

TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING THE GUSII-KIPSIGIS CONFLICT

ALONG SOTIK/BORABU BORDER (1992 to 2010)

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DECLARATION

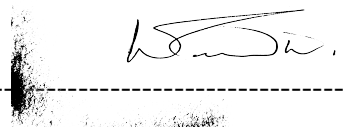
I declare that this project is my original work and has not been presented for another academic award in any other University or Institution.

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This Research project has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University Supervisors.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset
ACORD	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
AHSI	African Human Security Initiative
AU	African Union
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism Unit
CORD	Coalition for Reforms and Democracy
DP	Democratic Party
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FORD	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy
KANU	Kenya African National Union
LCB	Local Chief Bomet County
LCN	Local Chief Nyamira County
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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ABSTRACT

The Gusii and the Kipsigis have been engaged in conflict against each other for a long time. There also exists tangible competition for access to land and contest over administrative boundaries, politics of ethnicity, resource control, and distribution. The general goal of the study was to establish the reasons for the Gusii - Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010). The conflict theory and the conflict transformation theory guided the study. The conflict theory posits that human beings are sociable beings but prone to engage in conflict. The conflict transformational theory advocates for not only reestablishing the status quo but also to have a long term impact on the structure, process, and outcome of oriented efforts while emphasizing on social change and justice. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was adopted for the study. The study targeted 75 respondents who comprised ward administrators, village elders, and local chiefs from both Nyamira and Bomet Counties. The study collected data using focus group discussions and an interview guide. The data was analyzed based on conceptual content analysis. The results indicated that the traditional practice of cattle raiding was the major contributor to conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border. The findings also revealed that competition for scarce natural resources along the border was a factor propelling conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border. The findings revealed that the impact of the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border included loss of cattle, displacement of people, property destruction, social disorder, and environmental degradation. The study found that the mitigation strategies implemented over the period 1992 to 2010 by the Gusii and Kipsigis communities included livestock branding, peace committees, youth empowerment and employment, involvement of women in peace building, and that of the government and other organizations in peace building. The study recommends that the community members ought to be educated on the importance of peaceful coexistence in the region. Further research can be carried out to explore more about the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border after 2010 with the inauguration of the new Constitution of Kenya.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The Gusii are a Bantu community and they form part of the western Bantu of Kenya. They occupy the northern part of Nyanza and are neighbors to the Kipsigis, Abakuria, Maasai, and the Luo communities. The Kipsigis on the other hand are one of the Nilotic groups of Kenya. They are part of the nine sub-ethnic groups of the Kalenjin group occupying the southern part of the Rift Valley.¹ The two communities (Gusii and Kipsigis) under study have been involved in the conflict for a long time. The Sotik-Borabu border has contributed largely to the conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis. Data shows that the border conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis is propelled and fueled by cultural, social, and political causes. The Kipsigis since the pre-colonial period have practiced pastoralism; this may be attributed to their close proximity to the Maasai community who are largely pastoralists.² According to Ndeda³ the Gusii, practice many economic activities among which include farming and pastoralism. Therefore, natural resources have been a critical component for the survival of both the Gusii and the Kipsigis. The scarce natural resources available facilitate the conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis. Moreover, the communities believe that cattle rustling is a way of showing their superiority, hence they indulge in raiding each other resulting in the border conflict.

¹ A., Mwanzi. *A History of the Kipsigis*. East African Literature Bureau. 1997.

² Ndeda, Mildred AJ. "Population movement, settlement and the construction of society to the east of Lake Victoria in precolonial times: the western Kenyan case." *Les Cahiers d'Afrique de l'Est/The East African Review* 52 (2019): 83-108.

³ Ndeda, Mildred AJ. "Population movement, settlement and the construction of society to the east of Lake Victoria in precolonial times: the western Kenyan case." *Les Cahiers d'Afrique de l'Est/The East African Review* 52 (2019): 83-108.

Despite the conflict that exists between the Gusii and the Kipsigis, the two communities are similar in certain aspects. Both communities have assimilated the traditional way of life with both communities practicing agriculture and cattle keeping. Further, both communities attach great importance to their natural resources and animals since it does not only provide food but also, job opportunities for the farmers.⁴ As such, the two communities are bound to disagree across the borders since both communities aim to gain superiority over each other. Moreover, both communities still hold on to their respective traditional rituals that cattle rustling is a part of their daily lives. Thus cross-border conflict between the two communities is to be expected.

Different authors have recorded contradicting findings on the relationship between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. Omwenga⁵ argued that at times the two communities co-existed especially during post-independence period. The author, for example, argued that during the 1890-1892 famine which was named *Nyamakongiro* the Gusii and Kipsigis communities cooperated in order to survive. According to the data collected, the author found that the Kipsigis bartered children in exchange for food from the Gusii communities. This implies that to a small extent, during difficult times that affected both communities, the Gusii and Kipsigis co-existed for survival. However, this contradicts findings by Ochieng⁶ who established that while the Kipsigis, bartered their children, they did not trade with the Gusii, an implication of continued hostility between the two communities, even in

⁴ M. Omwenga. "*Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002.*" Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

⁵ M. Omwenga. "*Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002.*" Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

⁶ E., Ochieng. "*Participation of women in peacebuilding in the cross-border conflict between the Luo of upper Nyakach and Kipsigis of Sigowet sub-counties: 1963-1992.*" phd diss., school of humanities and social sciences, Kenyatta university, 2017.

difficult times. Due to the contradicting findings from different authors, this study sought to add to a further understanding of the Gusii-Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border.

1.2 Background of the Study

Conflict refers to a dispute between two or more parties. Contrary to what many people think, not all confrontation is negative.⁷ The use of violence to settle conflicts has been common throughout human history. Non-violent conflict has the potential to positively affect society by bringing to light deeply ingrained problems that have contributed to the conflicts and allowing them to be discussed and, ideally, permanently resolved. Conflict that is violent may also succeed in this, but at a very high cost.⁸ Violent conflict may also achieve this, but at a very high cost. Violent conflict is extremely damaging, causing a great deal of casualties (both fighters and civilians), destruction of infrastructure, destruction of buildings, and catastrophic impacts on economies and general development.

John Galtung,⁹ argues that conflicts arise when there is structural inequality when one party has organizational mechanisms in place while the other party does not, leaving the latter group weaker and more susceptible to violence and conflict. Conflict is not brought on by the relationship's subjective aspects, but rather by deeply ingrained structural flaws.¹⁰ Galtung contends that some social institutions or systems may affect others in

⁷ Gideon Solonka Kilakoi. *Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in East Africa: The Case of Sotik and Borabu Constituencies in Kenya, 1990-2012*. Masters Thesis, University of Nairobi, 2013.

⁸ Wallensteen, Peter. 2007. *Understanding conflict resolution: war, peace and the global system*. London: SAGE Publications.

⁹ Alio Wako Kayete, *Cross Border Natural Resource-Based Conflicts and Regional Security: A Comparison of the Eastern and Western Africa Experiences*. Masters Thesis, University of Nairobi, 2018.

¹⁰ Galtung, Johan. "Violence, peace, and peace research." *Journal of peace research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-191.

society in order to keep them from satisfying their most fundamental wants. The society also has social layers, and because these strata contain anomalies, individuals in positions of power and wealth often take advantage of the weaker members of society. In order to prevent the latter from fulfilling their fundamental wants and rights, the former will resort to violence and employ force. Conflict is therefore unavoidable. Since a greater proportion of the world's resources are natural ones, individuals in positions of power will constantly abuse and harm the less privileged elements of society, which will eventually cause conflict and insecurity.

Given that 80 percent of rural Kenyans rely on the land for their livelihood, land has been regarded as one of the most contentious problems in Kenya since colonization. In Kenya, British colonialism was administrative rather than military, and it was followed by significant land alienation for the advantage of European settlers.¹¹ This would subsequently lead to the struggle for independence, which was partly motivated by the desire to reclaim the land that had been taken from the indigenous people. Kenya inherited the colonialists' unbalanced land policy system of land ownership at independence, failing to correct previous injustices against African land.

The scarcity of natural resources such as land is among the leading causes of conflict between different communities. The disputes are often between two communities as evident in the case of the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.¹² The causes of the disputes include cattle rustling, ownership of grazing land, uneven distribution, and use of land

¹¹ M., Maina. *"Land Disputes Resolution In Kenya: A Comparison Of The Environment And Land Court And The Land Disputes Tribunal."* PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2015.

¹² C., Bosibori. *Transformation in Chinkororo Movement among the Abagusii of Kisii County, Kenya, 1961-2010.* (Thesis, Kenyatta University), 2017.

amongst the communities. Land disputes between these two communities started during the pre- colonial period and were exacerbated during the colonial period. However, disputes experienced in different communities were resolved through traditional dispute resolutions mechanisms. Each community practiced its traditional dispute resolution mechanisms including the use of mediation and negotiation. According to Maina,¹³ these traditional mechanisms were preferred by most of the community people since they resulted in win-win situations.

Among the Kipsigis and the Gusii, cattle rustling (theft) is a recurring activity. This issue continues to be a thorn affecting the communities living around the Sotik and Borabu border. The Gusii are divided into seven colonial boundaries: Kitutu (Getutu), North Mugirango, South Mugirango, Majoge, Wanjare (Nchari), Bassi, and Nyaribari. The reasons for engaging in cattle rustling in the Kipsigis and Gusii communities include cultural practices, youth unemployment, a deficient justice system, and retaliation attacks. It was noted that cattle theft and conflict, in general, were mostly done by the youth (National Steering Committee on Peace building and Conflict Management (NSC)).¹⁴

Notably, cattle rustling is not the only cause of conflict among the Gusii and Kipsigis Communities. However, it is a driver of conflict within the area. Moreover, boundary issues are also a driver of conflict between the two communities. This then raises a need to conduct this study, towards understanding the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010).

¹³ T., Allen, and A., Macdonald. "Post-conflict traditional justice: a critical overview." 2013

¹⁴ National Steering Committee on Peace building and Conflict Management (NSC) Secretariat. *National Conflict Mapping and Analysis: Peace and Conflict Trends in Kenya* (Nairobi, 27). 2011.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The absence of visible boundaries on the ground is a challenge in Kenya. It has hampered the coexistence and trade activities that drive Kenya's demographic and economic dynamism. Furthermore, Kenya is a society characterized by unequal and dysfunctional legal, political, social, environmental, and economic structures, inter-county boundary irregularities are a potential recipe for a deeply embedded structural violence.¹⁵ In much of the country, there exists tangible competition for access to land and contest over administrative boundaries because of politics of ethnicity, resource control, and distribution.¹⁶ This is because most boundary change procedures established in the colonial period are still in place to this day. The colonial injustices that separated communities through borders are yet to be addressed.

The Gusii and the Kipsigis have been engaged in conflict against each other for a long time. The conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis is fueled mostly by the fact that they share similar natural resources along the Sotik-Borabu border. Moreover, the two communities share economic and cultural practices such as pastoralism and cattle rustling. These activities have driven conflict between the two communities over the years. Also with the introduction of the multi-party system, the Gusii and Kipsigis communities intensified the conflict, since they started to vote for leaders along ethnic lines. Thus, conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis has evolved over the years in terms of its cause and its impact to the two communities. The introduction of the new constitution in 2010,

¹⁵ T., Yamano, and D., Klaus. "Land conflicts in Kenya: causes, impacts, and resolutions." *Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development/National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. The World Bank* 28 (2005).

¹⁶ S., Moturi, O., Vicky and A., Mildred. "Boundary and resource conflict between Kisii and Nyamira counties at Keroka town (1963-2017)." (2018).

symbolized change, since it set clear boundaries on conflict and encouraged peacebuilding following the 2007/2008 post-election violence. Therefore, it is against this background that the scope of this study covers the period 1992-2010.

Despite literature reviewing inter-ethnic conflict in Kenya, not much has been written on the conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of the Sotik- Borabu border. Scholars like Ochieng¹⁷ and Mwanzi¹⁸ covered the history of the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities, however, the authors did not provide a comprehensive analysis of the effects of the conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. Other studies like the Omwenga¹⁹ point to political and economic factors as the source of conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis during the period 1963 to 2002. The study did not look at the conflict between the two communities after 2002. This study fills that research gap. In its attempt to understand the factors that resulted in continuous and severe conflicts between the two communities during the period 1992 to 2010. This study sought to answer the research question; what are the reasons and impacts behind the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010)?

¹⁷ W., Ochieng. *A Pre-colonial History of the Gusii of Western Kenya from CAD 1500 to 1914*. East African Literature Bureau, 1974.

¹⁸ A., Mwanzi. *A History of the Kipsigis*. East African Literature Bureau. 1997.

¹⁹ M. Omwenga. "*Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002.*" Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

1.4 Objective of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to establish the reasons behind the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010)

1.4.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

- i. To evaluate the root causes of the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010)
- ii. To examine the impacts of the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010)
- iii. To analyze the mitigation measures implemented to end the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010)

1.5 Justification of the Study

The Kipsigis and Gusii communities have experienced conflict for a long time since the pre-colonial period. The conflict between the two communities have been fueled by different causes, among which is the competition for scarce natural resources along the Sotik-Borabu border. Therefore, this study will be beneficial to the leaders and the community members of the Kipsigis and Gusii, since it examines measures that both communities have taken and suggests others that can be implemented to end their long-held conflict. Moreover, the study identifies the root causes of conflict between the two communities; this information can be used to mitigate the conflict by having agreements and negotiations on the approaches to use in sharing the scarce natural resources along the Sotik-Borabu border.

The study is important since it paves way for policy makers both at the national and county levels to come up with strategies to end the conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border. The Gusii and the Kipsigis communities are neighbours; therefore, their peaceful co-existence is required to ensure sustainability of the two communities and the Sotik-Borabu border. The two communities must come together to co-exist and ensure the sustainability of the region. As such, it is the role of the policy-makers to ensure that appropriate policies to promote long-term solutions are adopted by the two communities.

Further, this study is important since it seeks to fill the gap created by other studies as stated elsewhere. Research that seeks to explain the conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis is limited presenting a study gap. Despite the extensive literature on the conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis, to date, border conflict between the two communities is still a festering issue.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study area is the Sotik-Borabu border and its environs. The Gusii and Kipsigis people live side by side on the border. The Gusii practice farming while the Kipsigis are mainly pastoralists.²⁰ The study targeted the two communities because, since independence, the two communities have engaged in conflict for many reasons among which, are competition for scarce resources, power and cattle rustling in the region. The study focused on the period 1992-2010. This is because, the multi-party system which was introduced in 1992 appears to have led to an increase in animosity between the two

²⁰ T., Mong'are, K., Kasiera, J., Njino and P., Bureti. "*Mitigation Efforts of the Seventh Day Adventist Church Teachings to the Borabu/Sotik Boarder 2007/8 Post Election Violence, Kenya.*" Master's thesis, Nairobi University.

communities. Previously, though the communities had conflict, the root cause was for competition for natural resources. However, the introduction of the multi-party system resulted in the Gusii and Kipsigis disputing over political power. In 2010, a new constitution was introduced that provided clear framework on conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Therefore, it was critical to provide an understanding of the conflict between the two communities over the 18 years from 1992-2010.

1.7 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The study faced a number of limitations. The first was that, some of the targeted respondents were not willing to participate in the study. Secondly, the researcher encountered the limitation of language barrier with some of the respondents who participated in the focus group discussion. The use of the focus group discussions though effective in collecting adequate data, was difficult to implement.

1.8 Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to help readers better comprehend cross-border conflict and conflict along the Sotik/Borabu Border. By offering an empirical understanding of cross-border conflict, its origins, repercussions, and mitigating methods, this literature review aids in answering the thesis's main research question.

