralist communities in Kenya, especially by taking into consideration the traditional perspectives of the conflicts.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

The study focused on the impact of the Marnkwet—Pokot conflict and its attendant effects like out-migration (internal displacements) on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet people living in Tot Division. The breakdown of the social institutions and the peoples' perception towards the present political leadership and government, as contrasted with the traditional political administration, were studied.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the traditional and colonial socio-political organization of the Marakwet, marginalization of the Marakwet and poverty situation, conflicts, violence and cattle rustling between Marakwet and Pokot, and out migration of the Marakwet from Kerio Valley. In addition, there is a review of theoretical framework and an explanation of the conceptual framework.

2.2 Socio-political Organization of the Marakwet

The Marakwet is one among the Kalenjin sub-tribes that include Pokot, Lugen, Sabaot, Kipsigis, Nandi, Ogiek, I'crik ami Keiyo. Their language is Kalenjin and share broadly the same cultural traditions which relate to initiation and division of the community into age-sets (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 1985). The community was purely hunters and gatherers community before colonial period, although there were some who practiced agriculture as exemplified by the presence of water furrows. The Marakwet regarded the Pokot, who are their immediate neighbours in West and East Pokot regions, from time immemorial as their sworn enemies.

The colonialists brought boundary issues that have affected the political stability of the two communities. The ownership of large boundary secured the place of the Marakwet as strong, although the British colonials sympathized with them as the poor tribe according to the Political Record Book (C.O.K. 1931)

The Community's belief system centered around *Chchet to Chemaitawlas* (Sun), *oi* (living spirits), and *li/at* (the thunder) (Kipkorir, 2008). But there is also the influence of *ivony* (wild animals), human specialist and domestic animals in the belief system. The conduct of mortals before *Asti* is guided by a range of superstitions and taboos, but there have been changing perspectives in attitude as depicted by the conflict between the traditional and Christian ways of reasoning: "The conflict between Christianity and traditionalism is a function of the development (socio-political changes) of the district

[lilgeyo Morakwet]" (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 1985). At the end of it all majority of the population could subscribe to Christian ways but differed on their understanding and practice of circumcision. The Marakwet did not abandon circumcision, although they are now redefining their stand with regard to female circumcision, given the global fight against it and the changing times.

In regard to foods and consumption patterns, and recreation, their focus into Westernized life whereby the Marakwet people have abandoned the traditional methods of recreation like hunting, herding, ihehriet (passing pebbles through holes on the ground), etc to adopt modern pastimes like watching television or reading (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 1985).

The political system of administration of the Marakwet has changed from authority of the council of elders (*Kokwo/ Osis*) to the rule of the colonial chiefs, DOs or DCs. The *Kokwo* has been rendered obsolete given the out-migration effect and the persistent Marakwet-Pokot conflict. The school and the church as social institutions have shaped people's administration of power.

2J Marginalization and Deprivation of the Marakwet

According to CIMIRIDF (2006) Marakwet is classified among the Northern-Frontier Districts, these are districts that have been marginalized since colonial period probably because of the unproductivity of their lands or persistence of uneconomical lifestyles like nomadic pastoralism. These areas that these people live are arid and semi-arid and cannot sustain livelihood. Some of the ways with which to identify marginalized groups in Kenya include marginalization in terms of inadequate budgetary allocation by the Central Government, lack of access to services (education, health, and infrastructure) or lack of proper representation in the country's political system. This has led to frustrations with the changing lifestyles and technological innovations making them strain very much in their attempt to live up to the changing trends. These people in turn have been rendered vulnerable to political exigencies leading to militarization of their lands and recurrent struggle over the limited resources (CIMIRIDF, 2006). This list describes the Marakwet-Pokot violent conflicts.

The Kerio Valley region has been observed by many scholars including the early colonials like Mollis in 1912 as having agro husbandry potential for sustainability. There are alluvial deposits from the many rivers running down the escarpment and to some extent numerous animal deposits from both domestic and wild animals plus the dead vegetation adding to the long period the land was left after cattle rustling. The report observes that the socio economic activities have been disrupted by the cattle rustling menace i.e. closures of markets, migration from the valley (more than half of the population) leaving the fertile valley unutilized and the water resources therein lost (NCC'K and SNV, 2000). It is observed that the area has a lot of untapped resources that can be exploited to benefit the people and uplift their living standards, but the successive cattle rustling problems along the Kerio Valley has made this an impossible venture.

In one of its quarterly human rights reports (2001) the IRC says, 'Banditry continues to be one of the most pronounced causes of insecurity. The inability of the government to take specific measures against the menace is a loud statement on the government's laxity in fulfilling its obligation of providing security to its citizens in marginalized areas'. The lack of diversified economic agenda by the government has made it impossible for people from those areas to get to other sources of income which can cushion them from vagaries of weather.... Violent conflicts will continue to escalate. . . . Banditry incidents have led to ethnic animosity as individual and clans seek revenge against their adversaries.'

In Lokot and Marakwet areas, have been influenced by the age-old cultural tradition of cattle rustling. Once again, failure to develop the region has left the inhabitants with no choices, hence the prominence of cattle rustling. This has also been further complicated by local ethnic rivalries and the presence of belligerent politicians. Therefore, it is evident that lack of political goodwill has contributed immensely to the marginalization and has shaped the Marakwet socio-political perception and organization.

2.4 Marakwet-Pokot Conflict and Poverty Situation

Considered in totality, Marakwet District is poor but the worst hit areas are Lokot and Lunyo divisions along the Kerio Valley whose people make 28.01% of the poor

Marakwet. They live in abject poverty and can be said to be suffering from food poverty, hardcore poverty and overall poverty yet they occupy land that has the potential to bait them out of their situation (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2002).

If this is contrasted with the past poverty figures and percentages, it is clear that cattle rustling has contributed largely to the situation rendering the fertile Kerio Valley untenable. Comparison with Martikwet of 1970's and 80's. (Kipkonr, 1971) confirms that every household had at least a domestic animal for survival unlike Unlay where some people do not own even a sheep or a goat. Cattle rustling forced people to sell their animals either to get money for relocation to safer areas than losing them to cattle rustlers while those who owned many herds acquired modern sophisticated weapons to guard their stock leading to proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the area. This is thought to be a conceited approach to solving conflict. The unfolding situation has resulted in unspeakable poverty from general banditry and ethnic animosity as Kamcnju, et al. (2003) indicate that "those holding guns have a false sense of security... there is no significant psychological feeling of security and the relative ability to ward off attacks".

2.5 Impact of Out migration on Marakwet Socio-political Organization

Apart from talking about the Marakwet-Pokot conflict, most studies into the conflict have not captured internal displacements. More than half of the original population of the Marakwet in the Kerio Valley has moved out of the area, going out during conflict time and coming in when there is relative peace as a coping mechanism hence affecting the socio-political organization of the community. Some of them have even gone for good, but there is little literature beyond fleeing. Kamcnju, et al (2003) indicate that there is high agricultural potential in Kerio Valley for growth of bananas, beans, maize, mangoes, cabbages, citrus fruits and paw paws. But despite these facts, people have fled from the valley in the face of insecurity.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2001) a theory is a set of concepts or constructs and the interrelationships that are assumed to exist among these concepts. Therefore, a theory provides the basis for establishing the hypothesis to be tested in a study. In simple terms

Kerlipger (1986) defines a theory as a set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena.

The study was guided by two major theories: (1) conflict theory by Randall Marx Collins, and (2) structural functionalist theory by Talcott Parsons.

(i) Conflict Theory

Randall Marx Collins (1975) contribution to conflict theory shows that stratification and organization are grounded in everyday life. His theory claims that conflict has a focus on the realistic ground of central processes in social life. Collins believed that a conflict theory of stratification must examine the material arrangements that affect interaction and, although the actors are likely to be affected by such material factors as 'the physical places, the modes of communication, the supply of weapons, devices for staging one's public impression, tools, goods' (Ritjver, Jfiflo), not all actors are affected in the same way. A major variable is the resources that the different actors possess.