1.8.1 Cross-Border Conflict

The evolutionary nature of borders is referred to as 'borders in motion' by Victor Konrad in his paper "Towards a Theory of Borders in Motion." ²¹Chiara Brambilla sees

²¹ V., Konrad. "Borders, Bordered Lands and Borderlands: Geographical States of Insecurity between Canada and the United States and the Impacts of Security Primacy." *Borders, Fences and Walls: State of Insecurity* (2014): 85-102.

border evolution as a shift in the way people think about borders over time, arguing that it is the progressive transfer of boundaries from the margins to the political sphere.²² When it comes to the frontiers of Africa, Okumu claims that

*pre-colonial African boundaries 'were not static' and fluctuated in the period immediately before the imposition of colonial rule and the ensuing boundaries.*²³

Boundaries, according to Okumu, are political constructs that reflect the thinking and desires of those in power. The study by Okumu focused on the definition of international borders while the current study focusses on local borders between communities.

Cross-border conflicts are intractable. Conflicts that are difficult to resolve or deescalate are serious and intense, stuck, and difficult to defuse. They persist for a very long time without being resolved.²⁴ Conflicts that are difficult to resolve involve many sides and a wide range of complicated concerns, including ones that are political, economic, social, historical, and cultural in nature. All of these difficulties are seen as crucial to the continued existence of humans' social nature, and efforts to resolve them are often met with resistance. The involved parties are unable to settle on such complicated problems that affect their social life at the negotiation table. As a result, one side of the battle sees the other's extreme attitude as a threat to its own existence. Different groups may become afraid of one another and want to hurt one another. The escalating tensions frequently deceive the groups into ignoring their common history, development concerns, and destiny, fostering an environment that is

²² B., Chiara. "Borders and identities/border identities: The Angola-Namibia border and the plurivocality of the Kwanyama identity." *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 22, no. 2 (2007): 21-38.

²³ Okumu, "The Purpose and Functions of International Boundaries," 37.

²⁴ C., Ruth, and M., Dewdney. *The mediator's handbook: Skills and strategies for practitioners*. Lawbook Co., 2004.

inhospitable for peace to flourish.²⁵ Though, Alio recognized that natural resources scarcity contribute to cross border conflict, the study's geographical interest was elsewhere.

According to Blanchard,²⁶ conflict along the boundaries does not only occur in Africa but the whole globe. Out of the 194 states, only 60 and 71 auxiliary states are free from experiencing boundary conflict²⁷ The author explains that boundary disagreements are a challenge since they escalate into feuds. Although Blanchard²⁸ acknowledges the existence of conflict between communities, there is a further need to examine the cross-border conflict between communities as it is with other states such as Kenya.

Interstate disputes in Africa,²⁹ according to Prescott and Triggs, are the primary cause of violence in the region since delimitation lacked vital knowledge about Africa's inhabitants and geographic facts. These conditions have been escalated by boundary and resource conflicts since borders define control over specific resources within each region. Every attempt to revise borders, whether for strategic, national, or religious reasons inevitably triggers conflict, due to the sensitivity of both sides regarding the loss of resources. Prescott and Triggs only concentrated on the legal framework associated with border conflicts. The authors did not assess the cultural and social aspects of border conflict

²⁵ W., Alio. *Cross-border Natural Resource-Based Conflicts and Regional Security: A Comparison of the Eastern and Western Africa Experiences*. Masters Thesis, University of Nairobi. 2018

²⁶ J., Blanchard. "Linking border disputes and war: An institutional-statist theory." *Geopolitics* 10, no. 4 (2005): 688-711.

²⁷ F., Msafiri. *Escalation and Resolution of Border Disputes and Interstate Conflicts in Africa: The Malawi-Tanzania Case*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2011.

²⁸ J., Blanchard. "Linking border disputes and war: An institutional-statist theory." *Geopolitics* 10, no. 4 (2005): 688-711.

²⁹ V., Prescott, and D., Triggs. *International frontiers and boundaries: Law, politics and geography*. Brill, 2008.

among specific communities. This study filled this gap by acknowledging that social and cultural aspects especially within the African context contribute to cross-border conflicts.

Shah³⁰ and Anyu³¹, stated that the impact of colonization and in particular the development of borders across African states have led to continued disputes and conflicts. Anyu argued that the majority of the interstates and ethnic conflicts in Africa resulted from the artificial borders created by the colonial powers during the colonial period in the 1880s. They confirm that the division of regions during colonial days has resulted in the conflicts between community boundaries attributed to the differences within the communities. This study makes the same assertion that the division of the borders by the colonial power fueled conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.

In Africa, the cross-border conflict has always existed as a social phenomenon that governs inter-human and intercommunal relationships.³² Pre-colonial settlement patterns in Africa were created through conquest and pacification, therefore, they have remained symbolic in the history of different ethnic communities. Some of these pre-colonial rivalries have been extended to post-colonial times affecting relations between ethnic communities as different regions where communities continue to express obsessions and exclusive claims over particular resources in specific territories. Msafiri³³ posited that the cross-border conflicts in the continents of Africa emerged during the pre-colonial period and persist in the modern era as is evident of the Sotik-Borabu conflict between the Gusii

³⁰S., Anup. "Conflicts in Africa-Introduction," 2010

³¹ J., Anyu. "The international court of justice and border-conflict resolution in Africa: The Bakassi peninsula conflict." *Mediterranean Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (2007): 39-55.

³² S., Anup. "Conflicts in Africa-Introduction," Retrieved from <http://www.globalissues.org/article/84/conflicts-inafrica-introduction>. 2010

³³ F., Msafiri. *Escalation and Resolution of Border Disputes and Interstate Conflicts in Africa: The Malawi-Tanzania Case*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2011.

and Kipsigis. The study looked at cross-border conflicts in Africa as a continent, this study was specific to the Sotik-Borabu border in Kenya.

According to Ngeiywa³⁴ cross-border conflict in Kenya started during the contact between the cattle-keeping population and long-distance traders in the 19th Century when pastoralism was largely practiced in East Africa. Presently, these communities are impoverished, dominated, and underprivileged. In recent years, negative developments in terms of border relations have emerged in Kenya, highlighting anew, the relevance of the border question and the measures being taken to address it by the Government. According to Okumu³⁵ such tensions hold a high potential to escalate the interstate conflict in Kenya as a result of natural resources discoveries along the borders. Natural resources on borders or in borderlands have not only enhanced possibilities of inter-county conflicts but have also supported territorial values that were marginalized and neglected by the Government. The study was not specific to the conflict fueled by natural resources scarcity along the Sotik-Borabu border. Hence, it is imperative to understand the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010)

1.8.2 Causes of Cross-Border Conflict

Conflict, according to Mwagiru,³⁶ is ubiquitous in all communities. This indicates that there will always be conflict wherever there are people, just as there would be conflict in any civilization. Conflict in society and among people, he claims, cannot be abolished

³⁴

³⁵ Okumu, W. (2010). Resources and border disputes in Eastern Africa. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 4(2), 279-297.

³⁶ M., Mwagiru "Community Based Approaches and Crisis Prevention Peace and Conflict Management in Kenya". (unpublished, Thesis). 2001.

because it is a natural aspect of life. The causes of cross-boundary conflicts differ concerning the society being investigated. However, power is a constant cause of conflict between not only communities as well as nations. Throughout human existence, the drive to acquire status and power has been regarded as a contributor to the behavior of humans.³⁷ Though the study identified power as a cause for conflict, the focus of the study was on peace building while the focus of this study is providing insight into the nature of cross-border conflict.

Hobbes³⁸ a philosopher, notes that the desire to have power does not end until death. Having power directly translates to the control of resources which often than not are scarce. Moreover, power implies the ability to influence the behavior of other human beings.³⁹ Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson found that status contributes to the decision on resource use and allocation among groups.⁴⁰ Since power is a determinant of resource allocation and utilization, it is imperative to assess whether the Gusii and Kipsigis communities conflict as a result of their attempt to gain power and status over each other.

Zeleza⁴¹ argues that power is a cause of cross-border conflict in Africa with its roots in colonialism. Since independence, some of the African communities are yet to settle down and live in harmony due to the injustice experienced under colonial power. In support

³⁷ I., Frieze, S., Bonka, B., Boneva, Y. Lee-Chai, and J. Bargh. "Power motivation and motivation to help others." *The use and abuse of power* (2001): 75-92.

³⁸ T., Hobbes, and C., Edwin. *Leviathan: with selected variants from the Latin edition of 1668*. Vol. 8348. Hackett Publishing, 1994.

³⁹ D., Galinsky, H., Deborah Gruenfeld, and C., Magee. "From power to action." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 85, no. 3 (2003): 453.

⁴⁰ Gruenfeld, Deborah H., Dacher J. Keltner, and Cameron Anderson. "The effects of power on those who possess it: How social structure can affect social cognition." (2003).

⁴¹ P., Zeleza. "Introduction: The causes and costs of war in Africa." *The roots of African conflicts: The causes and costs* (2008): 1-35.

of this argument, Ramsbotham⁴² notes that political leaders are aware of the ideology that the community that possesses power has access to a large portion of resources. Hence, as communities attempt to gain the power to influence how resources are allocated and utilized, conflict becomes inevitable. Gulliver found that young people in Northern Kenya often engage in raiding activities without informing their elders.⁴³ The authors, Zeleza focused on Africa while Gulliver focused on Northern Kenya region only, this presented a gap to be filled with a specific focus on the Sotik-Borabu border between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.

Lamphear discovered while studying the Somali society that the social function of elders is no longer a privilege of age, but can be played by young men as well if they are affluent or have political authority, such as chiefs or councilors.⁴⁴ As such, the young men can easily misuse their power and influence by engaging in raiding activities or instigating other young people to conduct cattle rustling activities rather than empowering the community to earn an honest living. In the Gusii and Kipsigis communities, it is essential to understand whether the role of elders to guide the society is still respected or has been taken over by young men and women. This study assesses how power and influence have been used by the Gusii and Kipsigis communities to instigate conflict or push for conflict resolution.

⁴² O., Ramsbotham. "The analysis of protracted social conflict: a tribute to Edward Azar." *Review of International Studies* (2005): 109-126.

⁴³ H., Gulliver. "The age-set organization of the Jie tribe." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 83, no. 2 (1953): 147-168.

⁴⁴ J., Lamphear. "Aspects of Turkana leadership during the era of primary resistance." *Journal of African History* (1976): 225-243.

Poverty is another element that contributes to community conflict.⁴⁵ According to Kumssa, the Ethiopia-Kenya cross-border area is marked by a high level of poverty,^{46a} lack of physical infrastructure, low rates of school enrollment, and low literacy levels. The movement of the populations is largely attributed to inadequate resources in the origin country. Hence moving to another country leads to more conflict as a result of competition for the scarce resources available in the host nation. The study by Kumssa paid attention to an international border. This study will concentrate on the dynamics of local borders and establish whether poverty as caused by cattle raiding leads to conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.

Resources are at the epicenter of the survival of a society. However, with the growing population globally, the competition for resources increases resulting in increased conflict. The resources facing stiff competition include land, water, and minerals. The issues of water shortage between Palestine and Israel remain unsolved to date.⁴⁷ In the Middle East, the access and control of water resources is an element of conflict between the Middle East countries. According to Naylor, natural resource-based disputes are violent in most parts of Africa, and wars, like other social activities, necessitate financial muscle and other resources to advance, a fact that has been used to explain many intra-state conflicts in Africa.⁴⁸ Botha, on the other hand, claims that the historical root of the societal conflict is domestic concerns that can escalate to conflict over natural resources, causing

⁴⁵ M., Makoloo, and P., Yash. *Kenya: Minorities, indigenous peoples and ethnic diversity*. London: Minority Rights Group International, 2005.

⁴⁶ Kumssa, Asfaw, John F. Jones, and James Herbert Williams. "Conflict and human security in the North Rift and North Eastern Kenya." *International Journal of social economics* 36, no. 10 (2009): 1008-1020.

⁴⁷ J., Fröhlich. "Water: Reason for conflict or catalyst for peace? The case of the Middle East." *L'Europe en Formation* 3 (2012): 139-161.

⁴⁸ R., Naylor. *Economic warfare: sanctions, embargo busting, and their human cost*. UPNE, 2001.p.18

instability in places like the DRC, Angola, Liberia, and Sudan, as a political vehicle for calling for warfare.⁴⁹ It is evident that the issue of resources drives conflict across the world from the Middle East to Africa, however, this study aims to determine whether natural resources can be deemed as a root cause for conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities over the period 1992 to 2010.

In Kenya, the Pokot raided the Luhya, Turkana, Keiyo, Sabot, Tudn, and Sengwar. Globally, the Pokot raided the Sebei and the Karamajong of Uganda, while the Turkana have conducted raiding activities in Toposa, Ethiopia.⁵⁰ The lack of adequate control over the whole landscape of the porous borders makes the scenario more complex. Further, Omosa,⁵¹ found that conflicts arising from grazing land and water resources on the border of Kenya and Somalia have occurred since the independence of both nations. Gakuria⁵² also observes that the fight for scarce resources contributes largely to the conflict occurring among Kenyan communities. In addition, George,⁵³ notes that the two main pastoralist communities in Marsabit County, in the north of Kenya, the Borana and Gabra, for instance, have a long history of violent conflict over precious resources like pasturelands and water sources. From these findings, it is clear that scarce natural resources are drivers of cross-border conflict. As such, this study aims to confirm or reject these findings while focusing on conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010.

⁴⁹ A., Botha. "Relationship between Africa and international terrorism: Causes and linkages." In *Conference on Southern African and International Terrorism. Brenthurst Foundation, Tswalu*, pp. 25-27. 2007.

⁵⁰ K. Ngeiywa. *Deterring Cross-Border Conflict in the Horn of Africa: A Case Study of Kenya-Uganda Border*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2008.

⁵¹ K., Omosa. "The impact of water conflicts on pastoral livelihoods." *The case of Wajir district. IISD, Winnipeg* (2005).

⁵² Gakuria, A. "Natural resource-based conflict among pastoralist communities in Kenya." Ph.D. diss., University of Nairobi, 2013.

⁵³ F., George. *Pastoral Organizations is a Key for Uncertain Environments*. Utah State University, Logan. 2008

In most developing nations and in particular those in Africa, cattle raiding is a catalyst for conflict. This is grounded on the culture of different societies; some of which advocate cattle raiding as a sign of superiority. Pastoralists' traditional cultural customs, according to Gakuria,⁵⁴ are another source of conflict. For generations, they (traditionalists) have fought for pastureland and water sources. Although not originally considered a crime, this practice has expressed itself in cattle raiding. Furthermore, the pastoralists' suspicion, revenge adventures, and anxiety are all heightened as a result of the commercialization practice. Political change in Somalia, according to Goldsmith,⁵⁵ has resulted in an upsurge in the practice. He identified Mukunumbi, a market in Lamu, as the location where stolen livestock is sold under the patronage of trade lords. Such far-flung markets are intended to thwart the traditional practice of offending clans recovering livestock and compensating them. Jeremy Lind⁵⁶ found that among the pastoralists in Turkana, raiding for commercial purposes was a contributor to violence than any challenge raised by the destruction of the ecology. The Gusii and Kipsigis are pastoralists, hence cattle grazing is a common phenomenon among the two communities. However, with the emergence of modernization, it is imperative to assess whether cattle raiding is still practiced by the two communities and whether it results in ethnic conflict. Moreover, while the studies associated border conflicts to traditional practices such as pastoralism, the authors did not

⁵⁴ Gakuria, A. "Natural resource-based conflict among pastoralist communities in Kenya." Ph.D. diss., University of Nairobi, 2013.

⁵⁵ P., Goldsmith. "Cattle, Khat, and Guns: Trade, Conflict, and Security on northern Kenya's Highland-Lowland Interface." In *A Case Study, A paper prepared for the USAID Conference on Conflict Resolution in the Great Horn of Africa*. 1997.