The theory also looks at the cultural phenomena such as beliefs and ideals from the point of view of interests, resources and power. From this perspective, the effect of Mau Mau-Pokot conflict demonstrated the inequality of material possession with the 'Haves' moving out to safer places and the 'Have-nots' remaining in the conflict-ridden Kerio Valley. The 'Haves' have continued their dominance through voting and imposing ideas on the 'Have-nots' living in Kerio Valley, hence changed socio-political situation and stratification of the Marakwet. His theory is paramount in explaining the dialectic emphasis of cause and effect relationships among elements of the social world such as the Pokot Marakwet conflict and the out-migration of the Marakwet from the Kerio Valley to upland areas and major towns so that they can own land (resources) and fight over political domination (political control).

(ii) Structural Functionalism Theory

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The structural functional model comes from a variety of authors but it is associated with Talcott Parsons. Robert Merton is another well known sociologist who provided some important structural functional theoretical statements. The development of structural functionalism is traced to Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Durkheim. The functional approach was developed from the 1800s through the 1900s in the United States. Parsons studied Weber and Durkheim, and translated some of these into English. Parsons thus became a major interpreter of these writers in America, and his interpretation may be considered to have developed the influence of these writers in a particular way.

Parsons and the functionalist approach to sociology occupy an intermediate position between classical and contemporary sociology because it puts particular emphasis on function, interdependence, consensus, equilibrium, and evolutionary change of existing institutions in the society. The focus is macro-sociological, with institutions and structures existing in the society as a whole. The different parts of each society contribute positively to the operation or functioning of the system as a whole. Functionalism attempts to explain the relationship of different parts of the system to each other, and to the whole. These parts usually work together in an orderly manner, without great conflict. The different parts are usually in equilibrium, or moving toward equilibrium, with consensus rather than conflict governing the inter-relationships of the various parts. While equilibrium, consensus, and static rather than dynamic analysis is most common, there is some discussion of change.

Change tends to be orderly and evolutionary rather than revolutionary or with dramatic structural breaks. Conflicts or external factors stimulate adjustment of the parts to move toward a new equilibrium. As change occurs, the various parts of societies become more differentiated, with these parts adapting to new needs and problems. Societies become more complex, with new institutions and subsystems developing that perform the new functions required to make the society operate smoothly.

Functionalists argue that societies are generally in a normal state of affairs, with the different parts functioning smoothly to contribute to the operation of the society. There may be disturbances from this normal state of affairs - from outside the society, because the different parts are not operating properly, or because of features such as population or technical change - but these disturbances trigger adjustments in the various parts of society that return the society to a state of equilibrium. When there is a disturbance in the social world, the various roles and organizations have means to return the society to a more normal state of affairs.

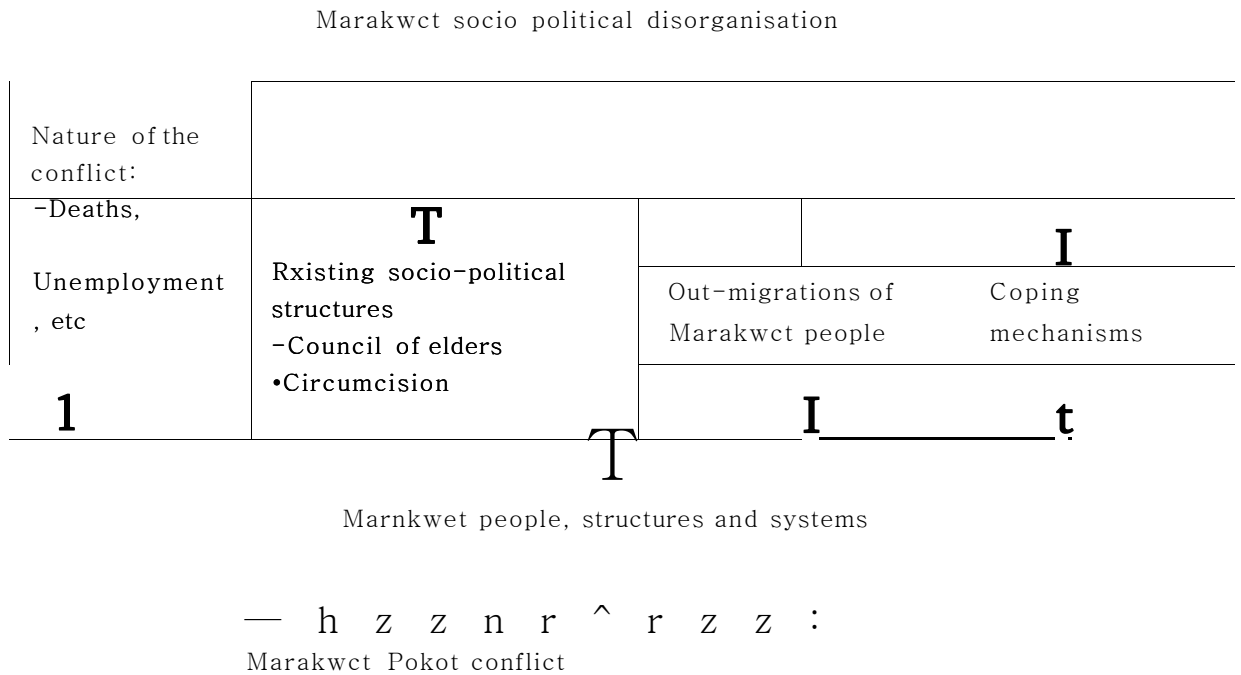
In the case of Marakwet-Pokot conflict, strive towards a new equilibrium as a result of the changes imposed on the community's socio-political organization by the vagaries of war, has led to out-migration or even school dropout. And as the community tries to reach a new equilibrium, there is the dawning truth of changing modern values and lifestyles that have come to shape the new reality. Therefore, this theory brings into sharp focus the inevitable changes to the socio-political organization of the Marakwet area, a result of the violent cattle rustling consequences.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Explanation of the Conceptual Framework

According to the diagram below, Marnkwet-Pokot conflict has impacted on the socio-political structures of the Marakwet by the nature of the conflict, impact on the existing socio-political structures, forcing outmigration of the people from Kerio Valley to far away places, and also shattering their socio-political coping mechanisms. Those who outmigrate come back later and they do not respect the existing structures. This leads to the Marakwet socio-political disorganization.

Fig 2.1: Conceptual Framework



Key: n»c arrows point towards the result of the specific variables either singly or in combination

Figure 2.2: Operationalization of variables

Definition of variable	Variable	Indicators
Independent variables	Nature of the conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> breakdown of law and order Reported deaths due to raiding Injuries Idleness of the population, especially youth Malnutrition of children
	(Inter-) migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in population Outflow of capital (human and financial)
	existing socio-political structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council of elders Circumcision both as a ritual and structure
	Coping mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voting patterns among the out-migrated elite Continuous traditional ceremonies e.g. weddings
Dependent variable	Maiakwel socio-political disorganization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disrespect of elders foliage of Kokwo/ council of elders Killing of women and children Making referrals of cases to the court of law Injustice prevailing Decline in traditional ceremonies i.e. joint initiation ceremonies, weddings done in urban towns rather than villages

Chapter 3:

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is the scientific, systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomena (Kerlinger, 1961), whereas research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims at combining relevance to the research purposes with economy in procedure (Singleton, et al, 1988). This study combined a case study and survey research designs in order to meet its objectives and goals.

3.2 Site Selection and Description

Former Tot Division of Marakwet District, which has been subdivided into Tunyo and other divisions was purposively selected as the study site because the people of this division have been the major victims of the Marakwet Pokot conflict. In addition, the division epitomizes the indigenous nature of Marakwet culture, as evidenced by their cultural homogeneity and semi-primitive nature.

Marakwet District is located in Rift Valley Province and covers 1,500 square kilometres with a population of 150,000 people. It borders West Pokot District to the North, Trans Nzoia to the West, Jasin Ciishu to the Southwest, Kericho to the South and Baringo to the East. It lies between longitudes 35° 1' and 35° 4' East and latitudes 0° 51' and 1° 14' North. It is divided into three topographic zones: the highland plateau, the Marakwet escarpment and the Kericho Valley. The highland plateau rises gradually from an altitude of 2,800m above the sea level on the Chebimit Ridge to 3,000m above sea level on the Chirangany hills to the north (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2007)

The district is divided into seven administrative divisions, twenty nine locations and eight sub locations. Politically, it has two parliamentary constituencies namely Marakwet East and Marakwet West, which have since been converted into separate districts with the late presidential decree in 2007. Each constituent ward covers three administrative divisions, and

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shares one division. It is further divided into twenty nine civic wards with one local authority, the Marakwet County Council (MCC).