⁵⁶ J., Lind. "Supporting pastoralist livelihoods in eastern Africa through peace building." *Development* 49, no. 3 (2006): 111-115.

look into the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict that is largely motivated by cultural practices and was the key focus of this study.

1.8.3 Impacts of Cross-Border Conflict

People frequently live in fear and uncertainty in border zones. Conflicts and insecurity result in the loss of life and means of subsistence, harm to the body and mind, interruption of trade, and interference with education. Many residents in border areas are compelled to maintain a constant state of heightened alertness in order to repel any incursions.⁵⁷ Conflict-related displacements imperil agro-pastoral farming, local enterprises, and the education of school-age children, all of which slow down the economy's growth in border regions. In addition to the aforementioned negative effects, conflicts and insecurity result in losses of life and property. The study by Alio, comprehensive explanation of the impacts of cross-border conflicts, was an eye opener for this study.

In developing countries, conflict along the borders has resulted in the destitution of women, whereby making ends meet becomes a challenge. The acts of lawlessness and violence in developing countries hinder projects by NGOs and civil rights movements to be implemented in society. In such regions where violence is prevalent, groups of women often live in fear of being attacked and violated.⁵⁸ This is supported by a report by the Kenya Human Rights Commission in collaboration with the Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD), that was significantly involved in peace-building

⁵⁷ W., Alio. *Cross-border Natural Resource-Based Conflicts and Regional Security: A Comparison of the Eastern and Western Africa Experiences*. Masters Thesis, University of Nairobi. 2018

⁵⁸ T., Ayot. *Ethnic Conflict in Kenya and its Impact on the Policy*. Paper presented at the CODESRIA General Assembly. 1995.

initiatives in Sotik and Borabu, documented sexual assault during and after the war in 2007/2008. The study by Ayot argued that the most vulnerable groups in society during conflict are the women, children and senior citizens. This study attempted to determine whether over 20 years later (since Ayot conducted his study), women and children are still among the most vulnerable groups in the context of cross-border conflict. Women, whether literate or not, are generally powerful members of any community.⁵⁹ As active participants in decision-making processes and community-based conflict efforts, they can play a key role. They are the first to fall victim to violence in high-risk regions, such as near community borders, and they suffer the most. In many situations, they are victims of different war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the use of sexual abuse as a weapon of war. Despite horrific experiences, women have already proved via their activities that they are powerful and determined actors in the peace process, and thereby mitigation.⁶⁰ As a result, it is critical to enlist their support to achieve long-term stability. The study by Opiyo was not centered around the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict that has been persistent since pre-colonial period. As such, this study applies these mitigation measures in determining whether, during the period 1992 to 2010, women were used in mitigating conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border between the Kipsigis and Gusii communities.

Eaton⁶¹ notes that the loss of cattle during the cross-border conflict between the Pokot and Turkana communities has become a common phenomenon in the region. The author explains that the commercialization of cattle has resulted in more cattle raiding. The

⁵⁹ F., Opiyo, W., Oliver, S., Janpeter, and M., Stephen. "Resource-based conflicts in drought-prone Northwestern Kenya: The drivers and mitigation mechanisms." (2012).

⁶⁰ K. Ngeiywa. *Deterring Cross-Border Conflict in the Horn of Africa: A Case Study of Kenya-Uganda Border*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2008.

⁶¹ D., Eaton. "The business of peace: raiding and peace work along the Kenya-Uganda border (Part I)." *African Affairs* 107, no. 426 (2008): 89-110.

continuous and constant conflict between the Turkana and the Pokot has resulted in the loss of more than 90,000 animals by the two communities as indicated by a CEWARN report of 2010. In support, Stites and Akabwai⁶² explained that cattle loss among pastoral groups due to conflict has resulted in a social change in terms of the responsibility of the different genders in society. The loss of cattle has limited men's ability to provide for their wives and children, and livelihood responsibilities have shifted from the domain of the males of livestock keeping to the domain of women practicing agriculture. The two studies pave way for further research to be conducted to assess whether the loss of cattle is a common phenomenon witnessed during cross-border conflict involving other communities such as the Gusii and Kipsigis.

Destruction of property is often associated with trans-border conflict. According to Schilling et al,⁶³ during the period 2006-2009, approximately 20 homes were looted and vandalized in Kaputir in Turkana County. In Nauyapong and Lask, it was recorded that the Turkana people started to steal beehives and maize as a result of hunger. Further, Omwenga⁶⁴ observed that the 1992 inter-ethnic animosities in Kenya, resulted in the loss of property by arson. There was also a decrease in raw materials and food suppliers for industries resulting in the expensive importation of maize, sugar, and wheat. This had a ripple effect leading to price fluctuation of basic goods in the conflict-prone regions. Other people also took advantage of the circumstances and grabbed the land which had been left

⁶² E., Stites, and A., Darlington. "We are now reduced to women!: Impacts of forced disarmament in Karamoja, Uganda." *Nomadic Peoples* 14, no. 2 (2010): 24-43.

⁶³ J., Schilling, M., Akuno, J., Scheffran, and T., Weinzierl. "On raids and relations: Climate change, pastoral conflict and adaptation in northwestern Kenya." *Conflict-sensitive adaptation to climate change in Africa* 241 (2014).

⁶⁴ M. Omwenga. "Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002." Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

by the affected groups who fled the regions while some bought the lands at throw-away prices from the affected communities. Granted that destruction of property follows any armed conflict, it is essential to understand why the Gusii and Kipsigis have continuously engaged in a conflict which may ultimately result in property destruction. The study by Schilling only looked at cross-border conflict over a 3-year period. This study will focus on an 18-year period to ensure adequate data collection that will facilitate in making conclusions.

Schilling et al.⁶⁵ further note that the direct impacts of cattle raiding on the well-being of human are injuries and loss of lives during the raids. The author observed that in Turkana during the period 2006-2009, there were 592 hospital records on raid-related deaths. CEWARN notes that in 2009 640 deaths in West Pokot and Turkana were reported to be caused as a result of raiding activities. This is an indication of the increased extent of a cross-border conflict between communities. The study was however not based on the conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border found between the Gusii and Kipsigis lands..

Erosion of social ties is an impact that follows trans-border conflict. According to Goldsmith,⁶⁶ from a traditional standpoint, communities in Africa living near each other were bound through cultural ties. Inter-community activities such as joint marriages, circumcisions, celebrations, and events such as royal weddings and royal funerals reinforced and articulated the cultural linkages over time. One of the biggest tragedies of conflict, however, has been the gradual but inexorable disintegration of such noble and

⁶⁵ J., Schilling, M., Akuno, J., Scheffran, and T., Weinzierl. "On raids and relations: Climate change, pastoral conflict and adaptation in northwestern Kenya." *Conflict-sensitive adaptation to climate change in Africa* 241 (2014).

⁶⁶ P., Goldsmith, H., Ahmed, and M., Babiker. "*Fighting for inclusion: conflicts among pastoralists in Eastern Africa and the Horn.*" Development Policy Management Forum. Nairobi. 2007.

time-tested social bonds that bind neighbors. The relationship between the Gusii and Kipsigis has always been tainted since the pre-colonial periods, therefore, this study assessed whether the social ties of the Gusii and Kipsigis communities have changed over time.

Further, Goldsmith et al⁶⁷, explained that trans-border conflict impacts the environment negatively. The pressure on the already fragile ecosystem during times of conflict may be difficult to reverse. The movement of large herds of livestock on limited space with regards to pastoralists' conflict can be devastating. The emphasis on physical and structural violence brings together the discourse of human security with injustice, environmental justice, and inequality.⁶⁸ Sustainable issues are aligned with issues on human security and especially concerning the management of environment and rights, land distribution, land-use practices, and poverty. The authors explained that the environment suffers in situations of conflict; this is because a lot of pressure is put on the environment by both conflicting parties. This study aims to assess whether the environment along the Sotik-Borabu border has suffered as a result of conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis from 1992 to 2010.

Lokiyo⁶⁹ explains that the displacement of persons is a phenomenon commonly associated with trans-border conflict. The author explains that in the case of rivers Turkwell and Kerio, 78% of the pastoralists move to Uganda while only 10% can settle in the safe

⁶⁷ P., Goldsmith, H., Ahmed, and M., Babiker. *Fighting for inclusion: conflicts among pastoralists in Eastern Africa and the Horn.* Development Policy Management Forum. Nairobi. 2007

⁶⁸ A., Schnurr, and A., Larry. eds. *Natural Resources and Social Conflict: Towards Critical Environmental Security.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

⁶⁹ E., Lokiyo. *Transborder conflict between the Turkana and Pokot in Kainuk and Alale divisions, Kenya 1995–2013* (Doctoral dissertation, MA dissertation. Nairobi: Kenyatta University). 2014

zones of the riverbanks. In the case of the Turkana and Pokot border conflict, Lokiyo posits the temporary and permanent displacement of community members following conflict is inevitable. Further, Chelanga, Singo, and Ndege⁷⁰ noted that even though ethnic clashes helped KANU win the general elections of 1992 and 1997, they displaced and disenfranchised thousands of potential voters, denying them the opportunity to exercise their democratic and citizenship rights. In a research carried out by ACLED⁷¹ in Northern Kenya, they found that a total of 164,457 people have been displaced by the inter-ethnic conflicts in the pastoralist North Frontier District of Kenya. 70% of the displaced are women and children below 14 years. Following these findings, the study analyzed the extent of displacement between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities during the period 1992 to 2010 and whether the displacement was temporary or permanent. This is because, Omwenga focused on the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict upto 2002, presenting a time gap to be filled, that this study focused up to 2010 when the new constitution was promulgated.

Social amenities are directly impacted by trans-border conflict. According to Mkutu,⁷² in Karamoja, health facilities are poorly equipped and the access to health care services by the people in the area is a challenge. According to a report by the GoK (2009a and 2009b) the doctor-patient ratio in Laikipia West and Laikipia North are 1:271,720 and 1: 18,710 respectively. The poor state of social amenities results from the displacement of people after a border conflict. On the other hand, Bond,⁷³ observes that the majority of

⁷⁰ K., Chelanga, Ndege, P. O., and Singo, S. M. (2009). *The Crisis of Governance: Politics and Ethnic Conflict in Kenya*. Moi University. Center for Refugee Studies. 2009

⁷¹ Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED). *Conflict Trends: Real Time Analysis of African Political Violence*. No.1. 2012.

⁷² K., Mkutu. "Impact of small arms insecurity on the public health of pastoralists in the Kenya–Uganda border regions." *Crime, Law and Social Change* 47, no. 1 (2007): 33-56.

⁷³ J., Bond. "Conflict, development and security at the agro–pastoral–wildlife nexus: a case of Laikipia County, Kenya." *Journal of development studies* 50, no. 7 (2014): 991-1008.

people would have preferred to have their children be in school, however, the lack of schools that are accessible within the area lacks adequate teachers and essential facilities. The lack of schools emanates from the destruction of property during conflict while the lack of teachers is attributed to the displacement of people during and after a conflict in Laikipia. The average literacy level of Laikipia West is 54% an indication, that the region has poor standards of educational facilities.⁷⁴ These findings shed light on the social impact of cross-border conflict, while this study sought to assess whether social amenities including hospitals, schools, churches, and shopping centers along the Sotik-Borabu border were affected due to conflict during the period 1992 to 2010.

Conflict is known to interfere directly with the production of food by hindering farmers from conducting their activities on time and lowering the capacities of populations in many other ways. Food distribution in areas of armed conflict also faces frequent interruptions, due to logistical problems as encountered in the transportation of aid, lack of transport vehicles, and refusal by government forces to permit convoys to pass through their territories. The objective of the latter is to stem any advances or gains, on the part of the opposition, through deliberate starvation and depopulation of the rebel-held territories.⁷⁵ This study sought to determine whether the agricultural aspect of the Gusii and Kipsigis communities was affected by cross-border conflict during the period 1992 to 2010.

⁷⁴ Government of Kenya. *Population and Housing Census*, Central Bureau for Statistics: Nairobi. 2009.

⁷⁵ M. Omwenga. "*Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002.*" Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

1.8.4 Mitigation Measures of Cross-Border Conflict

According to Guldumann, the traditional approach to conflict reduction measures was primarily spearheaded by the United Nations (UN) and its member nations.⁷⁶ This strategy was based on impartiality and followed the UN charter's objectives. Traditional peacekeeping, according to De Coning, was about sustaining the status quo.⁷⁷ The peacekeepers had the full support of the warring parties in this traditional sense.⁷⁸ Creating conflict buffer zones, supervising military withdrawals, providing border protection, defending government structures and politicians, and ensuring free and fair elections are among the tasks that peacekeeping soldiers would be involved in. The study by Guldumann focused on peacebuilding measures commonly adopted in developed nations. This presented a gap for measures adopted in rural settings in developing countries such as Kenya.

In response to widespread criticism of the previous approach, the United Nations and its member nations devised a new peace-building strategy. According to De Coning, the focus of international conflict management has shifted from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in the post-Cold War era. This shift reflects the above-mentioned more holistic understanding of peacebuilding. This shift is most noticeable at the United Nations, which continues to play a role in international conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Several countries, notably the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sri Lanka, Timor-

⁷⁶ T., Guldumann. Peacekeeping Under Strain: Coping with Evolving Contradictions?. *Peace and Conflict Review*, 4(2), 68-79, 2010.

⁷⁷ C., De Coning. The coherence dilemma in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction systems. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 8(3), 85-110. 2008.

⁷⁸ T., Guldumann. Peacekeeping Under Strain: Coping with Evolving Contradictions?. *Peace and Conflict Review*, 4(2), 68-79, 2010.

Leste, Guatemala, Liberia, and Somalia, have used this novel approach to peacebuilding.⁷⁹

This study seeks to determine whether peace building approach to be used to end conflict along the Sotik-Borabu region would be effective.

The role of parliament should be to advance peace. According to Lokiyo, the links or bridges between the people and the government, the capital and the outlying regions, and among constituencies and communities within countries are members of parliament, politicians, elders, youth leaders, teachers, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially in areas where communication networks are weak.⁸⁰ If the will is there and it is skillfully exploited, they may readily transmit the message of peace. As a result, the parliament has a responsibility to peacefully resolve problems rather than engage in fighting as communities around border lines do. Parliamentarians are required to be more proactive and neutral in shaping the political agenda for peace and prosperity, while also addressing the demands of all people, to foster trust and avoid cross-border conflicts from escalating. It is also up to each parliament to design a mechanism of allocating resources properly, in collaboration with the government, to address the socioeconomic needs of neglected pastoral communities.⁸¹ The study by Lokiyo focused on the Turkana-Pokot conflict, the current study focused on the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict. This study is critical to the current research since it calls out the role that leaders and in particular parliamentary leaders can play to mitigate conflict. In adherence to the current study, it will be assessed

⁷⁹ De Coning, Cedric. "From peacebuilding to sustaining peace: Implications of complexity for resilience and sustainability." *Resilience* 4, no. 3 (2016): 166-181.

⁸⁰ E., Lokiyo. "Transborder conflict between the Turkana and Pokot in Kainuk and Alale divisions, Kenya 1995–2013." PhD diss., MA dissertation. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, 2014.

⁸¹ This is because most cross-border conflicts have their genesis as unfair distribution of natural resources

whether leaders have contributed to ending the cross-border conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010.

According to the Uwiano Platform for Peace, Kenya has seen intermittent violence that may be divided into high-level conflicts marked by the ethnic-based struggle for state authority and low-level, ongoing conflicts fueled by resource rivalry.⁸² On a small scale local level, peace-building efforts have involved bringing people together to have a discourse about how to resolve their conflict over the management of resources like grazing land, usually led by the local leaders.⁸³

Onyango⁸⁴ revealed that conflict resolution efforts can include both peace arrangements directed by the administration, and political pioneers, and at times by external partners, such as the NGO, and through grass-roots activities. The grass-roots peace-building activity develops out of misery and dissatisfaction caused by clashes. The most utilized grass-root peace-building methodology in West-Pokot was establishing peace committees headed by local elders. This technique included butchering a goat and the utilization of goat blood for purging. Sharing a feast among the warring networks' senior citizens was an indication of serene concurrence. The focus of Onyango's study was in West Pokot, presenting a gap for further studies to be conducted focusing on other communities such as the Gusii and Kipsigis. Hence, the current study borrowed from this

⁸² Uwiano Joint Secretariat, *Uwiano Platform for Peace: Experiences and Lessons Learned*, (Nairobi, 2012), viii.

⁸³ K., Solonka. "Post-conflict peace building in East Africa: The case of Sotik and Borabu constituencies in Kenya, 1990-2012." PhD diss., University of Nairobi., 2013.

⁸⁴ E., Onyango. "Cross-Border Conflict Management Measures Adopted By Non-Governmental Organizations In Kenya: A Survey Of West Pokot County." Phd Diss., Africa Nazarene University, 2019.

study to assess whether the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities used senior citizens' networks to resolve their conflicts during the period 1992 to 2010.

Using the Kenya-Uganda border violence as an example, Ngeiywa⁸⁵ described livestock branding as a technique for identifying cattle that have been stolen from a particular community. Although it was put into place after both nations attained independence, it hasn't been frequently followed or enforced. The Ministry of Livestock, which is also in charge of collecting data for future use, assigns each region a special mark that is used to identify livestock. Theoretically, because of the marks present, brands ought to help both the government and good Samaritans identify cattle that doesn't belong in a particular area. Citizens who are concerned about their safety should report stray cattle to their elders, the local government, or, if there is one nearby, the police. This program was implemented by the Kenyan government among pastoral communities in the country's northern districts. The method works well, and peace initiatives and institutions operating in the region promote and support it. In the Karamojong region, the Ugandan government has followed suit, ensuring that any cattle stolen from either side of the border can be retrieved by security officers. During cross-border commission meetings, government officials frequently bring up the problem of branding livestock in pastoral conflict regions. While the premise behind branding and identification is valid, this system will not work effectively without continued community and law enforcement assistance. The study focused on an international border while this study will focus on a local border, the Sotik-Borabu border. Since cattle rearing is practiced by both the Gusii and Kipsigis

⁸⁵ K. Ngeiywa. *Deterring Cross-Border Conflict in the Horn of Africa: A Case Study of Kenya-Uganda Border*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2008.

communities, it is imperative to ascertain whether as a mitigating strategy, the two communities have adopted branding during the years 1992 to 2010.

1.8.5 Gusii and the Kipsigis Conflict along the Sotik/Borabu Border

The Gusii and Kipsigis communities have conflicted since before the colonialization of Kenya. The bad relations between the two communities began during their migration around the 17th or 18th centuries. The dispute was attributed to the scarcity of land in the region where both communities intended to reside. The conflict persisted and intensified with the arrival of colonial rule. The conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities worsened as the colonial powers utilized the segmentation between the ethnic groups to their advantage.⁸⁶ The colonial powers divided the two communities further by creating a buffer so that they could not interact and did not take measures to curb cattle raiding on the Gusii by the Kipsigis. Therefore, it can be argued that the colonial powers encouraged conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis since they did not implement any measures for peacebuilding.

The post-independent Government has the greater responsibility for encouraging the conflicts between the two communities, despite the fact that colonialism also contributed to further segregation and hostility between the two ethnic groupings. This is due to the fact that it accomplished nothing more than preserve colonial borders and administrative systems while failing to address the issues that colonialism had caused, such

⁸⁶ M. Omwenga. "*Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002.*" Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

as the land issue.⁸⁷ Thus, the Kenyan government did not deal with issues relating to intercommunity relations and international cooperation.

Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that the Gusii and Kipsigis occasionally coexisted in a positive way after independence, as seen by the economic, cultural, and social activities that took place across the border. The Kipsigis and the Abagusii co-operated in solving common problems that affected them. The two communities also engaged in trade, especially at Kamukunji, Ndanai, Ole Miriri, and Centre markets.⁸⁸ However, since the re-introduction of multiparty democracy in Kenya in 1992, political parties have been used as vehicles for ethnic political power. This was not any different among the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. These political parties used by politicians to air their ethnic sentiments, often lacked a national outlook and therefore, only increased ethnic animosity and prejudices instead of promoting national unity. This was because, in most instances, either of the two communities were in support of different political parties.⁸⁹ Following the victory of Mwai Kibaki as President in 2007/2008, this pattern repeated itself in consecutive presidential elections, resulting in the highest death toll in post-election violence to date. By putting political and economic authorities at sub-national levels (counties) managed democratically by the people rather than the national or central authority, the Constitution provided the nation with a platform to seek new levels of economic and democratic development.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ E., Ochieng. "*Participation of women in peacebuilding in the cross-border conflict between the Luo of upper Nyakach and Kipsigis of Sigowet sub-counties: 1963-1992.*" phd diss., school of humanities and social sciences, Kenyatta university, 2017.

⁸⁸ S., Omvoyo. "*The Agricultural Changes in the Kipsigis Land, C. 1894-1963: An Historical Inquiry.*" PhD diss., Kenyatta University, 2000.

⁸⁹ Most Kipsigis always supported KANU while most Gusii supported DP and other political parties

⁹⁰ The government of Kenya, the new constitution (2010).

1.9 Theoretical Approach

This study was anchored on two theories; the conflict theory and the conflict transformational theory. The conflict theory by Randall Collins⁹¹ (in Abraham, 1982) assesses varying social situations grounded on the conflicting interests of the involved parties. The theory posits that human beings are sociable beings but prone to engage in conflict. Inequality divides the society into grade level hierarchies with the persons with resources and those lacking the resources. Since competition among social groups is inevitable in a world where resources are scarce, individuals aim to maximize their share of natural resources. Those who control a greater share of resources maximize the power that comes with it by using coercion to influence people.

The conflict theory suggests that communities are in perpetual conflict as a result of competition over limited resources. The theory argues that a society is only preserved not by obedience and agreement but by power and dominance. Ochieng⁹² adopted the conflict theory and notes that communities with wealth and power strive to use whichever means to secure by eliminating the poor and powerless. The conflict hypothesis is based on the idea that groups and individuals in society try to maximize their interests. Furthermore, Galtung's⁹³ conflict theory also incorporates a critical analysis of the conflict's causes, dynamics, actors, and outcomes.

The conflict hypothesis is primarily criticized for ignoring the stability of society. While cultures are always changing, the majority of the changes are modest and frequently

⁹¹ M., Abraham. *Modern sociological theory: an introduction*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1982.

⁹² E., Ochieng, "*Participation of women in peacebuilding in the cross-border conflict between the Luo of upper Nyakach and Kipsigis of Sigowet sub-counties: 1963-1992.*" phd diss., school of humanities and social sciences, Kenyatta university, 2017.

⁹³ J. Galtung, "Violence, peace, and peace research." *Journal of peace research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-191.

go unrecognized. According to Obiefuna⁹⁴, hold fairly steady across time. Conflict theory emphasizes change and conflict while also acknowledging that neither (conflict & change) is superior to the other.

Despite the limitation identified by Obiefuna, the conflict theory by Collins is critical for this study in explaining the conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii along the Sotik-Borabu border.⁹⁵ The conflict at the Sotik-Borabu border is largely a result of competition for scarce resources and power. The theory explains that conflict between communities is mostly associated with competition for power and scarce resources. However, this theory is limited since it is grounded on the opinion that conflict is only caused by resources competition. The conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities is caused by a wide range of reasons among which include poverty and political influence. Still, the theory is critical in explaining how scarce resources such as land, water, and vegetation have resulted directly or indirectly in the conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.

The proponents of the conflict transformational theory include Johan Galtung⁹⁶, John Paul Lederach⁹⁷, and Thania Paffenholz.⁹⁸ The theory advocates for not only reestablishing the status quo but it aims to have a long term impact on the structure, process, and outcome of oriented efforts while emphasizing on social change and justice. The theory

⁹⁴ C., Obiefuna, "Conflict Theory and the Analysis of Religious Experience." *African Research Review* 5, no. 1 (2011).

⁹⁵ M. Omwenga. "Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002." Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

⁹⁶ J., Galtung. "Violence, peace, and peace research." *Journal of peace research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-191.

⁹⁷ P., Lederach. "Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies." *Washington, DC: USIP* (1997).

⁹⁸ P., Thania. *Conflict Transformation: Three Lenses in one Frame*, New Routes, Vol 14, Life and Peace Institute, 2. www.life-peace.org. 2009.

emphasizes the need to transform the asymmetric power and cultural imbalances between parties in conflict to find a solution to a conflict. As such, for its effectiveness, conflict transformation must be applied in all aspects of society simultaneously and independently.⁹⁹ The theory is appropriate since it supports the inclusion of all aspects of a community. The strength of any community is unity and togetherness within its members. As such in resolving land disputes all aspects of a community must be considered to ensure the successful resolution of conflict.

Zistel¹⁰⁰ adopted the theory and noted that the theory of conflict transformation builds on the traditional resolution technique of mediation which aims at empowering people. Since a large portion of society has its techniques and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict, attempts at conflict transformation must involve respect of resources from within the community and put in place initiatives for building peace while putting into consideration the culture of the society. Culture is a valuable societal resource for settling the conflict. Culture allows the general public to take control of the problem-solving process. Many governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have encouraged local and indigenous conflict resolution schemes.

Lederach¹⁰¹ offers analytical support that addresses the approach to transforming conflicts that are deep-rooted in society such as land conflicts. Moreover, the author

⁹⁹ Op cit Susanne B. Zistel, p 15, Michelle Maise, 'Conflict Transformation: A Circular Journey With a Purpose', in Three lenses in one frame, New Routes, Vol 14, Life And Peace Institute, 2, (2009), www.lifepeace.org, Owen Frazer, Lakdar Ghetas, Conflict Transformation: Approaches to Conflict Transformation, Lessons from Algeria, Denmark, Egypt, Kenya, morocco, Tajikistan and Yemen, Geneva, Cordoba Now Forum, 2013, www.css.ethz.ch, 2014, www.cordoue.ch, accessed on 1st May, 2014, www.colorado.edu/conflict/transform/index.htm.

¹⁰⁰ Op cit Susanne B. Zistel pp 22-23

¹⁰¹ P., Lederach. "Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies." *Washington, DC: USIP* (1997).

provides a framework to solve conflict and maintain reconciliation for the long term. The author argues that building peace by solving disagreements is a process allowing the transformation of conflict to occur at the top, middle and lower levels of the society.¹⁰² This is a conceptual background of the approaches and activities that support the involvement and participation of conflicting people in building peace in post-conflict societies. The analysis by Lederach does not cover the solving of disputes from just one level. The analysis assumes that conflict resolution has to occur from either bottom to top level. In the case of traditional dispute resolution, the process can either occur within two levels or just one level between the individuals disputing.

The theory is criticized by Mayer¹⁰³, on the ideology that resolution and transformation are connected. The author criticizes the assumption that the resolution of disputes has the potential to facilitate individual transformation. The author also states that transformation only occurs through the individual experiences of people with conflict and resolution. Further, Väyrynen¹⁰⁴ noted that transformation and resolution ought not to be perceived as interconnected terms but rather, transformation ought to precede resolution.

Despite the criticism, the theory is critical to this research since it emphasizes re-establishing and restoration of the status quo for the conflicting parties. The theory has focused on improving relations between the conflicting parties to ensure there is no repeat of such conflicts. According to the theory, conflict is only transformed once a balance between the conflicting parties is reestablished and both parties come towards a common

¹⁰² Lederach, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies, p 39

¹⁰³ B., Mayer. *The dynamics of conflict resolution: A practitioner's guide*. John Wiley & Sons, 2010.

¹⁰⁴ R., Väyrynen. "From conflict resolution to conflict transformation: a critical review." In *The new agenda for peace research*, pp. 135-160. Routledge, 2019.

understanding. Hence, this theory is important for understanding the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010).

1.10 Hypothesis

The study will be based on the following hypothesis;

- i. The root causes of conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis along the Sotik/Borabu border is largely attributed to cattle rustling and competition over scarce resources (1992 to 2010).
- ii. There are impacts of the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010).
- iii. Mitigation measures have been implemented in the past to end the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010).

1.11 Methodology

The study was conducted using a descriptive cross-sectional research approach. This is because it aims to demonstrate the description of study variables. This research strategy was suited for this study since it allowed for the collection of data from a specified sample and made it easier to describe the phenomenon under investigation. Furthermore, the research methodology enabled implications to be drawn from the findings.¹⁰⁵ Hence, the research design was appropriate for understanding the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010).

¹⁰⁵ O. Mugenda, and A., Mugenda. Research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. 2003. *African Centre for technology Studies. Nairobi. Reny a.*

The study targeted 75 respondents who comprised ward administrators, village elders, and local chiefs from both Nyamira and Bomet Counties. The study a census sampling technique here the entire target population was included in the study. This ensured that the key informants, namely; ward administrators, village elders, and chiefs are interviewed. Since there are 25 wards in Bomet County and 20 wards in Nyamira County, the study focused on 45 ward administrators. It also focused on 10 Nyamira village elders, 10 Bomet village elders, and 5 local chiefs from each of both Counties. This made a sample population of 75 respondents. The sample size is presented in Appendix III. The village elders, ward administrators, and chiefs were interviewed since they were in a better position to answer questions that were asked. The group of interviewees had lived in the area for a considerable period, so they were rich in information regarding the Gusii-Kipsigis conflict along Sotik/Borabu border.

Primary data was used in this study. An interview guide was used to collect data from the 10 local chiefs from Bomet and Nyamira County. The interview guide was semi-structured, allowing the key informants to give their opinions on the research topic freely. This ensured maximum information was gathered from the key informants. The semi-structured interview guide was appropriate for this study since it allowed one-on-one interactions with key informants, moreover, it facilitated the collection of in-depth data from the key informants on their opinions on the research topic. The semi-structured interview allowed for detailed discussions with the informants on their understanding of the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010).

Further, the study used focus group discussions (FGDs) to collect data from the 45 ward administrators and 20 village elders from Nyamira and Bomet County. The researcher

had 4 FGDs each made up of 13 respondents. The FGDs facilitated the collection of qualitative data. Moreover, through the use of FGDs, the researcher was able to gather unfiltered information on the opinion of the understanding of the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010). In addition, the study collected secondary data from reports and published documents on the study topic. Secondary data collected was based on cross-border conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.

The interview guide, focus group talks, and secondary data sources were used to collect qualitative data. As a result, the data was examined using content analysis. Content analysis according to Creswell and Cheryl¹⁰⁶ is used to determine themes and concepts from qualitative data. The content analysis was used to show the opinions of the informants on the reasons behind the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010). The presentation of the qualitative data was in the form of narration.

¹⁰⁶ W., Creswell and P., Cheryl. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications, 2016.

CHAPTER TWO: CAUSES OF THE GUSII AND THE KIPSIGIS CONFLICT ALONG THE SOTIK/BORABU BORDER (1992 to 2010)

2.1 Introduction

Mwagiru,¹⁰⁷ asserts that conflict is present in all societies. He contends that because conflict is a natural part of existence, it cannot be eliminated in society. Since before Kenya was colonized, there has been conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. The bad relations between the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities have persisted to date. The Gusii and Kipsigis communities share the Sotik-Borabu border which was initially set up by the colonial powers. Conflict between the two communities is often associated with the border. During the period 1992 to 2010, the conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities was caused by different factors. This chapter covers the causes that have led to the conflict between the two communities along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period (1992 to 2010). These causes include; cattle rustling, power, poverty, political influence, and scarce natural resources.