Tot Division covers a greater part of the Kerio Valley, an area characterized by the frequent cattle rustling activities, and the people are semi-pastoralist because they practice mixed farming, although the type of farming is shifting cultivation because no land demarcation has been done. Traditional methods of land tenure are still used (communal land ownership). Tot residents live in the escarpment and carry out their activities along the valley, and so they leave the escarpment in the morning for Canning, trading, schooling and livestock activities in the valley. All their livelihoods are derived from the valley, and thus the interference in the valley disrupts their lifestyle completely.

3.3 Units of Analysis and Observation

According to Baker (1994), units of analysis are the social entities whose social characteristics are the focus of the proposed study, whereas units of observation are the subjects, objects, items or entities from which we measure the characteristics or obtain the data required in the research study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003)

Therefore, the unit of analysis of this study is the impact of the Marakwet-Pokot Conflict on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet, whereas the units of observation are the residents (youth, elders and women) of Marakwet living in Lot Division; provincial administration officers; heads of police divisions; leaders of COOs, NCiOs, and church based organizations.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Method

This study used random sampling technique. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2001) sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the larger group from which they were selected. Random sampling is a method of drawing a portion of sample of a population so that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected (Kerlinger, 1986).

the study used a random size of 100 representatives, 80 general informants and 20 key informants. The general informants comprised of youth, women, and community elders; whereas provincial administration officials, heads of police divisions, leaders of CBOs, NGOs and church based organizations were targeted as the key informants.

According to the 2009 household and demographic census, there are at least 800 households in Lot Division. A random sample of 80 general informants was computed and found highly representative.

3.5 Sources, Tools and Methods of Data Collection

The study was both primary (obtained from the field) and secondary (from existing sources), both qualitative and quantitative (numeric). The primary data of the study was obtained through Questionnaires' interview schedule, Key information guide, and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) questions administered to the respondents during the data collection exercise.

3.6 Data Analysis and Reporting

Data analysis is more or less the ways with which to handle the raw data in order to facilitate understanding and meet the objectives of the study. The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS and described using descriptive statistics like the mean, mode or median, the measures of variability and relationships were established using inferential statistics, whereas the qualitative data was summarized and interrelationships among variables were noted.

Chapter 4:

Findings and Analyses

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives the results of the study. Here is a projection of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, a reflection on the nature of Marakwet Pokot conflict, Marakwet socio-political structures, the impact of out-migration on Marakwet socio-political organization, and the emerging coping mechanisms in relation to the impact of the conflict on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet; and a further discussion of the findings.

4.2 Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This study targeted youth, men, women, elders, provincial administrators (particularly the chiefs and assistant chiefs) and other key persons in the Study area and focused group discussions. There were a total of 54 responses out of 80 from the general category of respondents and 16 responses out of 20 from the key informants' category, making 67% and 80% respectively, as illustrated by the pie charts below.



Figure 4.1: Distribution of respondents in the study area

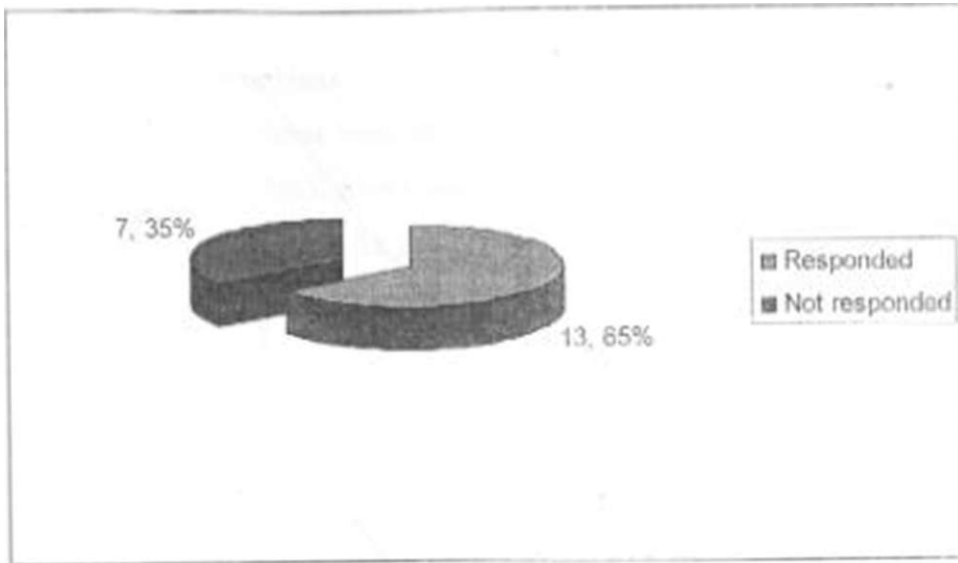


Figure 4.2: Percentage of response from key informant

4.2.1 Six of Respondents

There were 18 females and 12 males, making up 96% and 66.67% of the respondents respectively in the general category.

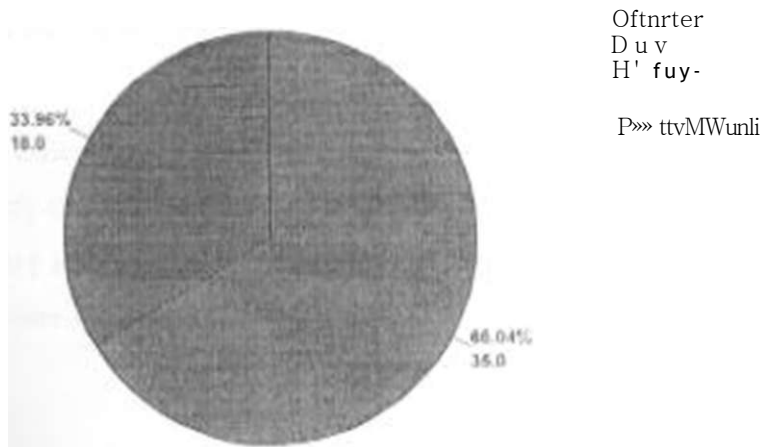


Figure 4J: Composition of respondents

4.2.2 Age of Respondent*

Most of the respondents were in the age brackets of 36-40 years (24%) followed by below 20 years (16.6%). 61-65 years (12.96%), 51-55 years (11%). There were no responses from the ages 31-35 years (0%).

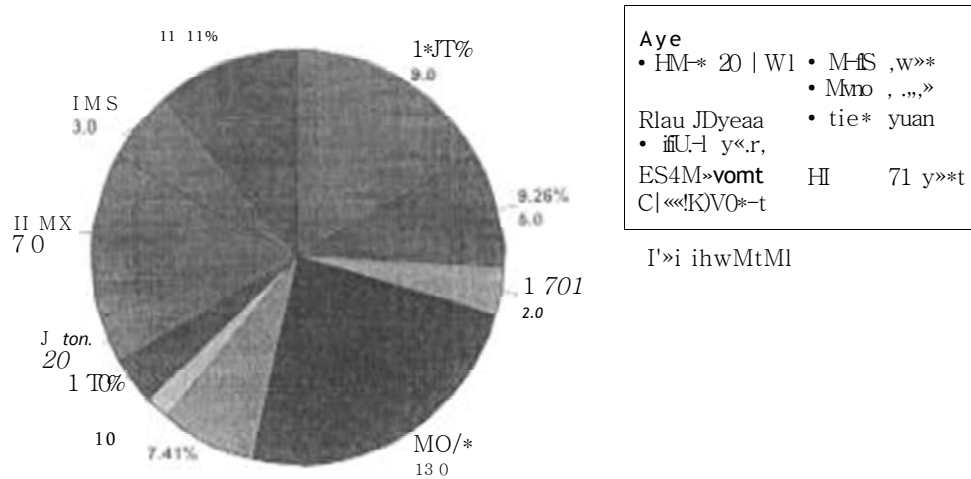


Figure 4.4: Age of Respondents

4.2.3 Education of Respondents

Twenty-three point four percent (23.4%) of the respondents had informal education and primary educational qualifications, 10.9% had no education at all, whereas 14.1% and 6.3% had some secondary and tertiary qualifications respectively.

Table 4.1: Level of education

		FraqiMMicy	Percent	Vnlid Percent	Cumulultva Percent
Valid	no formal Schooling	7	10. It	130	130
	informal schooling	15	23.4	278	407
	some primary schooling	3	4.7	56	463
	primary school completed	15	23.4	278	741
	some secondary school	9	14.1	167	907
	totllciy	4	6.3	74	081
	uwvoisity degree	1	1.5	19	1000
	Total	54	044	100.0	
Missing	System	to	15.6		
total		64	tooo		

4.2.4 Occupation of Respondents

Most of ilic informants were engaged in one form of economic activity or another in the region. However, a slight percentage of 10%, were not employed at all. This raises the question of their likelihood of active engagement in the cattle rustling conflicts.

Table 4.2: Occupation of respondents

		Fioquwicy	Pon onl	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	employed in puhhc	10	15.6	18.0	16.0
	self employed	11	17.2	20.8	30.6
	not employed	25	30.1	47.2	86.8
	employed in pnvutc	6	9.4	11.3	08.1
	olhei	1	1.0	1.0	106.0
	total	53	82.8	100.0	
Missing	System	11	17.2		
Total		64	100.0		

4.2.5 Marital status of respondents

Majority (51.6%) of the informants were married. There were no cases of divorce or separation in both categories, confirming how compact the society is in relation to the family institution.

Table 4.3- Marital status

		l'loquiwty	PorcBot	Valid Torcnnt	Cumutottva Pwcont
Vflirt	divorced	4	6.3	7.1 ¹	74
	Mam<*l	33	51.6	61.1	68.5
	single	17	26.6	31.5	moo
	total	54	84.4	100.0	
Missing	System	10	15.6		
total		64	100.0		

4.3 The Nature of Marakwet-Pokot-Conflict

The first objective of the study was to determine the nature of Marakwet-Pokot Conflict in Lot Division.

4.3.1 The Context of Marakwet-Pokot Conflict

Insecurity became a problem in Marakwet since 1992 where most of the youth were being used as security personnel. They were the ones to defend the community against Pokot attacks. Youth again could not go to school because they joined 'Kahoryng', the community's defense team. When fighting with Pokot stopped, the youth who had joined the 'kuboryang' used their experience of the war to rob people of their property along tin-roads, people's shops or even rape school children. The youth are affected by the following social problems: drug abuse, poor education system, insecurity, lack of exposure, backward cultural practices, problems of inheritance like land, idleness, unemployment and poverty, illiteracy, early marriages, cattle rustling and prostitution. In addition, most of the Marakwet youth lacked external exposure; they just stick to what the parents are telling them, especially in matters of marriage of which they marry earlier and sire many children as well as marrying many wives. All these cause conflict in the families. According to the respondents, the youth among myriad of other socio-economic and political problems are the cause and effect of the Marakwet-Pokot conflict.

There is general insecurity in the region. People have access to weapons such as guns, which encourage people to engage in criminal activities. In 2004, youth attacked an

elders' meeting which was trying to arbitrate in a protracted land dispute between two clans with an anti-personnel grenade at Chcoi in upland Marakwet. About ten people died. Many children have also been orphaned after they lost their parents during the various attacks and they have no one to provide, educate and live with. They have been left at the mercy of their relatives and well wishers who often mistreat them.

4.3.2 Social Problems and their Impact on Marakwet Socio-political Organization

Poverty has been considered the major cause and effect of cattle rustling. Extreme poverty in the region has made the people to jealously guard the available domestic animals which include cattle, sheep and goats. This is because of the utility of these animals that includes the paying of dowry and school fees for children. For most women poverty is one of the major problems affecting the Marakwet Community. Most people in the Kario Valley side of Maialwet live in abject poverty. Respondents argued that the climatic conditions in the valley side of Marakwet are hostile, supporting minimal economic activity, hence most people live in poverty. Apart from hostile climatic conditions, cattle rustling between the Pokot and Marakwet has largely contributed to the higher levels of poverty experienced in the region. Among the foremost social problem in Marakwet is starvation. There is general unavailability of food in the area. The area is dry, hot and rocky. These conditions do not support growing of food crops. It is thus extremely difficult for families to sustain decent livelihood and starvation continues to ravage the area. As a result, the Pokot have also been accused of stealing farm produce from the Marakwet. During the 1990s in Pokot Inud, the Pokot who do not practice crop farming crossed the Kario River to the Marakwet side and stole cassava roots. This then hampered the Marakwet efforts to combat poverty in the district.

The issue of poor educational facilities has made the youth not to qualify and to proceed to higher levels of education, hence making them class eight and below-dropouts. This has made them to resort to cattle rustling or become professional robbers. Many of Marakwet schools have little access to modern learning materials which makes most children to learn in the uncompetitive Marakwet schools. The children come out incompetent to get jobs hence idling in the villages, thereby becoming a security threat.

According to most respondents unemployment is another social problem in the District. Most of the youth in the district are not employed. There is no single company or factory that operates in the valley which can absorb the school leaving youth, even those that operated before like the Kerio Valley Development Authority (KVDA) have closed down due to insecurity in the region or mismanagement. This situation therefore contributed largely to idleness of the youth. Idleness is a big problem among the youth. Since there are no employment facilities combined with lack of exposure most youth end up staying idle in the District. Indeed during the research in the district by seven in the morning the youth were already idling by the roadside. Idleness in the district, introduces the youth to drug abuse.

To the youth drug abuse has become a major problem because many youth wake up in the morning and the only thing they ask as a greeting is 'who has unlay?' *litis* means, who has prepared 'busaa' today. The youth keep looking for that 'busaa' from dawn to sunset without any kind of food. Their mothers come home in the evening very hungry and frustrated, hence causing chaos in the home, especially when they find no food. In Chesogoch and Soko Bora commercial centres, for example, there are *Kulebeil* and *Kai liesyu* which are the common drug abuse places, therefore, alcoholism is a major social problem. Illegal brews are excessively consumed by the youth and even encouraged by the elders during traditional ceremonies like initiation and traditional weddings. This has led to family neglect/irresponsibility and thus causing family conflict and many marriage break-ups. Local brewers have in many occasions spent nights behind bars after being charged of breaking the law. Some have also been lined heavily.

Idleness has also contributed to early marriage. Most of the youth in the division marry at a tender age because they do not have any serious business to engage their minds, they marry many without proper courtship or under alcoholic influence, *litis* meant that they did not marry proper partners. The men therefore ended up marrying again resulting to polygamy. Polygamy is a common phenomenon in the Kerio Valley. This has placed a high economic burden on the people who are already strained by their poor income. Polygamy has resulted into giving birth to a large number of children that the family

cannot raise. This situation always resulted into conflicts that led to separation and divorce. Divorce and rejection of women is prevalent in the Kerio Valley. Little premium is placed on women as, in most cases, they are considered children. Divorce combined with idleness in Marakwet district exposed women and young girls to immorality and prostitution. Many of girls who have dropped out of school engage in prostitution. This was enhanced by the deployment of the General Service Unit (GSU) and Anti Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) police in Soko Bora and Chesongoch respectively. Prostitutes also flood the area in the peak of mango harvesting season between October and February

There is still mass circumcision of both boys and girls in Tot Division, and a large percentage of the respondents cited cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) as contributing to infections of HIV/AIDS and dehumanization of women. If a woman is not circumcised she was exposed to a lot of harassment and neglect from both her parents and the entire Marakwet community. Indeed one became a Marakwet only after initiation or through traditional wedding. As earlier argued for Kerio Valley is dry with very little rainfall. Lack of water has exposed the communities living in the valley to suffer from frequent outbreak of diseases in the region. Respondents argued that sometimes they are forced to use unclean water which in most cases affected their health and that of their children and yet accessing medical facilities remained another major problem. Most respondents said that there are few hospital services in the district; if they wanted medical services they were sometimes forced to walk longer distances to seek the services. The only referral hospital in the district is AIC Kiqwtowar Hospital that is located in upland Marakwet, farther away from the division.

According to youth respondents, land and cattle inheritance is another conflicting issue, especially between the girl-child and the men. The girls are not given a chance to inherit land, cattle or any other property. It is believed that a lady changes family membership and the biological family withdraws immediately once she gets married. Therefore, there is no need to transfer property from one family to another as it will be double ownership. Family conflict also resulted from inheritance of property where some parties claim to have been sidelined. In cases of polygamy, a woman who has not given birth to a boy, for instance, her girls will have no share of the property at all. There are cases also where

sons fight each other citing favouritism from the household head during the sharing process.