2.2 Cattle Rustling

The Gusii and the Kipsigis are neighbours, who engage in different practices. Among the cultural practices by the two communities since pre-colonial time include; agricultural farming and pastoralism. The practice of pastoralism especially by the Gusii may be attributed to their proximity to the Maasai community who are known for pastoralism as the main cultural practice. Due to the nature of pastoralism that relies; on the available scarce resources, conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis in terms of cattle

¹⁰⁷ M., Mwagiru “Community Based Approaches and Crisis Prevention Peace and Conflict Management in Kenya”. (unpublished, Thesis). 2001.

raiding was inevitable. Cattle rustling was a common cultural practice until recently. Cattle rustling was used to depict the more powerful community based on the number of raids they successfully conducted. Raids were often used to restock cattle following droughts or other natural disasters. On the down side, the raids prompted retaliation, revenge, and counter-retaliation prolonging strife in society. The respondents from the focus group¹⁰⁸ indicated that cattle raiding as an activity often conducted by the young men as a rite of passage. However, as the animosity grew between the two communities, cattle raiding become an issue of contention. The respondents¹⁰⁹ argued that convincing the young men to stop cattle raiding would be difficult granted that they had witnessed the incidences from a young age. This as reported by the local chiefs in Nyamira County would result in the young men raiding cattle from their neighbours without permission which would result in retaliation and warfare in the end.

Commercial raiding, according to Gakuria,¹¹⁰ is a recent occurrence that has drastically changed the character of violence in pastoral communities. The pastoralists' suspicion, revenge adventures, and anxiety are all heightened as a result of commercialization. The commercialization of cattle during the late 1990s resulted in both the Gusii and Kipsigis communities engaging in cattle raiding. This was confirmed by a participant from FGD-4¹¹¹ who indicate that in the late 20th century, many young people from the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities engaged in cattle rustling since it was commercialized at the time. This then intensified conflict between the two communities.

¹⁰⁸ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹⁰⁹ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹¹⁰ Gakuria, A. "Natural resource-based conflict among pastoralist communities in Kenya." Ph.D. diss., University of Nairobi, 2013.

¹¹¹ Participant from FGD-4, 24th August 2021

Moreover, the respondents from the FGD-4¹¹² stated that cattle raiding was identified to have a ripple effect on unemployment. Youths and people whose livestock was raided were left without a source of income and were unable to integrate effectively into the pastoralists' social structure. As a result of their displeasure, pastoralists retaliated by robbing cattle from nearby communities. The participants from FGD-3¹¹³ stated this to be the case among the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. Implies that conflict between the two communities has been fueled by cattle rustling. Further, LCN3 noted that:

During the yearly years of the 2000s before the introduction of free education, many young people especially the young men, sought to gain power within their age groups by taking part in cattle rustling which fueled more conflict along the border. These young men were unable to join high school at the time due to the high level of poverty in society. Hence, to prove their worth, they would engage in cattle rustling, to be respected by their age mates... In a way, it was like a rite of passage to gain the status quo they needed at the time, but one which had dire consequences for the entire society along the Sotik-Borabu border (Local Chief from Nyamira County, 23rd August 2021)

The local leaders who participated in FGD-1¹¹⁴ further claimed that young males are frequently encouraged by girls and women who sing and dance war songs, encouraging them to show their bravery and obtain fortune by raiding for livestock. Youth were often encouraged to raid by tribal prophets or seers and elders in the hopes of sharing in the loot.

¹¹² Focus group discussion held 24th Aug 2021 in Nyamira County

¹¹³ Focus group discussion held 7th July 2021 in Bomet County

¹¹⁴ Local leaders in Nyamira County who took part in FGD-1 held on 11th Aug 2021

This was supported by the participants in the FGDs¹¹⁵ who indicated that the women played a key role during the cattle raiding activities. Three respondents¹¹⁶ revealed that women often sang, cooked and praised the young men for raiding cattle from their neighbouring communities. This is an indication that cattle raiding was not only practiced by men but women also encouraged the practice. Orchardson¹¹⁷ argued that, among the Kipsigis, raiding of cattle was an institutionalized and sports activity accepted by the community. The participation of the women in cattle rustling is an indication that the practice was accepted by the community members. Therefore, it can be concluded that the disputes arising as a result of cattle rustling is driven by both genders of the society, who had accepted cattle raiding as a cultural practice.

The interviewees echoed that the increased cattle rustling resulted in poverty among community members, leading to more disputes and conflicts. According to LCB1:

We, the Kipsigis have always practiced pastoralism, hence without our cattle, we have no other source of income. The Gusii are better off since other than practicing pastoralism they are also farmers. Hence, even if all of their cattle is raided they will still have farming as a source of income. Whenever a community member in Bomet loses their cattle, they lose everything since it was the only source of wealth they had. Hence, to acquire more, we resolve to what we know best, cattle raiding from the Gusii who keep cattle, hence resulting to conflict in the end. (Local Chief from Bomet County, 19th July 2021)

¹¹⁵ Respondents from FGD-2 held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County and Respondents from FGD-4 held on 24th Aug 2021 in Nyamira County

¹¹⁶ Three respondents in FGD-4 held on 24th Aug 2021 in Nyamira County

¹¹⁷ Orchardson, I.Q. (1971) *The Kipsigis, Nairobi*: EALB.

According to a 1992 – 2015 Development Plan Report¹¹⁸ pastoral districts provide the most intractable poverty problems as a result of cattle raiding in the country. This was also confirmed through the by the participants in the FGD-3¹¹⁹ who revealed that often the Kipsigis are the inciters of conflict by stealing cattle from the Gusii people. It was revealed that the pastoral communities, in this case, the Kipsigis, fuel conflict by stealing or feeding their cattle on pasture that belongs to other communities. The behaviour by the Kipsigis for survival was identified to be unacceptable to the Gusii who could not stand the increasing cases of trespass into their land. The Gusii participants revealed that they did not like the behaviour of trespassing by the Kipsigis since it destroyed their crops.

According to Makoloo et al.,¹²⁰ conflicts arise because basic human needs such as autonomy, group identification, participation, acknowledgment, security, and poverty are not met. The lack of identity by young people attached to the increasing level of poverty during the late 90s aggravated the youths along the Sotik-Borabu border. This is because, after completing primary education, the young men and girls could not attend high school due to the lack of school fees. The lucky few who came from wealthier families were able to go to school leaving the rest in the villages trying to find something to do. A young participant from FGD-3 said:

I completed my primary education in 1995, by then my family could not afford to take me to school, hence I was not able to join any secondary school. This left me with no choice but to join my other age-mates who took part in stealing cattle and

¹¹⁸ NPEP. *National Poverty Eradication Plan 1999-2015*. Nairobi: Department of Development Coordination, (1999).

¹¹⁹ Focus Group Discussion held on 7th July in Bomet County

¹²⁰ M., Makoloo, and P., Yash. *Kenya: Minorities, indigenous peoples and ethnic diversity*. London: Minority Rights Group International, 2005.

selling them to earn some money... I remember we would steal, the next day the community members would blame each other resulting in a conflict of words and at times, of arms. Those were not my best years. However, during the regime of President Kibaki who introduced free education, I was able to join secondary school and I managed to complete my academics. My sole goal now is to ensure that no other young men and girls follow the path I did to get to where I am today.

(Participant from FGD-3, 7th July 2021)

2.3 Power

The desire for rank and power has been observed as a primary motivation for human conduct throughout history.¹²¹ Hobbes, a philosopher, defines power as having control over resources,¹²² the ability to influence others' behavior, and the ability to act on a specific initiative.¹²³ Among the Gusii and Kipsigis communities, the power struggle has been evident. An interviewer, LCB2 said:

the struggle for power between the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities has been a cause for conflict in the region. A good example is the conflict that was witnessed in Chebilat town, an area that borders both Bomet and Nyamira County. The 2007/2008 post-election violence was rampant in this area as a result of community leaders fighting to hold public office (Local Chief from Bomet County, 21st July 2021)

¹²¹ I., Frieze, S., Bonka, B., Boneva, Y. Lee-Chai, and J. Bargh. "Power motivation and motivation to help others." *The use and abuse of power* (2001): 75-92.

¹²² T., Hobbes, and C., Edwin. *Leviathan: with selected variants from the Latin edition of 1668*. Vol. 8348. Hackett Publishing, 1994.

¹²³ D., Galinsky, H., Deborah Gruenfeld, and C., Magee. "From power to action." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 85, no. 3 (2003): 453.

The participants from the FGD-1¹²⁴ also indicated that rather than bringing the community members along the Sotik-Borabu region together, most leaders seek to meet their interests by pitting each community against the other. The respondents¹²⁵ reminisced about the reporters at KASS FM a Kalenjin radio station that incited conflict following the 2007/2008 post-election conflict. This raises questions as to the leadership of the society, where leaders consciously in the pursuit for power pit communities against each other resulting in conflict between communities.

It is also important to note that intertwined with the concept of power is status.¹²⁶ The participants from the FGD-2¹²⁷ revealed that the Gusii and Kipsigis communities are more concerned with maintaining their status quo rather than settling their differences. The Gusii people practice farming while the Kipsigis are mainly pastoralists.¹²⁸ Both the Gusii and Kipsigis communities keep livestock hence they all depend on the same natural resources. As such competing on which community possesses more livestock than the other has been an issue of tension in the region since pre-colonial times to date. The participants of FGD-2¹²⁹ agreed that there is a sense of pride that comes with knowing that one community possesses more livestock than the other. As such, both communities work towards maintaining this status quo irrespective of the approach used to attain more livestock.

¹²⁴ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹²⁵ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹²⁶ J., Sell, J., Michael, A., Elizabeth, D., Charles and K., Rick. "Investigating conflict, power, and status within and among groups." *Small group research* 35, no. 1 (2004): 44-72.

¹²⁷ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County.

¹²⁸ T., Mong'are, K., Kasiera, J., Njino and P., Bureti. "*Mitigation Efforts of the Seventh Day Adventist Church Teachings to the Borabu/Sotik Boarder 2007/8 Post Election Violence, Kenya.*" Master's thesis, Nairobi University.

¹²⁹ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County.

Respondents from FGD4¹³⁰ indicated that the power of community leaders in the 21st Century is often overlooked. Traditionally, the community leaders held a lot of power and were respected by all community members within both communities. However, as more modernization and new systems have developed following the end of the colonial rule, more people within the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities have started to disregard the power of their community elders. Before engaging in any raiding activities against the Gusii and the Kipsigis people sought permission from their local communities. However, from the introduction of the multi-party system in 1992 to 2010 many community members engaged in cattle rustling on their own will without seeking permission from the local leaders and elders. A local chief from Bomet County¹³¹ stated that the post-election violence in 2007/2008 created an opportunity for more incidences of cattle raiding in Borabu and in Chebilat town. Moreover, LCB5 said:

the disregard for the power of the local leaders and leaders may be attributed to the power example in leadership advocated by the national leaders in Kenya... Most young people opt to disregard power along the Sotik-Borabu border since the community leaders are not doing anything to correct them and lead them on the right path. (Local Chief from Bomet County, 28th July 2021)

The finding concurred with Lamphear¹³² in his research into Somali society that the social role of elders is no longer solely a function of age or experience, but can also be played by young men if they are wealthy or have clout in their community. This is similar to the

¹³⁰ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021

¹³¹ Interview with local chief from Bomet County on 28th July 2021

¹³² J., Lamphear. "Aspects of Turkana leadership during the era of primary resistance." *Journal of African History* (1976): 225-243.

circumstances among the Kipsigis and Gusii communities where young people engage in conflict activities as a way of gaining power.

The participants from the FGD-4¹³³ revealed that the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities use power as a way of possessing more resources along the border such as pasture and water. This concurs with Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson that power in part determines the allocation of resources within groups and, by implication, each individual's power.¹³⁴ This was identified to be the case along the Sotik-Borabu border. Power is the ability to control resources, own and others', without social interference.¹³⁵ Since natural resources are essential for the sustenance of the two communities, it implies that whichever community was hailed to have more power than the other controlled a vast majority of the resources in the region. However, the respondents FGD-3¹³⁶ shed light on the fact that determining the community that possessed the power to allocate resources along the border was difficult since both communities hailed themselves as powerful as the other one. Due to the lack of consensus, the two communities have engaged in long-term conflict. This is an implication that better measures and agreements should be formulated on the division along the Sotik/Borabu border.

2.4 Political Influence

The respondents from FGD-4¹³⁷ also stated that the struggle for political power along the border of Borabu/Sotik has resulted in conflict, particularly during the

¹³³ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹³⁴ Gruenfeld, Deborah H., Dacher J. Keltner, and Cameron Anderson. "The effects of power on those who possess it: How social structure can affect social cognition." (2003).

¹³⁵ D., Galinsky, H., Deborah Gruenfeld, and C., Magee. "From power to action." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 85, no. 3 (2003): 453.

¹³⁶ Focus group discussion held on 7th 2021 in Bomet County

¹³⁷ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

electioneering years. Violence along the border was witnessed during 1992, 1997 and 2007 general elections in Kenya as different political leaders were vying for political positions. According to the participants from FGD-2¹³⁸, the introduction of the multi-party system was followed by increased conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border since it divided the two communities along political party lines. A participant of the FGD-2 revealed;

Before 1992, the Gusii and the Kipsigis only had to vote for one political party. Although they were conflicting, the conflict was intensified with the multi-party system which divided the two communities along political lines. Majority of the Kipsigis remained loyal to KANU while majority of the Gusii defected to FORD and DP political parties. This shift by the Gusii resulted in more animosity than ever before. However, it is important to note that the Gusii community defected since they felt that the Moi regime did not look to meet their interests. (Participant from FGD-2, 30th July 2021)

Similar to the findings by Mongare¹³⁹ the study indicated that although the Gusii and Kipsigis communities conflicted during the 1992 and 1997 elections, a different image was evident during the 2002 election. This was because, just like the rest of the entire country, the two communities were ready to end the presidential regime of Moi. During the 2002 election, Mwai Kibaki garnered 42.1% of the votes in Rift valley.¹⁴⁰ However,

¹³⁸ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

¹³⁹ T., Mong'are, K., Kasiera, J., Njino and P., Bureti. "Mitigation Efforts of the Seventh Day Adventist Church Teachings to the Borabu/Sotik Boarder 2007/8 Post Election Violence, Kenya." Master's thesis, Nairobi University.

¹⁴⁰ K., Alex. Kenya. Presidential Election 2002. 2007. Retrieved from [online] <https://www.electoralgeography.com/new/en/countries/k/kenya/kenya-presidential-election-2002.html>.

this was short-lived since, in 2007, the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities were divided along political lines resulting in more conflict.

The participants from the FGD-4¹⁴¹ noted that just like the voters in Kenya for a long time have voted along ethnic lines, the same was evident by the Gusii and Kipsigis communities during the 1992, 1997 and 2007 general elections. From the interviews, it was noted that some members of the two ethnic groups used threats of violence against those who supported the opposition. This discouraged some from registering as voters and some of those who had registered, feared voting as they could be intimidated. This made some people especially the Gusii evacuate from the area to their ancestral homes for fear of an outbreak of war between the two communities. This disenfranchised the electorates and therefore, it denied them their political right of voting. A local chief from Bomet County¹⁴² explained that this was a deliberate measure taken to make the people, especially the Gusii not vote for their favorite presidential candidate who in most cases was not the preferred candidate among the Kipsigis.

Like other parts of Kenya, the Bomet and Nyamira Counties have witnessed the misuse of power and influence by their political leaders. In their drive for dominance, political figures in the Sotik-Borabu region have used divisive tactics. This has included using the ethnic card, in which politicians have campaigned for votes by bringing up ethnic issues. This has included but is not limited to, demonizing a specific group or group of people and/or mobilizing on ethnic grounds.

¹⁴¹ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹⁴² Interview with a local chief from Bomet County held on 27th July 2021

during the election campaigns in 1997 and 2007, the electoral aspirants in Bomet and Nyamira used ethnic incitation to discredit each other with the sole aim of winning the election. Most leaders do not understand the impact incitation has on the common citizen. This is because, following the incitation during the two election periods, the community members along the Sotik-Borabu border turned against each other in violence (Participant from FGD-1, 11th August 2021)

Moreover, in support of Solanka's¹⁴³ findings, a local chief from Nyamira County¹⁴⁴ stated that some politicians use historical injustices to incite people into conflict. An informant, LCN4¹⁴⁵ revealed that the Moi's regime both before and post the multi-party system, took advantage of the land issues among the Gusii and Kipsigis communities as a technique to remain in power. The interviewee¹⁴⁶ explained that the Moi regime did not address the border issue, hence creating more animosity between the two communities since the Gusii people felt unheard and sidelined. This may be attributed to the fact that the Gusii felt that the Moi regime favoured the Kipsigis over them on the lines of ethnicity.

The participants from the FGD-2¹⁴⁷ stated that political leaders in the Gusii and Kipsigis region following the introduction of a multiparty system have been focused on building an image that will be deemed acceptable to their political parties. Maintaining a

¹⁴³ K., Solonka. "Post-conflict peace building in East Africa: The case of Sotik and Borabu constituencies in Kenya, 1990-2012." PhD diss., University of Nairobi., 2013.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with a Local Chief from Nyamira County, 26th August 2021.

¹⁴⁵ Interview with a Local Chief from Nyamira County, 26th August 2021.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with a Local Chief from Nyamira County, 26th August 2021

¹⁴⁷ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

status quo has always been a great motivator for the political leaders along the Sotik-Borabu region. This is because as espoused by a participant in FGD-2:

A political party in Kenya holds the power to either ensure the success or failure of any elected leaders affiliated with the party. As such, to sustain the status quo, the leaders in Gusii and Kipsigis have continued to incite the community members against each other; this is because the conflict between the two communities sustains these leaders in power while maintaining their brand which is aligned to their political parties (Participant from FGD-2, 30th July 2021)

The participants from FGD-3¹⁴⁸ explained that the inauguration of the new constitution in 2010 symbolized a change in the way political leaders could behave. According to the respondents, the new constitution was a sign of democracy in Kenya where each citizen was acknowledged as having specific rights. Moreover, the new Constitution is a guideline of what is expected by each citizen by the state. Three participants from FGD-3¹⁴⁹ explained that after the inauguration of the new constitution in 2010, the political leaders in Nyamira and Bomet stopped spreading messages of incitation. This is because, the Constitution while allowing the freedom of speech, prohibits any form of incitement of violence and conflict by any individual, be it a leader or a common citizen.¹⁵⁰ The participants argued that the new constitution paved way for the political leaders to watch their words and actions while in public. This raises the question to the leadership in Kenya where a constitution or specific law had to be passed to ensure that the

¹⁴⁸ Focus group discussion held on 7th July 2021 in Bomet County

¹⁴⁹ Focus group discussion held on 7th July 2021 in Bomet County

¹⁵⁰ The government of Kenya, the new constitution, 2010, Article 33.

political leaders behave appropriately. This symbolizes a failing in the Kenyan government.

2.6 Natural Resources

Natural resource-related conflicts, according to Naylor, are characterized by violence in most places of Africa.¹⁵¹ While Botha contends that the underlying historical causes of conflict are domestic issues, competition over natural resources is one example of a situation that could lead to violence.¹⁵² This argument is supported by the data collected where the participants from FGD-1¹⁵³ indicated that conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities was caused by the fight for natural resources along the Sotik-Borabu border. Both ethnic communities argue that they ought to occupy the larger part of the border. In particular, from the local chiefs,¹⁵⁴ it was indicated that the Kipsigis are vocal about the land which is occupied by the Gusii. According to the Kipsigis, the land is supposed to be theirs. This belief has often resulted in conflict between the two ethnic communities. This is an indication that the scarcity of natural resources can lead to increased levels of conflict and disputes among communities sharing common resources.

In addition, two local chiefs from Bomet County explained that the Gusii and Kipsigis communities often conflicted over land and water sources for their cattle.¹⁵⁵ Often resources are attached to the livelihoods of community members.¹⁵⁶ This is the case for the

¹⁵¹ R., Naylor. *Economic warfare: sanctions, embargo busting, and their human cost*. UPNE, 2001.p.18

¹⁵² A., Botha. "Relationship between Africa and international terrorism: Causes and linkages." In *Conference on Southern African and International Terrorism*. Brenthurst Foundation, Tswalu, pp. 25-27. 2007.

¹⁵³ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹⁵⁴ Interviews with Local chiefs in Nyamira county held on 26th August 2021 and 30th August 2021

¹⁵⁵ Interviews with Local chiefs in Bomet county held on 22nd July 2021 and 19th July 2021

¹⁵⁶ R., Charlton, and D., Micheline. *The mediator's handbook: Skills and strategies for practitioners*. Lawbook Company, 1995.

Gusii and Kipsigis communities. For the Gusii communities, the land is largely used for tea plantations and residential houses while for the Kipsigis community the land is largely used for residential homes and pasture. The participants from the FGD-2¹⁵⁷ argued that land is important to the day-to-day operations of the two communities. Further a local chief from Bomet said:

Land is one of the reasons why the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict. Land is important to the people along the Sotik/Borabu region since most of them have cattle. The issue of land has led to more disagreements and conflict between the two communities. (Local Chief from Bomet County, 22nd July, 2021)

In addition, the participants from the FGD-3¹⁵⁸ explained that both communities actively practiced pastoralism among other forms of economic activities such as agriculture. Thus as posited by Omosa,¹⁵⁹ conflicts over grazing land and water among pastoral communities are expected. Although the Gusii people practice farming, they also indulge in pastoralism. The participants from the FGD-2¹⁶⁰ revealed that while conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis started since the precolonial period, the animosity persisted into the independent state up-to the period under study, and as natural resources became more scarce as the population in the country grew. This was supported by a participant from the FGD-2 who said:

¹⁵⁷ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

¹⁵⁸ Focus group discussion held on 7th July 2021 in Bomet County

¹⁵⁹ K., Omosa. "The impact of water conflicts on pastoral livelihoods." *The case of Wajir district. IISD, Winnipeg* (2005).

¹⁶⁰ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

The Kipsigis at times trespass on the Gusii community land and graze their animals on the tea plantation. Out of anger, the Gusii seek vengeance by grazing their cattle in the lands of the Kipsigis. To say the least, both communities are at fault since they trespass into each other pieces of land resulting in more conflict. (Ward administrator from FGD-4, 24th August 2021)

Pastoralists, for example, rely on their livestock (camels, cattle, sheep, and goats) and wander from place to place with them in search of suitable pasture space and water. During a drought, their movement becomes more pronounced. Among the Gusii and Kipsigis communities, during the dry seasons, they seek pasture in other places. The village elders argued that the lack of natural resources especially during drought resulted in more conflict since both communities required the same natural resources. The village elders added that the situation was worsened following the introduction of the multi-party system, which paved way for the two communities to vote for their leaders along ethnic lines. One village elder from Bomet County said:

I do not understand why we cannot keep our differences aside during the drought seasons. During my time, when I was a young man, the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities used to co-exist. Even though we still conflicted at times we understood that during hard times it was better to stand together than alone. After 1992, I have witnessed chaos as cattle have died since we cannot offer each other a helping hand like in the old days, it is very disappointing, our forefathers would be disappointed. (Village elder from Bomet County, 15th July 2021)

Among the Gusii community land was a commodity valued and collectively defended by the community. This was in support of Ntabo¹⁶¹ who noted that land among the Gusii people was an indication of wealth. As a result, one's social and economic well-being during their lifespan was solely dependent on the land. Additionally, the Gusii believe that their land cannot be passed down or sold to a stranger because doing so will lead the spirits of those buried there to be offended and torment the family and lineage for all time. From the focus group discussions, the ward administrators from Nyamira County explained that land to the Gusii people is a permanent resource, which cannot be exchanged to other ethnic groups. This belief has been held by the Gusii since the colonial period to date. Moreover, it explains why even though the Gusii were occasionally chased away from their land by the Kipsigis, they would still return to fight for it. Thus although during the 2007/2008 post-election violence the Gusii were chased away, they still came back. This is a true testament to the importance of land to both the Gusii communities and the Kipsigis who opt to expand their land by grabbing it from their neighbours.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the causes of transboundary conflict. Power and politics were drivers of conflict among the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities from 1992 to 2010. This is because the two ethnic communities have had different loyalties concerning political parties since the emergence of the multi-party system. Consequently, the two communities have conflicted over which leaders need to remain in office. Moreover, some of the conflicts have also been instigated by the political leaders who have

¹⁶¹ M., Ntabo. "The socio-Economic, Philosophical and Spiritual Value Attached to Land." *Ethnography of the Gusii of Western Kenya: A Vanishing Cultural Heritage*. United Kingdom: The Edwin Mellen Press Ltd (2006).

incited hatred between the two communities. Moreover, the drive for obtaining status and power has been thought of as a fundamental motivator of human behavior. The findings indicated that the leaders elected by the Gusii and Kipsigis communities were more interested in maintaining their status quo rather than serving the public. The motivation to maintain a status quo has resulted in the leaders neglecting some community members while favouring other community members thus creating animosity that ultimately results in conflict. This was established to be the case along the Sotik-Borabu border where the Gusii and Kipsigis political support was not aligned leading to increased conflict.

Moreover, the chapter highlights that poverty results in conflict. a state of destitution pushed the community members along the Sotik-Borabu border to engage in actions that led to conflict. In addition, competition for scarce available resources is also a cause of conflict. The extreme poverty in Bomet and Nyamira county mostly affects the youth who have lacked employment or any source of employment. As such, to earn some money, the young people opt to steal from their neighbouring communities resulting in conflict.

These scarce resources include land and water. The Gusii and Kipsigis communities often conflict over land since, both ethnic groups are pastoralists, hence land is an important asset. The reliance on similar natural resources by the two communities implies that conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities is inevitable. This is because the survival of the two communities is embedded in the available resources within the Sotik-Borabu border.

The chapter also explains that the conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii is caused by cattle rustling. Cattle rustling and banditry are carried out by young people on account of both cultural and economic interests. Because of the symbiotic relationship between ethnicity and politics and the goodwill contemplated by community elites, the same has been invoked in inciting their communities and associates into inter-ethnic conflicts. The following chapter addresses the impacts of the ethnic conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010.

CHAPTER THREE: IMPACTS OF THE GUSII AND THE KIPSIGIS CONFLICT ALONG THE SOTIK/BORABU BORDER (1992 to 2010)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the impacts of transboundary conflict. Like all conflicts, cross-border conflicts have repercussions, most of which are detrimental. This was noticeable between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities from 1992 to 2010. The two communities' hostility has increased over the past 18 years, driving them to engage in conflict and warfare, many of which have had unfavorable outcomes. The confrontation between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities along the Sotik-Borabu boundary remains unresolved. This study covers the impacts of cross-border conflicts and identifies the groups that are often affected by the conflicts during the years 1992 to 2010.

3.2 Consequences of the Gusii and Kipsigis Conflict

3.2.1 Loss of Human Life

One of the negative consequences of conflict is the loss of human life. However, the participants from the FGD-4¹⁶² indicated that among the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities, the loss of human life during the conflict was a rare phenomenon. This was similar to findings by Mkutu¹⁶³ who explained that following the cultural norms, the loss of human life among pastoralists was rare and in case it occurs, compensation in terms of money was paid to the family of the victim. Participants from FGD-3¹⁶⁴ indicated that following the 2007/2008 post-election violence, some of the people in Sotik were

¹⁶² Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹⁶³ Mkutu K. (2008): *Guns and governance in the Rift-Valley –pastoralist conflict and small arms*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

¹⁶⁴ Focus group discussion held on 7th 2021 in Bomet County

compensated Ksh 25,000 for the loss of their loved ones and property. According to the participants from the focus group discussions¹⁶⁵, most of the community members who engaged in conflict and warfare were careful not to kill any person. However, many people were injured during these conflicts.

Notably, even if the loss of life was rare, it did occur sometimes. For instance, the participants from FGD-1¹⁶⁶ stated that they will never forget the post-election violence in 2007/2008. This is because, many people lost their lives following the post-election violence which was driven along ethnic lines in most parts of the country. Along the Sotik-Borabu border, the conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis intensified following the 2007/2008 post-election violence. A village elder explained:

In my lifetime, I have witnessed both the good and bad parts of, life...However, the 2007/2008 post-election violence will forever be engraved in my mind. This is because it is during this time that the hatred between our two communities was best visible. The inhumane actions taken by our community members showed us that people can be evil given the chance. We lost many lives during that period... The blood that was shed by our community members was too much to allow our community to go back to that time. (Village elder from Nyamira County, 19th August 2021)

¹⁶⁵ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

¹⁶⁶ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

3.2.2 Loss of Cattle

The ward administrators¹⁶⁷ revealed that the loss of cattle that has been witnessed by the two ethnic communities from 1992 to 2010 can never be recovered. The ward administrators explained that some of the cattle raiding conducted by the two communities were out of mere vengeance, where the raiders would even raid cattle simply to sell it at a throwaway price due to anger. However, this argument was contradicted by a local chief from Nyamira County¹⁶⁸ who indicated that if the Gusii and Kipsigis communities only understood the power they yield by owning cattle, they would not engage in unnecessary conflict, rather they would uplift each other and buy more cattle rather than simply kill each other's cattle out of anger and vengeance. According to the local chief, in Kenya, cattle and livestock are one of the most expensive commodities that man can have since it brings in more income. One of the local chief¹⁶⁹ admitted his disappointment with the two communities who were willing to result in killing cattle rather than working out their differences and starting businesses using the livestock available in the region. This is an implication that while the loss of cattle is a common consequence of conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis, the two communities were careful not to harm any cattle since it provided them a source of livelihood

The finding concurred with results by Solonka¹⁷⁰ and Omwenga¹⁷¹ that the loss of cattle was a negative effect of conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border. According to the

¹⁶⁷ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹⁶⁸ Interview held with a local chief from Nyamira County on 16th August 2021

¹⁶⁹ Interview held with a local chief in Bomet County on 22nd July 2021

¹⁷⁰ K., Solonka. "Post-conflict peace building in East Africa: The case of Sotik and Borabu constituencies in Kenya, 1990-2012." PhD diss., University of Nairobi., 2013.

¹⁷¹ M. Omwenga. "*Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002.*" Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

interviews conducted with the local chiefs of Nyamira and Bomet counties, the two communities along the border raid each other as a traditional practice leading to conflict. The conflict had a ripple effect since it entailed the destruction of property and the loss of animals. Moreover, the communities took part in retaliatory attacks along the Sotik/Borabu border. Those whose cattle had been stolen and not found would sometimes blame the entire community and chose to steal their neighbor's cow as a form of retaliation. These actions reduce the number of cattle possessed by either community member.

3.2.3 Displacement of People

Lokiyo¹⁷² explains that the displacement of persons is a common phenomenon associated with trans-border conflict. This was found to be true among the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. Two local chiefs from Nyamira and Bomet counties¹⁷³ revealed that having displaced people in the region was a common phenomenon during times of dispute and conflict. The local chiefs revealed that displacement among the Gusii people was expected since the Kipsigis people would torch their land and houses. This prompted the Gusii people to be displaced. This is an expected outcome of conflict, therefore, it was an expected finding in the current study that the Gusii and Kipsigis community members would be displaced during times of conflicts.