In addition, dowry among the Pokot cost the Marakwet a lot. The Pokot people attach a lot of value on women during marriage. The youthful Pokot are forced to pay a lot of cattle as dowry. This therefore, forces the Pokot to engage in regular raids on the Marakwet to raise the cattle, hence causing a lot of suffering. Children ended up with no milk which is an important complement of their diet, leading them to malnutrition.

4.3.3 Economic Problems

There were various economic problems influenced by factors ranging from local to internal to external influence. Unequal distribution of resources and high rate of inflation in the country ranked high. Most respondents said that the region was marginalized during the Moi regime. In 2005 a small section of the region was targeted and small section received electric power, but prices of commodities have skyrocketed and thus most people cannot afford to even buy basic necessities.

Most respondents cited cattle raiding as the main economic problem in the division. They argued that, cattle were an important source of income to both the Marakwet and Pokot. Raiding by the Pokot, therefore, denied the Marakwet a chance to economic prosperity, pushing them into an economic crisis. Pasture disputes are also common during the drought times when the Pokot cross Keiyo River to graze their cattle on the Marakwet side. This causes the Marakwet to retaliate. At times, these are pasture disputes among the Marakwet clans. The government is partly to blame because it has not put up any meaningful infrastructure in the area. In addition, most respondents cited reckless killing by the Pokot raiders as an economic problem. They contended that most of the people who were killed were in their productive age and some left behind dependants. This placed a big burden on women who were left to take care of the families that were left.

Although Tot Division is dry, it remained a fertile ground for Mango Production; however, the main economic problem associated with this production is lack of market. This is very pronounced in the months of August to December, when the area produces a lot of mangoes. There is no ready market for the mangoes and most end up being spoiled. There is no ready market for the Marakwet produce, hence farmers incur huge losses even though they invest a lot in labour and farm input. Most of the farmers are left at the mercy of the middlemen who take advantage of their vulnerability and exploit them, buying the mangoes at low prices. According to most respondents the losses are sometimes caused by poor transport network. Marakwet district has one of the poorest road networks in the country. Some parts of the district cannot be accessed, hence their economic potential is left untapped. Indeed the district has a very small stretch of a tarmac road which does not offer much help, fruits produced in Tot Division do not reach the market in Eldoret Town because no one agrees to risk his lorry or life by driving in the area. In addition, there is no fruit processing industry in the area despite the fact that the area produces many of fruits like mangoes.

Similarly, criminal activities such as theft and banditry have shunned off investors from the Kerio Valley. This situation has affected the production of the people other than denying them an opportunity of employment which the investors would have provided. There are many cases of robbery and theft, especially on the road. Cattle and goats are lost anyhow. Theft of beehives and honey has also been a continuous problem for the people of Kerio Valley until recently that youth do not take any more concern of them. There were allegations that the Pokot keep on stealing their beehives because they cannot construct their own. Theft of beehives and honey is also common amongst the Tot Division residents themselves.

Lack of finances or capital to invest is another major economic problem in Tot Division. Indeed Marakwet District has been served by a mobile KCU bank from Eldoret, until 2000 when a KCU bank was built at Kapsowit, the district headquarters. This situation has denied the people a chance to borrow funds for investment.

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Although land is very important in Lot Division, people can not use it to secure funds and is still under communal ownership. This, therefore, means that nobody owns land, therefore denying the people economic benefits that are associated with land security. This situation has also led to frequent land disputes, there are land disputes between the clans about ancestral land between people in the valley and those living in the uplands. There are also land disputes between families over land.

Lot division is hit by famine because of scarcity of rainfall or (lowing water, partly caused by destruction of Forest. Animals have succumbed to death. Crops have withered in the process of expecting rain. There is also the problem of water disputes. They originate from Marakwet water rights, which some people do not respect. There is a schedule on use of water but some people at times wrongly divert water to their farms thus causing conflicts. Some people sometimes wait for too long for their turn to use the water, Lot Division also lacks modern irrigation facilities that could conserve water and give it for meaningful use. The locals in this region depend on water furrows for irrigation which sometimes were not dependable because they kept breaking down or huge amount of water was lost through evaporation.

Presence of large unplanned families was blamed on low levels of education and lack of family planning education for married couples. Most parents do not have sources of income. Children in the area have dropped out of school as a result of lack of school fees. You will find someone who is very bright, who has passed primary examinations but cannot proceed to secondary school due to lack of school fees. They remain at home to look after cattle or just idle around. There is also lack of post-secondary training facilities for those who have finished secondary education. In the division there is only one Youth polytechnic, which trains less competently in a few courses. Finally, there is lack of technical information. National happenings, pass without youth in the area getting informed. This is because of lack of infrastructure. It is only in Chesongoch Community Library in the division where you can access a daily newspaper late in the evening.

4.3.4 Political Problems

Misunderstanding between leaders/elders and youth is a contentious political problem that has shattered the socio-political institution of the people of Marakwet in Lot Division. The elders' views are always different with those of the youth. In addition, the Marakwet people as other patriarchal communities did not give women a lot of political freedom. This, therefore, translated into most women not being able to participate meaningfully in governance processes. However, this has changed with women being voted in to represent the people both at the parliamentary and civic levels.

Voting is done according to sections contrary to the compact nature of Marakwet society. This shows a transformation in the socio-political system. For instance, the wrangle over where to place the district headquarters of the Marakwet District that was created in 2009 has proved divisive. Some politicians wanted to put the headquarters at Chesoi which is just less than an hour's ride from the current Kapsowar district headquarters, while others wanted to put it at Lot Centre. The same politicians were blamed for inciting their supporters to cause trouble in the district. According to most women this translated into insecurity and suppression of women who are not muscular enough to engage in such conflicts. Women according to Marakwet cultural practices are not allowed to speak while standing, but this ethical axle is less respected nowadays.

No objective programs, visions, projects, etc. that are geared towards alleviating youth problems. There is no one who has empowered the youth on having vision, objectives and even programs to try to come up with their own self help groups. Idle youth are easily influenced by politicians. The idle youth are being misused by the politicians to engage in election related violence. Youth are also not represented in development programmes. Most development committees which are spearheading development in the division, according to the respondents, do not include the youth, yet they are the most targeted group in development processes. The youth are not even benefiting from youth funds. The leaders do not inform them about the availability of the youth funds and, therefore, they take advantage and use themselves. They involve few people who are pro-them. In addition, the youth are ignorant and do not get involved in political process.

Youth in the Tot Division have also left politics to old men and assumed that they could get an opportunity to lead.

Political bias and corruption, especially in recruitment exercises for police or teachers, are rampant. It does not leave those who are competent to be absorbed. In fact, it gives chance to the rich only. Moreover, the elected leaders sideline areas that did not vote for them. This happens in the allocation of CDF and bursary funds. This discrimination goes further to development projects such as the construction of roads and electrification.

There are political disagreements among the area's political leaders, which causes political tension and stagnation of development projects, as politics is directed along tribalism and tribalism. It causes unnecessary rivalry and tension between various clans. During elections, these clan rivalries spill into fights during elections.

Finally, the people of Tot Division feel marginalized and cut off from the entire outside world. They feel left out and ignored in most of the national issues, and they express their anger by being rebellious and disobedient.

•1.1.5 Solutions to Marakwet-Tinkot Conflict

According to the respondents, Marakwet-Tinkot conflict has disrupted the functioning of Marakwet socio-political organization in many respects. The elders were relegated to the periphery in dispute resolution, paving way for provincial administration, military operations and NGO interventions. Socio-economic and political problems led to conflicts. The conflicts were both inter and intra ethnic. Some of these conflicts persisted for long while others were short-lived depending on what caused them and how they were solved. Elders are the most respected people in the society and when there was a conflict, elders' meetings and public haraza were held as an intervention mechanism to try to solve them. The elders from the conflicting groups met and engaged dialogue in discussing all critical issues that might have caused the conflict and their resolution mechanism.

After reaching a compromise the elders carried out traditional ceremonies and sacrifices to appease the communities and those involved if caught. The ceremonies involved oath taking (*muma*) or mice (*mils*) between the Marakwet and the Pokot, where animal's blood was mixed with some herbs then the conflicting parties were asked to drink. Cursing (*keos*) words were uttered to ensure that the covenant was binding. After sealing such a covenant the conflicting parties could now intermarry and trade. Intermarriages and trade, which was practiced since time immemorial among the two communities, enhanced peaceful coexistence among the conflicting parties.