Further, from participants from FGD-2¹⁷⁴ explained that during the 1992 and 1997 general election period in Kenya, the displacement of people conflicting along borderlines was witnessed. Along, the Sotik-Borabu border, the Gusii supported the FORD and DP

¹⁷² E., Lokiyo. *Transborder conflict between the Turkana and Pokot in Kainuk and Alale divisions, Kenya 1995–2013* (Doctoral dissertation, MA dissertation. Nairobi: Kenyatta University). 2014

¹⁷³ Interviews held with local chiefs from Nyamira and Bomet counties on 25th August 2021 and 19th July 2021 respectively

¹⁷⁴ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

parties while the Kipsigis remained loyal to KANU. Kenya has been profiled by different political analysis such as Mutahi Ngunyi, as a country that votes along ethnic lines. Before the 2013 general elections, Mutahi Ngunyi, a political analyst indicated that the Jubilee party would win the elections against its competition at the time, the CORD party. According to Mutahi Ngunyi, the tyranny of numbers along ethnic lines favoured the Jubilee party in comparison to the CORD party. The political analyst stated that the Jubilee party has a “bankable” ethnic vote of 6.2 Million (or 43.2% of the total vote) from the GEMA and Kalenjin communities while CORD starts off with 19.2% of the vote or 2.74 million votes from the Luo and Kamba communities.¹⁷⁵ Therefore, the introduction of the multi-party system paved way for the Gusii and Kipsigis communities to vote along ethnic lines, resulting in more animosity between the communities. This concurs with Chelanga, Singo, and Ndege¹⁷⁶ that even though ethnic clashes helped KANU win the general elections of 1992 and 1997, they displaced and disenfranchised thousands of potential voters.

A study by ACLED¹⁷⁷ in Northern Kenya found that displacement of people in Northern Kenya resulting from cross-border conflict was inevitable. This was also established by the participants from the FGD-2¹⁷⁸ from the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. A participant from FGD-2 said:

¹⁷⁵ M. Wachira. "What tyranny of numbers? Inside Mutahi Ngunyi's numerology." *Africa Centre for Open Governance*. Retrieved May 10 (2013): 2013.

¹⁷⁶ K., Chelanga, Ndege, P. O., and Singo, S. M. (2009). *The Crisis of Governance: Politics and Ethnic Conflict in Kenya*. Moi University. Center for Refugee Studies. 2009

¹⁷⁷ Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED). *Conflict Trends: Real Time Analysis of African Political Violence*. No.1. 2012.

¹⁷⁸ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

Displacement of the Gusii and Kipsigis communities is inevitable. This is particularly evident when the animosity between the two communities is severe to the extent that lands and property are torched down. Moreover, the fury of most of the Gusii and Kipsigis people cannot be contained during the conflicting period, hence for safety, most people caught during warfare opt to temporarily relocate and come back once the conflict is over. (Participant from FGD-2, 30th July, 2021)

Moreover, the participants from FGD-1 indicated that that most of the Kipsigis did not construct houses next to the border. Even if such was the case, the Gusii warriors were able to return to their villages during the battles in 1992 and 1997 between the Kipsigis and Gusii. The Kipsigis' homes were set on fire, which drove them to seek shelter in other locations including Ndanai and Kaplomboi.¹⁷⁹ The women, children, and senior citizens who were impacted by the clashes took refuge in the churches and Ndanai police station, where they were guarded by the police. Participants from FGD-2¹⁸⁰ indicated that the displacement of families and in particular women and children is a painful phenomenon to see. According to the respondents, some of the families which were displaced over the 18 years as a result of conflict were young families which were starting their lives. The continuous displacement discouraged the young families from coming back to the region, thus, they relocated to other cities including Nairobi. One of the village elders argued that the displacement of the Kipsigis and Gusii communities during the conflicts resulted in the separation of families as women and children had to be secured in other counties living the

¹⁷⁹ M. Omwenga. "Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002." Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

¹⁸⁰ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

men to reclaim their land back. This is an indication that conflict has a ripple effect, in that further to displacing people it results in separated families.

The displacement experienced along the Sotik-Borabu border was accompanied by additional challenges. A local chief¹⁸¹ indicated that the displaced people experienced a humanitarian catastrophe since they were confined to specified locations, including churches and schools, for their safety, preventing them from accessing their basic requirements. Moreover, cholera and dysentery outbreaks occurred in the camps where the members of the displaced community sought sanctuary due to poor sanitation and a lack of sufficient water. This finding was similar to results by Omwenga¹⁸² who noted that during the period 1963-2002, the conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis led to displaced persons who found themselves living in areas with poor sanitation making them susceptible to water borne diseases such as cholera. Some of the women also became victims of rape by the warriors and some men who decided to take advantage of the situation. This is a confirmation that during displacement, the women and children are among the most affected groups in society.

3.2.4 Destruction of Property

Ombati¹⁸³ noted that during cattle raiding between the Gusii and the Kipsigis, property was destroyed. This was confirmed by the study as the focus group discussions revealed that the destruction of property has been a norm between the Gusii and Kipsigis

¹⁸¹ Interview with a Local Chief from Nyamira County, 26th August 2021

¹⁸² M. Omwenga. "Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002." Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

¹⁸³ M., Ombati. Indigenising Peacebuilding in Kenya's Sotik/Borabu Cross-Border Conflict. 2014. Retrieved from a website of resources for peace: <http://www.ireness.net>.

communities for the period 1992 to 2010. The respondents from FGD-3¹⁸⁴ revealed that the destruction of property during the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict was severe to the extent that churches were also destroyed. According to a ward administrator:

The conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities has become severe to the extent that people are not afraid of destroying places of worship. Often, during ethnic conflicts, women and children find refuge in churches. However, once identified, the gangs engaging in the conflict do not consider that a church is a place of worship and will without any pause, attack the premise in the name of vengeance...The destruction of churches is one of the reasons that most of the churches in the region are not well constructed for fear of being demolished once conflict arises. (Ward Administrator from FGD-3, 7th July, 2021)

The findings showed that the burning of houses was a common way of destroying property in times of conflict struggling for grazing land and many others. The Gusii especially suffered this fate, especially during the 2007 post-election violence along the Kisii-Kiligolis and the Sotik-Borabu border. A local chief from Nyamira County said:

Many properties were lost during the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict following the 2007 post-election violence. The common properties that were destroyed through burning included residential homes, churches, schools, and shops. The destruction of property resulted in more destitution and poverty among the two ethnic communities. (Local Chief from Nyamira County, 25th August 2021)

¹⁸⁴ Focus group discussion held on 7th July 2021 in Bomet County

Further, the participants of FGD-1¹⁸⁵ revealed that the destruction of property had a ripple effect on the Gusii and Kipsigis community members. The destruction of properties and in particular shops and tea plantations resulted in increased cases of unemployment. The Gusii were the most affected communities since their tea plantations were destroyed by the Kipsigis whenever the two communities conflicted. The women from the Gusii communities worked in the tea plantations to earn a living. This is because most men in the Gusii land kept livestock while the women were in charge of the plantations. Once the tea plantations were burnt, the Gusii women did not have any other source of income. The shop owners were also not spared during warfare. This is because the shops were looted and destroyed. This implied that their source of livelihood ended with the destruction of the shops. The Waki report in 2008¹⁸⁶ reported that following the post-election violence in Kenya, violence along the Sotik-Borabu border intensified and as a result, 30 shops and 60 kiosks were destroyed as the Kipsigis and Gusii communities fought against each other.

Residential homes have not been spared by the Kipsigis and the Gusii people during incidences of conflict and war. 61 participants of the FGDs¹⁸⁷ revealed that they had lost their residential homes during the warfare for the period 1992 to 2010. The respondents revealed that most homes are usually destroyed since the perpetrators argue that if they can destroy the homes they can possess the land of their enemies. This is an indication that

¹⁸⁵ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹⁸⁶ Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, "Commissions of Inquiry - CIPEV Report (Waki Report)" IX. Government Documents and Regulations. 5.2008

¹⁸⁷ Respondents from focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 and 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County; and 30th July 2021 and 7th July 2021 in Bomet County.

residential homes were one of the targets of the warriors and gangs who engaged in conflict. An informant, a local chief from Nyamira county said:

In 1992 I lost my home to the Kipsigis. By then, I was young in my 20s and I had just started living on my own, in my small hut. From a distance, I could hear the Kipsigis coming toward my house, claiming that the land belongs to them. They were carrying torches of fire. Since I could not wait for them to come and hurt me, I ran away and watched as my small hut was burnt down from afar. (Local Chief from Nyamira County, 26th August 2021)

In addition, according to the Waki report,¹⁸⁸ approximately 310 residential houses were destroyed during the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict following the 2007 post-election violence. A similar case was observed by this study since it identified that majority of the residential houses along the Sotik-Borabu border have been destroyed and rebuilt again during the period 1992 to 2010.

3.3 Impact of Conflict between The Gusii and Kipsigis Communities

3.3.1 Social Disorder

The respondents from the FGD-4¹⁸⁹ indicated that the conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii is protracted, thus not a new phenomenon. The participants of the FGD-4¹⁹⁰ argued that the conflict between the two communities has remained severe over the years to the extent that the police had to be involved. Officially, the police are in charge of

¹⁸⁸ Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, "Commissions of Inquiry - CIPEV Report (Waki Report)" IX. Government Documents and Regulations. 5.2008

¹⁸⁹ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

¹⁹⁰ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

creating order and ensuring the security of the community members in Bomet and Nyamira. However, following violent conflict especially during the period 1992 to 2010, vigilante groups were formed. A local chief from Nyamira County¹⁹¹ revealed that since the police were reluctant to offer their services people started doubting their competence to conduct their duties as expected. This was attributed to the fact that the police were perceived to support the activities of cattle raiding. According to the participants of the FGD-2¹⁹², the police perfected the vice by either being involved in the raiding groups and were late to respond when the raiding was reported to them or they used some delay techniques to track the raided livestock. As a result of the failure of the security forces to uphold and enforce order and law and the subsequent loss of the people's confidence in the police, there was an emergence of vigilante groups that grew in their influence and power in their respective areas.

Further, the interviewees revealed that the role of the vigilante groups grew beyond local crime prevention to being utilized as militias in electoral politics like Chinkororo among the Gusii. The small vigilante groups which were formed to prevent cattle raiding by keeping vigil over their villages were also involved in disciplining those involved in the raiding cartels, especially among the Gusii community. Almost every village had one or more vigilante groups that exhibited themselves to be more efficient and effective, unlike the police. Two local chiefs from Bomet County¹⁹³ noted that the vigilante groups were especially active following the 1997 and 2007 elections when conflict erupted. This

¹⁹¹ Interview held in Nyamira County with a local chief on 30th Aug 2021

¹⁹² Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

¹⁹³ Interviews with local chiefs in Bomet county held on 19th July 2021 and 22nd July 2021

resulted in social disorder since the community members had lost their faith in law enforcement. One of the ward administrator in the FGD-3 said:

During the 1997 and 2007 general elections, the police and security personnel along the Sotik-Borabu border were not respected by any of the community members. Moreover, it was so severe that even the police personnel who were genuinely trying to offer assistance to the community members were actually, attacked. I once witnessed at the time, the community members along the border attacking a police officer and accusing him of not serving society... The rise of vigilante groups in both ethnic communities demoralized the work of genuine police and it also created a bad image of security personnel in the eyes of the community members. (Ward administrator from FGD-3, 7th July 2021)

This finding concurs with results from Ochieng who argued that the increased conflict since 1992 has resulted in weakened social ties between the Kipsigis and the Gusii¹⁹⁴ The participants explained that the increasing practice of cattle raiding and the competition for scarce resources, the communities were thrown into conflict, weakening their social ties. This resulted in the mistrust and reception of interethnic relations with suspicion. This has led to interference with interethnic marriages. A local chief¹⁹⁵ noted that traditionally, the Gusii and Kipsigis communities used to encourage intermarriages among young people. An interview with the local chiefs in both Bomet and Nyamira counties¹⁹⁶ revealed that from 1992 to 2010, the cases of intermarriages within the two

¹⁹⁴ O., Achieng. *Interethnic Coexistence among the Luo, the Kipsigis and the Gusii in Sondu Area in Kenya*. "Department of Sociology and Social Work." Phd Diss., University Of Nairobi. 2009

¹⁹⁵ Interview with a local chief from Bomet County held on 19th July 2021.

¹⁹⁶ Interviews with local chiefs in Bomet and Nyamira counties held on 22nd July 2021 and 30th August 2021 respectively

communities were a rare phenomenon. This is because, the girls from each of the communities were warned by their respective elders to be wary of the young men from the opposing communities, resulting in weakened social ties between the two communities.¹⁹⁷ This was in support of Goldsmith,¹⁹⁸ who revealed that erosion of social ties is an impact that follows trans-border conflict. From a traditional standpoint, communities in Africa living near each other were bound through cultural ties, however, conflict weakened these cultural and social ties as was established to be the case among the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.

In addition, the participants of the FGD-1¹⁹⁹ revealed that the trading activities between the Gusii and the Kipsigis reduced due to increased conflict. The economic ties between the two ethnic communities weakened following the increased conflict. From the focus group discussions, it was revealed that the Gusii and Kipsigis communities traditionally conducted trading together. The Gusii were farmers while the Kipsigis were pastoralists. The two communities before the colonial period would conduct barter trade. Despite their differences, the two communities at the time found a way to be cordial with each other and conduct trade. This continued even under colonial rule and after independence. Although they conflicted, the two communities still understood the importance of trading with each other. However, as explained by the local chiefs in Nyamira:

¹⁹⁷ Interviews with local chiefs in Bomet and Nyamira counties held on 22nd July 2021 and 30th August 2021 respectively

¹⁹⁸ P., Goldsmith, H., Ahmed, and M., Babiker. *Fighting for inclusion: conflicts among pastoralists in Eastern Africa and the Horn.* Development Policy Management Forum. Nairobi. 2007.

¹⁹⁹ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

Once the multi-party system was introduced, us the Gusii communities felt unsafe to trade with the Kipsigis people. This is because we could no longer trust the Kipsigis communities who hid under the ruling party. Moreover, granted that although we practice pastoralism, we are also farmers, we did not trust the source of animals that were sold to us by the Kipsigis. (Local Chief from Nyamira County, 30th August 2021)

The finding was similar to results by Omvvoyo²⁰⁰ who found that the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities conducted trading activities during the pre-colonial period. This is contrary to findings by Achieng²⁰¹ who established that the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities did not like each other enough to engage in trading activities.

3.3.2 Environmental Degradation

The environment often falls victim when two or more communities conflict. The case of environmental degradation is often witnessed in communities where continued conflict is a norm. Along the Sotik and Borabu border, environmental degradation has been witnessed following the increased conflict. It was found that the environmental aspect of communal conflicts that occur between Kipsigis and Gusii includes the destruction of vegetation covered by victims as a defensive strategy to destroy the hiding grounds of the attackers. This led to massive pollution of the environment and environmental degradation. From the focus group discussions, a participant said:

²⁰⁰ Omvvoyo, Samson Moenga. *"The Agricultural Changes in the Kipsigis Land, c. 1894-1963: An Historical Inquiry."* PhD diss., Kenyatta University, 2000.