In addition, in order to remove enmity, the Marakwet used compensation methods if murder or destruction of property occurred. The Marakwet would impose a fine. In case of murder 12 goats were paid for the head of the victim, 40 for the left hand side and 40 for the right hand side, totaling 112 goats. Once compensation was completed there was assumed to be no further hostility, for the parties could then intermarry. In most conflicts in Marakwet the elders were the first to intervene. They engaged in dialogue and performed traditional ceremonies that ensured end of hostilities among the conflicting parties. However, these conflict resolution mechanisms by the elders had come to play a minimal role after the Marakwet-Pokot cattle rustling conflicts, exemplifying how the conflict has interfered with the community's socio-political organisation.

External groups that included provincial administration, the military, and NGOs were involved. The provincial administration also intervened by organizing joint peace meetings or joint barnas. These meetings were always held on spots of conflict and encouraged the warring parties to surrender their weapons and reconsider peaceful coexistence. In case such meetings did not bear fruit the government intervened by deploying security forces who carried out operations to rid the region of illegal firearms, quite often sinning with an amnesty. Prominent people from the region also intervened to end the conflict. These people initiated activities that involved the conflicting parties working jointly to end hostilities. Such intervention by people from the region included the I'ecla I'orupe Peace Race.

The NGO world also played an important role in intervening to end conflict in the region. World Vision Kenya, NCCK and the Catholic Peace and Justice Commission (CJPC) were involved. They constructed schools and encouraged joint schooling of children from Marakwet and Pokot along the Kerio Valley; for instance, Queen of Peace Chesongoch Day Secondary School in Lot Division. The Red Cross ran various projects in Marakwet and Pokot jointly to end hostilities. The Media houses on their side campaigned against conflict by informing the world of what was going on, hence influencing intervention.

The respondents cited the following ways to be used to end Marakwet-Pokot conflict

- Oath taking ceremonies (mwmi). Elders slaughtered an animal, mixed flu* blood and all the communities representative took an oath to solve the conflict

Dialogue between the Marakwet and the Pokot (*mils*)

Elders meetings/ Kiniza and cleansing ceremonies

Village/ chiefs haraza

The security personnel

Political rallies

Through sports

Development projects e.g. the construction of a library at Chesongoch

Youth committees to meet with the Pokot youth

Banning of traditional liquor/ beer drinking

Banning of the bush market/ black market, and

Sensitization campaigns for the youth to go back to school

Encouraging freedom of movement between the two communities

Trading at specific markets in both communities

In elders group meetings to arbitrate in disputes, composition is dictated by the case at hand. Elders forward tough disputes to the chiefs. The chiefs then seek the help of senior elders and if the dispute is not resolved, it is forwarded to the District Officer for further action. Elders proclaim curses on those who engage in heinous acts and refuse to give evidence. Such a prospect forces people to speak the truth. Use of oaths before an elders' meeting starts is used to ensure that the elders are not compromised and that justice takes precedence during arbitration of disputes. Elders give prayers and sacrifices to God for

peaceful coexistence within the families and the community at large. The elders also prayed for rain so that the people would get food. Complicated cases or disputes are forwarded to the law courts by the elders. Respected elderly women do accompany elders to Baraza as they seek to solve disputes.

All the above conflict resolution methods are done through small traditional groups, community-wide groups, family, between husband and wife and external intervention. Small traditional groups are important in resolving low-scale conflicts like at the family and clan levels, whereas community-wide groups are good at conflicts of land, water, pasture and cattle thefts and rustling. External interventions like military operations are equally important to stop violent confrontations. The NGOs and churches have also come in to create awareness on conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence and at times compensation. Therefore, it is clear that the traditional means of resolving conflicts following Marakwet traditions and norms have collapsed.

1.1.2 Marakwet Socio-Political Structures

The second objective of the study was to identify the existing socio political structures of the Marakwet living in 'l'ot Division.

There is social permissiveness sweeping across the Marakwet community. The people no longer regard societal values. This has led to a social breakdown of morals because of the entry of education and Christianity. However, the community has had various traditional methods of socio-political administration. The council of elders was one of those dominant structures. According to the respondents, when conflicts erupted among the Marakwet the elders would call the conflicting parties together to identify the cause of the problem, after which they discussed on the way to resolve it. The end of the conflict was when the concerned parties reached an agreement. The Marakwet elders used oath taking (*muma*).

If the offender disrespected the elders' decision then a curse (*pun*) was used, which sometimes haunted the entire family of the offender. Use of curse is very important

among the Marakwct, a curse was sometimes used to maintain peace. This is whereby the elders would stop a conflict by a binding agreement, which was to be followed to the letter, but if any member repeats then he was haunted by the curse. This was done during traditional ceremonies led by the head of council of elders.

The women used a waistband (*Jckelio*), which is associated with child IwAritig ami protection of the children, to scare off offenders. When warriors go on raiding, women tie the belt to ensure the protection of their sons; if they refused to lie, their sons would never go on raiding. The following were the ways used by the community to prevent people taking offence:

- oath taking (*nmina*)
- enactment of penalties eg if you steal one animal, you will pay ten or risk being reported to the government
- on land boundary disputes, elders held a baraza, discussed and resolved them
- elders resolved family misconduct and inheritance conflicts
- the elders warned the youth against aggression
- signing of treaties (*miis*) between the Marakwct and the Pokot

The use of oath (*inumn*) is common. During *munui* a goat's ear is cut and given to all parties to eat. This is to force people to always speak the truth, thus ending the conflict. However, this is rarely taken as a last resort in resolving conflicts. When the Marakwct and the Pokot fight, there is use of *oi' miis* (truce-cum-oath). It involves the youth, who are strongly asked to stop the conflict. *Swoger* (ritual spear) and *kuiwo* (headgear) are laid down during the meeting and no one goes against it. The arbitration of conflicts between the Marakwct and the Pokot is normally done through *kokwa* (elders' meetings*). Such meetings nowadays are sanctioned by the provincial administration, and they were held on a venue agreed by both parties.

The Marakwct and Pokot enact peace pacts to end conflicts. These are normally done through a goat sacrifice oath. Elders from both communities participated in the oath and then ate together. Such an oath was meant to ensure peace. The Pokot brought a spear while the Marakwct brought a goat, then the goat is speared and the blood mixed with

particular herbs then they dnuik and ate together. However, this resolved the conflict only temporarily. There was also the use of compensation in cases of theft, manslaughter and murder. This compensation has recently been extended to the Pokot. Murder suspects have to undergo a *parperlsyo* (cleansing ritual) before resuming normal life. In addition, there are joint celebrations between the Marakwet and the Pokot. They are normally attended by women. There is a lot of feasting, as animals are slaughtered and this helps to reduce the tension between the concerned parties. Participants discuss on the importance of maintaining peace. In addition, the community stressed on respect of culture and observance of taboos, for instance, no killing of women or children during cattle raids, which are no longer observed.

There were other methods of resolving the conflict such as reed blowing to scare off likely offenders; peace rallies organized by the community; traditional barter trade; especially between the Marakwet and Pokot women. The Marakwet barter cereals with the Pokot in exchange of milk and livestock. This is particularly done during the dry spells and thus the Pokot cannot raid the Marakwet, as they survive on cereals from them.

From the foregoing, traditional methods of conflict resolution, especially between the Marakwet and the Pokot, are being used by the Marakwet. However, the use of these traditional methods have diminished, no longer regarded and continues to face many other challenges, hence depicting the extent of the shift in Marakwet traditional socio-political organization as a result of the Marakwet-Pokot conflicts

•1.5 The Impact of Out-migration on Marakwet Socio-political Organization

The third objective of the study was to explore the impact of out-migration on the socio-political organization of Marakwet living in Irii Division

The study found out that thousands of Marakwet deprived of security, shelter and livelihood have migrated to Eldoret and Kitale towns or farms in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia districts. Villagers without land outside Marakwet to migrate to have been sheltering in caves, rock-shelters and forests in the rocky and rough Kerio Valley

escarpment. This group is the most disadvantaged. They are rained on and most of them contract pneumonia or other diseases.

Raids against the Marakwet including the 2001 Murkutwa Massacre are viewed as part of the wider scheme to disinherit the community of their land in the fertile and well watered plains of Kerio Valley. By displacing the Marakwet, the Pokot were the likely to benefit from the seizure of grazing fields left behind by the fleeing people. The dispute over grazing pasture between the two communities before the massacre stemmed from the fact that the Marakwet resisted permanent displacement from their land. Pokot herdsmen may have assumed that the Marakwet had permanently left their lands because they were no longer grazing on or cultivating these lands from the time they were displaced from the bottom of the valley and forced to retreat to higher grounds.

On the other hand, some powerful and wealthy personalities among the Kalenjin were believed to be coveting the fertile and well watered Marakwet land for agribusiness and tourism, as the potential is indicated in Marakwet district development plans since the colonial period. In addition, some respondents said that the insecurity is part of a wider scramble for Kerio Valley whose prize has been fuelled by the prospect of minerals. The idea of pushing the Marakwet out of the valley is a cynical project. The scramble for Kerio Valley is not just an ethnic, but also a class issue. It involves a mix of manipulation of the traditional institutions of violence, communal conflicts, rivalries and rustling and banditry as well as government laxity and negligence in order to deprive the people of the communal land still under traditional land tenure system.

Even the Marakwet displaced and have moved to upland Marakwet have voiced the same concern of land deprivation by the powerful ruling Kalenjin elite. However, there are other factors voiced by the respondents that are majorly to blame for the continued out-migration amid the conflict. The traditional land tenure system does not favour any permanent developments by the Marakwet elite, the harsh climatic conditions, and the low value of land in the region are some of the issues that have compounded the out-migration.

On how the out-migration has contributed to the breakdown of Marakwet (traditional) socio-political system of organization, the respondents said that the out-migrated Marakwet come back often with new values. For instance, they are the ones who introduced modern weddings and modern circumcision, whereby some locals have opted to circumcising their children in hospitals or with the aid of modern trained health personnel. This has led to disrespect of the council of elders and *kokwo* system of administration.

4.6 The Emerging Socio-political Coping Mechanism

The fourth objective of the study was to find out the emerging coping mechanisms adopted by the Marakwet as a way of preserving their socio-political organization in the face of the violent conflicts in the region.

According to the respondents, there are various coping mechanisms that have enabled the sustenance of Marakwet socio-political organization. They include the retention of older people and other relations in the Kerio Valley in the advent of the massive out-migration from the region. These people have pushed on with the financial support of the elites in white collar jobs in towns.

The continuous celebrations and functions in Kerio Valley and frequent appearance of the elite in all these functions is another coping mechanism. The functions include circumcision and weddings. The educated Marakwet who live in towns or even abroad still take their children for circumcision in the Kerio Valley, famously called *lagan*. Some of them even still practice the traditional wedding ceremonies. However, there is a shift to modern weddings, which are done in towns and especially in Eldoret, by the young Marakwet professionals.

In addition, there are continuous meetings among the professionals that are held semi-annually and annually, especially according to locations. Majority of Marakwet still cast their votes in the district and quite often the professionals who reside outside the district decide the choice of candidates or are the ones who are voted in. All these have made the preservation of the Marakwet socio-political Organization possible today in spite of the

violent nature of Marakwet-Pokot conflict. However, other conflict coping mechanisms like the adoption of Christianity have compromised with the sustenance of Marakwet socio-political organization. The spread of Christianity in the region, the influence of NCiOs, education, and harmony with the relevant Government institutions such as the court, or corruption among elders as have stood in the midst of either adopting or abolishing the Marakwet socio-political organization

4.7 Discussion of the bindings

Some respondents cited some issues that compromised with the continued sustenance of Marakwet socio-political organization. Sometimes elders were corrupted, hence failing to give the light verdict as expected. Other respondents cited the problem of unruly youth as the greatest challenge to the preservation of the traditional structures and systems of Marakwet socio-political organization. Some youth did not respect elders and see the traditions as outdated and have been passed by events. Educated youth think that the elders apply outdated mechanisms in resolving problems affecting them.

Poverty was also cited by most respondents as a challenge to the practice of traditional system of socio-political administration. They contended that the elders who are custodians of traditional mores, norms and values are out of tune with the modern reality. Elders needed some livestock and grains to perform some traditional conflict resolutions but they lacked finances to efficiently deliver on the same. Moreover, it is expensive for one to travel in Lot Division because of the poor infrastructure. Sometimes elders were unable to travel in order to attend peace meetings and ceremonies. These elders are the most instrumental, hence their absence rendered the process of sustaining the traditional system of socio-political organization futile.

Finally, some respondents observed that women who are some of the major custodians of Marakwet culture were not recognized when it comes to issues relating to Marakwet-Pokot conflict. The neglect of women was a big challenge to maintenance of traditional Marakwet socio-political structures and systems

Chapter 5:

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the summary of major findings, conclusion to the study findings and analyses, and recommendations from the study and for further study.

5.2 Summary

Marakwet-Pokot conflict has disrupted Marakwet socio-political organization in many respects. There is more involvement of external forces and women in resolving the conflicts than before. For instance, ideally resolving conflict at different ethnic groups' level is a preserve of the elders and it was a taboo for women to take part. Women among the Marakwet were considered children and were not allowed to make decisions on their own. If they were allowed to take part in traditional ceremonies for conflict resolution then they only did so as observers but not as active participants. However, most women respondents interviewed admitted having been involved in Marakwet-Pokot conflict resolution but only as observers, like Marakwi culture allowed women only to assist in resolving conflict involving their children and if it is on boundary issues they could only give evidence. Although the culture did not allow women to take part as active participants, most of them acknowledged having taken part. Most of them admitted having offered advice to their sons and encouraged them not to revenge or attack their neighbours.

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) and church organizations have also come to be associated with Marakwet-Pokot conflict, especially at the resolution stage. This shows how the extant system is very weak and has been rendered almost unworkable. In their interventions the NGOs and church groups involved women in trying to solve the conflicts in Marakwet. Both Marakwet and Pokot women groups met at World Vision Kenya centres in the region where they were encouraged in discussions geared towards

bringing solutions to the conflict and sometimes they were encouraged to influence their husbands and sons against raids. The women took part in sports that promoted peace in the Kerio Valley; women also attended meetings where they gave evidence and advice to the elders, and joint agricultural activities along the Kerio Valley region mostly on projects initiated by the Kerio Valley Development Authority or World Vision Kenya. The youth also took part in various activities that were directed towards resolving these conflicts. These activities included seminars, sporting activities such as the Tecla Lorupc Peace Race. This promoted peace in the region.

The other most recent and modern activities that have superseded the traditional system of socio-political organization of the Marakwet with respect to the conflict include securing scholarships and bursaries for some high school students, organizing many activities geared towards drug, alcohol and HIV awareness, horticultural activities to uplift the economy, offering soft loans for development, or counseling of unruly youth in the modern way. Some of these were done through religious forums, rallies, community groups and reconciliatory celebrations, elders' meetings, cross border meetings, sports, chiefs baraza, seminars on anti-RiM, and these modern ways have been met with relative success showing how they have been received by the people of the Division. Any form of cattle rustling related conflicts or aggression tendencies have not been witnessed since 2001. People were able to track any emergent lawlessness and punish the concerned accordingly, and tension between the warring groups have reduced to an extent where the Pokot and Marakwet meet regularly.

Finally, the elders have been touted as having good experience on how to resolve conflicts, enjoying supremacy and the capacity to enforce forceful decisions, or having the necessary skill and qualifications because they are the custodians of customs. However, their declining capacity in resolving Marakwet-Pokot conflict, thereby paving way for external forces, is a reflection of the breakdown of Marakwet socio-political organization as a result of the cattle rustling conflicts.

5.3 (inclusions

litis study sought to investigate the impact of Marakwet-Pokot cattle rustling conflict on the (traditional) socio-political organization of the Marakwet. In order to carry out the research effectively and capture the required data, there was need to understand the socio-economic and political problems that affected different age groups of the respondents. The study, therefore, found out that there are various socio-economic and political problems which affected the targeted groups. These problems were either caused by internal or external factors, some of which the people had no control over

When conflicts erupted all respondents admitted that priority was first given to traditional methods of conflict resolution. To a greater percentage of the respondents traditional methods of conflict resolution involving the elders still hold sway in the society. Still a higher percentage of the respondents indicated that there is a relative shift towards the use of modern ideas in resolving the cattle rustling conflicts; for instance, there is the entry of provincial administration, military personnel, the NGOs and church-based organizations taking an active role superseding the effort of the elders who are by and large charged with this role. In conclusion, therefore, this shows how the socio-political organization of the Marakwet has been changed to a near verge of collapse by the scale of the cattle rustling conflicts.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Recommendations from the Study

For Marakwet socio-political organization to work, especially with respect to resolving Marakwet-Pokot cattle rustling conflicts, there is need to support traditional methods of conflict resolution in the following ways:

- Exposure meetings
- Funding of elders meetings by giving them subsistence allowances
- Funds for elders to visit other communities and see how they resolve disputes

- Elders should consult other wiser old men
- Organizing seminars and workshops for elders
- Encouraging the people to respect their customs
- Training on conflict resolution and peacekeeping
- Teaching elders basic literacy skills
- Building common entry schools for both Marakwet and Pokot to promote peaceful co-existence. Involving all members of society in resolving conflicts
- Listening to women and empowering them in conflict resolution and peacekeeping.
- Development projects to keep the youth busy
- Coordinated disarmament exercise in both communities and its neighbours
- Organizing social joint events such as athletics as exemplified by the Ilei-la-Irtpe Peace Race
- Encouraging intermarriage between both communities

> 1.2 Recommendations for Further Study

This research was a good experience because it highlighted how Marakwet-Pokot cattle rustling conflicts have impacted on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet. However, the study would have been enriched further if the Pokot side is also considered. The Marakwet conflict cannot be well understood without carrying a similar survey on the Pokot. Therefore, for comparative purposes, there is need to establish the impact of Marakwet-Pokot cattle rustling conflicts on the socio-political organization of the Pokot.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Questionnaire for General Respondents

MARAKWET IN TRANSITION AND CHANGE: THE SOCIO-POLITICAL
IMPACT OF MARAKWET-POKOT CONFLICT IN TOTAL VISION

How do you do? I am Maxmana Kiptoo, a student of Master of Arts degree in rural sociology and community development from the University of Nairobi. I would like to find out the impact of the Marakwet-Pokot Conflict on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet. I look forward to your co-operation. All responses from you will be handled with utmost confidentiality.

Section 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics

Name: __

Age bracket (years)

Below 20	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40

Level of education:

No formal schooling: ()

Some primary schooling ()

Primary education ()

Some secondary education ()

Secondary education ()

Tertiary ()

University degree ()

Administrative

Area:

Employment/ Occupation

Employed in public organization ()

!!

Employed in private organization ()

Self-employed ()

Unemployed ()

Other ()

6. Sex

Male

Female

7. Marital Status:

Single

Married

Widowed

1

niW

8 Do you live in Tot Division with all your family?

Yes

No

If no, why¹

Section 2: Marakwct Socio cultural Practices

◇. (.) Have you been circumcised in the Marakwct traditional system?

Yes

No

(h) If no. Why?

(c) Would you like to be circumcised ir. ditionally?

Yes

No

(d) When was the last time your village carried out mass circumcision of male youth?

(e) Does your village still practice female circumcision?

Yes

I

No

< live reasons for your answer

10. If you indicated married in 7 above, how did you do your wedding

Traditionally?

Modern (in the Church)?

Civil Marriage (In the DC's Office)?

Section 3: Aspects of Modernity and (Conflict with Marakwet Traditional Culture

II. Do you go to the church often?

Yes

No

If yes, which one?

Catholic

Protestant:

Other? (indicate)

12. If you are not going to Church, do you believe in God?

Yes

No

H There are many beliefs and taboos that restrict life in the community like you cannot eat meat and milk at the same time, do you obey them?

Yes

No

If no, why?

Section 4: Marakwet-Pokot Conflict and its Impact on the Socio-political Organization of the Murukwet

14. How many people have since died in your village from Marakwet-Pokot conflict?

15. What is the value of property or general damage that your village has suffered from this conflict?

16 Do you hate the I'okot for these damages or suffering?

I _____ 1 _____ I * I _

If no, Why?

17.1 have you ever met with any Pokot since the conflict (1992-present)

I Yes 1

If yes, did you talk together over anything?

r z ^ z i n z i z i r ^ x z ^ i

How was the mood of your conversation?

18. Since the eruption of the conflict, has your life changed in any way?

r _____ y i ~ * ~ i

If yes. how?

If no, do you know how people's lives have changed?

(Please indicate)

19. What are the causes of the conflict?

a. Social

b. Economic

c. Political

20. Who has caused these problems?

21. What are the solutions to the conflicts/problems cited in 19 above?

What are the traditional mechanisms used to resolve the conflict?

15. Why were these particular methods chosen?

21. How have these methods been effected?

25. What are the major obstacles to the administration of these methods?

26. Are the elders still very useful in the administration of these traditional methods of peacekeeping and conflict resolution?

Yes		No	
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If yes, how? If no, why?

27. What are the perceptions of the people towards the application of these methods of conflict resolution?

28. What changes have been brought to the administration of law and order by the conflict?

How has the system of administering peace and justice changed with the advent of the Marakwet-Pokot conflict?

30. How have the traditional institutions of governance changed with the advent of the Marakwet-Pokot conflict?

11 How has Marakwet belief system changed with the eruption of Marakwet-Pokot conflict?

32. What are the changes in the following areas of Marakwet life after the conflict?

(i) Education?

(ii) Religion and belief system⁰

(iii) Politics and administration?

(iv) Marakwet value* and norms and system of communal organization?

1 W What is the future like with the persistence of Marakwet–Pokot conflict for the social and political life of the Marakwet living along the Kcrio Valley (Tot Division)?

34. If you had money, would you buy land/ plot outside Kcrio Valley (Tot Division)?

CI

Yes

No

Please explain

I hunks you.

Appendix II: Guide for Key Informants

MAUAKWIT IN TRANSITION AND CHANGE: THE SOCIO-POLITICAL
IMPACT OF MARAKWET-POKOT CONFLICT IN TOTT DIVISION

How do you do? I am Leimana Kiptoo, a student of Master of Arts degree in rural Sociology and community development from the University of Nairobi. I would like to find out the impact of Marakwet-Pokot Conflict on the socio-political organization of the Marakwet. I look forward to your co-operation. All responses from you will be handled with utmost confidentiality

I. Name

(optional):

Age bracket (years)

20- 25

26-
30

31- 35	36- 40	41- 45

3. Occupation:

4. Academic qualification:

5. Administrative area

6. Sex

Male

Female

7. Marital Status:

Single

Married

Widow

Divorced

8. How has Marakwet-Pokot violent conflicts changed

(i) Marakwet religion and belief system?

(ii) Political life of the Marakwet anil system of communal organization?

0. What are the positive implications of the conflict on Marakwet socio-political organization?

10. What are the negative implications of the conflict on Marakwet socio political organization?

11 What is the likely trend in the impact of the Marakwet Pokot conflict on the socio-political organization Marakwet?

12. Do you think that the Marakwet who moved out to purchase land and **Nettle** in other areas have had any impact on the social-political development of the people living in lot Division? [yes. no| Explain

Thank yi>u.

Appendix III: FGD Questions

MAKAKWET IN TRANSITION AND CHANGE: THIS SOCIO-POLITICAL IMPACT OF MAKAKWET-POKOT CONFLICT IN TOT DIVISION

1. Since the eruption of Marakwet Pokot conflict, has your life changed in any way?
2. What are the causes of the conflict?
3. Who has caused these problems?
4. What are the solutions to the conflicts/ problems?
5. What are the traditional mechanisms used to resolve the conflict?
6. Why were these particular methods chosen?
7. What are the major obstacles to the administration of these conflicts?
8. Are the elders still very useful in the administration of these traditional methods of peacekeeping and conflict resolution?
9. What are the perceptions of the people towards the application of these methods of conflict resolution?
It) What changes have been brought to the administration of law and order by the conflict?
11. How has the system of administering peace and justice changed with the advent of the Marakwet-Pokot conflict?
It) How have the traditional institutions of governance changed with the advent of the Marakwet Pokot conflict?
11. How has Marakwet belief system changed with the eruption of Marakwet-Pokot conflict?
14. What are the changes in the following areas of Marakwet life after the conflict:
 - i. Education?
 - ii. Religion and belief system?
 - iii. Politics and administration?
 - iv. Marakwet values and norms and system of communal organization?
15. What is the future like with the persistence of Marakwet-Pokot conflict for the social and political life of the Marakwet living along the Kerio Valley (Lot Division)?