²⁰¹ O., Achieng. *Interethnic Coexistence among the Luo, the Kipsigis and the Gusii in Sondu Area in Kenya.* "Department of Sociology and Social Work." Phd Diss., University Of Nairobi. 2009

Majority of the Gusii people lost their farm produce due to conflict. Following the intensified and increased conflict in 1992, most of the Gusii people had to temporarily move to other regions since their farm produce was burnt down to terrorize the community for defecting from the KANU political party. This resulted in bare land that could no longer be used for farming. (Participant from FGD-2, 30th July, 2021)

Achieng²⁰² notes that environmental degradation is a common consequence of conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities. The participants from the FGD-4²⁰³ revealed that more to the burning of farm produce the environment suffered from increased smoke pollution. A participant from FGD-3²⁰⁴ described one night of violence along the Sotik-Borabu border as the “dark smoke night”. According a local chief in Bomet County,²⁰⁵ the night was characterized by intense burning of not only farm produce but huts, thus the whole cloud was dark, not because it was at night but due to the rising smoke resulting from the fire along the border. As such, one of the informants (LCN4) stated:

The increased conflict along the border has to a small extent contributed to climate change. This is because climate change is caused by greenhouse gasses emanated which were often produced during conflict along the border. In the 2007/2008 post-violence election, the burning of the properties along the Sotik-Borabu border was

²⁰² O., Achieng. *Interethnic Coexistence among the Luo, the Kipsigis and the Gusii in Sondu Area in Kenya*. "Department of Sociology and Social Work." Phd Diss., University Of Nairobi. 2009

²⁰³ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

²⁰⁴ Focus group discussion held on 7th July 2021 in Bomet County

²⁰⁵ Interview with a local chief in Bomet County on 21st July 2021

intense with churches and schools being burnt. (Local Chief from Nyamira County, 26th August 2021)

Further confirming the findings of Nyagosia²⁰⁶ it was identified that the increased conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis resulted in famine along the border. This came about from the continuous warfare between the two ethnic communities. During the warfare, the Gusii communities abandoned their farming practice in the effort of defending their land. This led to a lack of food for subsistence usage. In extreme cases, this famine led to numerous death of people and also animals, especially during the 2007 post-election violence. The few tea farmers were also affected as they could not pluck their tea; hence they also incurred losses. The conflict intensified the famine that occurred in the regions resided by the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. In addition, a respondent reminisced that:

Before the 2007 general election, the Gusii people had planted some crops and were still in the process of planting more in their pieces of land. However, following the post-election violence, most farmers fled to other regions to save their lives and that of their families while others abandoned farming to join warfare in an effort of protecting their land. By the end of the conflict, when the country was settling down following the signed agreement between Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga, both of our communities had burned the crops that had been planted. This resulted in us having to look for food crops in other areas to survive. (Participant from FGD-4, 24th August 2021)

²⁰⁶ S., Nyagosia. "historical study of border interactions and militarism between the abagusii of southwestern Kenya and their neighbouring communities, 1850-2007." PhD diss., Kisii University, 2017.

The famine experienced by both communities following the 2007/2008 conflict was severe since they had to walk long distances simply to obtain food for their families.

3.3.3 Education

Education is a pillar of any society. This is because it is through education that people gain knowledge on how to live as a society. However, a threat to education in any society is conflict. This was experienced firsthand in 2007 and 2008 by the community members of the Kipsigis and Gusii communities. It was identified that during the years 2007 and early 2008 the conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities was far more severe than ever before. The animosity between the two communities disrupted all social activities including the attendance of school by children.

Following the 2007 presidential results, we the Kipsigis community were furious since our favorable ODM leader, was not announced as the president. As a community, we had faith that if Raila was to be president, our community would be in good hands. However, once Mwai Kibaki was announced as the president most of us decided to take out our anger by attacking the Gusii communities and other neighbouring communities that supported Mwai Kibaki. Without even thinking we burnt schools. This was not taken silently by the Gusii people who also burnt Ribaita Primary School and destroyed other schools in our region..... at the end of it all, we both lost since our children no longer had a place to go and acquire knowledge once the conflict subsided in 2008. (Local Chief from Bomet County, 22nd July 2021)

Moreover, the participants from the FGD-2²⁰⁷ revealed that the education sector along the Sotik-Borabu border is affected by ethnic conflict. Maintaining teachers whose originality is not Nyamira or Bomet is difficult.²⁰⁸ This is because, in the emergence of any conflict, most teachers fear for their lives and request transfers to safer regions. The local chiefs from both Bomet and Nyamira revealed that finding a teacher whose originality is not Bomet or Nyamira in the region is difficult. This is because, most of the teachers transfer from safer regions, however, once they find that conflict is the normal practice along the border they immediately move to other safer areas. The highest percentage of teachers in Nyamira and Bomet counties are those who were born in the region and are willing to give back to society by educating the children in the area.

3.4 Groups Affected by the Gusii and Kipsigis Conflict along the Sotik-Borabu Border (1992 to 2010)

Different groups are always affected by conflict, however, it is evident that the common groups most affected by conflict include the women, children, and the youth. According to Kraetli and Swift²⁰⁹ young men and women are the most affected groups when conflict arises, since they lack any form of income. The same was established among the Gusii and the Kipsigis. In the event of any conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii, young men and girls are the most affected groups. It was revealed that in the event of any conflict between the two ethnic groups, young people are usually called to join the fighting groups with the message that they are protecting their community members. This results in

²⁰⁷ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

²⁰⁸ O., Achieng. *Interethnic Coexistence among the Luo, the Kipsigis and the Gusii in Sondu Area in Kenya*. "Department of Sociology and Social Work." Phd Diss., University Of Nairobi. 2009

²⁰⁹ Krätli, S., & Swift, J. (1999). *Understanding and managing pastoral conflict in Kenya: A literature review*.

a lot of social disorder since some of the young people asked to defend their communities are usually in school, thus they drop out of school with the objective of fighting to protect their communities.

In addition, it was revealed that women and young children also face the severe effect of conflict in society. The women and the children of Bomet and Nyamira counties have been affected by the conflicts that have taken place throughout the years. One of the ward administrators who were female said:

Since 1992 most of the women along the Sotik-Borabu border only stay in the area because of their children and their husbands. the women cannot move to other safer places without the blessing of their husbands, moreover granted that most of the older people in the region are traditional in their way of thinking, the women have no choice but to survive the conflicts and do whatever it takes to feed their families.

(Ward Administrator from FGD-2, 30th July 2021)

Further, the participants from the FGD-3²¹⁰ revealed that most women have become breadwinners in the region. This is based on the fact that once cattle have either been sold or raided most men enter into a depression since they are not able to provide for their families. As such the women have to step up and take the responsibility for the whole family.²¹¹ The women take part in odd jobs as a way of earning money and food to feed their children.

²¹⁰ Focus group discussion held on 7th July 2021 in Bomet County

²¹¹ M. Omwenga. "Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002." Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

Further, the local chiefs from Bomet and Nyamira Counties²¹² stated that the female gender often fall victim to sexual assault during conflicts. The local chiefs from both Nyamira and Bomet stated that they were very disappointed by the increased cases of sexual violence against women that were reported during conflicts. The local chiefs reported that the perpetrators of these sexual assaults included the warriors who engaged in violence, the gangs, and in some instances the police enforcement. This was supported by findings by the Waki report²¹³ that the perpetrators of sexual violence along the Sotik-Borabu border following the 2007/2008 post-election violence included, gangs, warriors, and police officers. They explained that between the years 1992 to 2010 the issue of sexual assault in the region was not a subject that people would freely talk about. Hence, the number of cases reported was few in comparison to the cases that remained unreported for fear of victimization and being attacked by society. Further, In 2007/2008, the Kenya Human Rights Commission and the Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD), a renowned international NGO that was significantly involved in peace-building initiatives in Sotik and Borabu, both claimed sexual assault during and after the violence.²¹⁴

The children were also identified to be a group that was affected by conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border. Other than not attending school due to the destruction of schools

²¹² Interviews with local chiefs from Bomet and Nyamira counties held on 19th July 2021 and 30th August 2021 respectively.

²¹³ Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, "Commissions of Inquiry - CIPEV Report (Waki Report)" IX. Government Documents and Regulations. 5.2008

²¹⁴ Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD), (Nairobi). *Case-Study: Peace building after post-election violence*, (Nairobi)

during conflicts, most children were separated from their parents as they fled their homes.

A participant from FGD-1 said:

During the Kipsigis and Gusii conflicts, in particular the warfare that involved a lot of burning, most children were displaced and separated from their parents, guardians, and relatives. (Participant from FGD-1, 11th August 2021)

The displacement of children lowered the chances of survival for the same children. This, as indicated by the local chiefs is one of the big reasons why the Gusii and the Kipsigis should choose to end conflict since it affects innocent children. Moreover separating the children from their parents also traumatizes the children. Some of the ward administrators in the focus group discussions were still children during the early years of the 1990s, they acknowledged that the conflict and violence they experienced during the time scared them for life. The trauma that followed from witnessing the conflict still haunts them to date. Five of these ward administrators also revealed that they joined the administrative positions in their respective counties to end the conflict in the region. According to the one ward administrator:

I would not like any child to undergo the trauma I did. If I can help the community to coexist peacefully, I will do it for the sake of the future generations which include my children as well. (Participant from FGD-3, 7th July, 2021)

These findings were aligned with those of Omwenga²¹⁵ and Achieng²¹⁶ who established that children are often affected by conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border by the Kipsigis and the Gusii community members. The children within this region are the future of tomorrow; they deserve a better environment where communities can co-exist peacefully without having to engage in any form of conflict.²¹⁷

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the impacts of the Borabu-Sotik border conflict on the Gusii and Kipsigis communities during the period 1992 to 2010. Like any other conflict, the conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border was followed by severe impacts. The impacts of the conflicts depended on the intensity of the conflicts and the root causes of the conflict. However, irrespective of the intensity of the conflict, the impacts were felt by all group members of the communities including both the older men and younger men, who had to join the warfare by force. Moreover, the women and the children were displaced and in many instances separated from each other. The female gender was by far the most affected group since they were sexually violated by the gangs that attacked and in some instances by the police whose sole responsibility was to protect them. More to this, some of the women could not report the cases of sexual assault for fear of victimization by society. This is an indication of the backward thinking at the time that was held by the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.

²¹⁵ M. Omwenga. "Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002." Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

²¹⁶ O., Achieng. *Interethnic Coexistence among the Luo, the Kipsigis and the Gusii in Sondu Area in Kenya*. "Department of Sociology and Social Work." Phd Diss., University Of Nairobi. 2009

²¹⁷ Focus group discussion with village elders from Bomet and Nyamira Counties.

This chapter has demonstrated that the displacement of people from their homes was one of the impacts of conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border. It was realized that although displacement of people was witnessed in both communities, the Gusii were the commonly affected ethnic groups. The Kipsigis would displace the Gusii from their homes and threaten them so that they may not return to their lands. Further, due to the increased violence following the multi-party system, some of the community members from the two ethnic communities lost their lives. Death was witnessed with some police being attacked and even killed. the loss of lives left some children orphaned and women widowed while the men become widowers.

Furthermore, the loss of cattle has been shown as another impact of the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict during the period 1992 to 2010. Before 1992, the two communities were able to interact cordially through trade. However, as more conflict intensified, the two communities could not see eye to eye, thus they turned to raid each other whenever an opportunity arose. This resulted in the depletion of their cattle. The property was destroyed whenever conflict arose between the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities. The churches, schools, residential homes, shops, and farms were the property commonly destroyed and burnt down during conflicts.

In addition, the social ties between the Kipsigis and Gusii communities were eroded. Due to increased mistrust and animosity, the two communities during the period 1992 to 2010 ceased engaging in cultural celebrations and trading as often as they did in the past. Over the 18 years, it was revealed that the celebration and trading activities between the two communities were fewer. This was due to the mistrust that grew between the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities. The hatred and anger against each other were

evident as the two communities tried to start trading with other communities other than each other even though they share a border.

Moreover, the education sector was negatively affected by the burning of schools and the transfer of teachers to other safer regions. The environment was not spared during the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict. Due to the burning practiced by the two ethnic communities the environment was polluted by smoke while soil pollution was also witnessed since the lands that were burnt became bare.

Essentially, the impacts of the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the border should act as a lesson to the two ethnic communities to work towards solving their differences. If the two communities fail to step up and address their issues, there may be no Nyamira and Bomet for the future generation. Although some strategies were adopted by the two communities to resolve their conflicts and to promote co-existence, as will be discussed in the next chapter, there is a need for more strategies to be applied aligned to the provisions of the adoption of the new constitution and the increased modernization, otherwise, these negative impacts will continue to be recorded in the region.

CHAPTER FOUR: MITIGATION MEASURES IMPLEMENTED TO END THE GUSII AND THE KIPSIGIS CONFLICT ALONG THE SOTIK/BORABU BORDER (1992 to 2010)

4.1 Introduction

Peacebuilding is a process of cultural reconstruction, a process of establishing social conversation that stimulates critical reflection on current realities, re-evaluation of current priorities, and the formation of shared meanings.²¹⁸ Every cultural community has its own "indigenous exceptionalisms," or methods, values, insights, and practices that are unique to it. As for the Kipsigis and the Gusii, conflict has persisted over the period 1992 to 2010. Therefore, the need to implement mitigating strategies has become a necessity in the region. This section highlights the mitigating strategies that have been implemented by the Kipsigis and Gusii communities during the period 1992 to 2010 in an effort of ending the conflict.

4.2 Committees for Peace Building

One of the triumphs of Kenya's peacebuilding procedures is the evolution of the Peace Committee model for resolving conflicts. It began as a loosely organized group of elders (representing traditional governing institutions), civil society, religious leaders, and government officials. Since then, the model has been reproduced across the country, and persistent initiatives to institutionalize it have gained traction.²¹⁹ Regular cross-border conferences (Baraza in Swahili) are held by the committee, allowing for the development

²¹⁸ T., Guldemann. Peacekeeping Under Strain: Coping with Evolving Contradictions?'. *Peace and Conflict Review*, 4(2), 68-79, 2010.

²¹⁹ Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED). *Conflict Trends: Real Time Analysis of African Political Violence*. No.1. 2012.

of relationships and friendships, as well as the establishment of "constructive dependency" among individuals, the two communities, cultural leaders, administrators, and political authorities. Continued and potentially more significant relationships, collaborations, and cooperation are reliant on the cycle of dependency that has been established. These activities aid in the restoration and maintenance of peace. The local chiefs²²⁰ revealed that the Gusii and Kipsigis community members following the conflict that erupted in 1992 established committees whose sole purpose was to preach peace in the region. The local chiefs²²¹ indicated that during the conflict that emerged as a result of the 1992 general elections, the elders in Konoin in Bomet County and Siengirei in Nyamira County formed committees to resolve the disputes among the two ethnic communities. Further, the respondents revealed that during the 1990s the committees were not as strong as they were following the 2002 general elections. The respondents revealed that although the committees were formed in the 1990s, they were weak and hence could be dissolved as easily as they were formed.

Further, the village elders agreed that the committees for peacebuilding during the 1990s were not successful in ending conflict between the community members since the largest percentage of the people who made up the committees were old and whose cultural stand was that the Kipsigis and the Gusii ought not to co-exist peacefully. The committees at the time were made up of people who had their interests at heart and not that of society. However, despite the failure of the committees at the time, it was an initial step to bringing

²²⁰ Interviews with local chiefs from Nyamira and Bomet counties held on 26th August 2021 and 22nd July 2021 respectively

²²¹ Interviews with local chiefs from Nyamira and Bomet counties held on 26th August 2021 and 22nd July 2021 respectively

the two communities together at one table to discuss their differences. Moreover, a local chief from Bomet County²²² indicated that District Peace Committees were formed following the 2007/2008 general elections in Sotik area. The local chief²²³ revealed that the youths were trained by the government on peace building initiatives to help bring peace to the two ethnic communities residing along the Sotik/Borabu border

As the years passed, following the success of the 2002 election in Kenya, the two communities started to establish stronger peace committees. A local chief explained:

Following the peaceful general elections in 2002, the Gusii and Kipsigis communities started to have confidence in each other and attempted to establish stronger peace committees. These peace committees were formed on the basis that its members would work to meet the needs of the society and not their interests.”

(Local Chief from Bomet County, 26th July 2021)

Further, a local chief from Bomet county²²⁴ explained that The Uwiano platform for peace was developed to create peace in the nation as a result of the post-election violence in 2007 and 2008. national approach for preventing and responding to conflicts is the Uwiano platform for peace. According to the Uwiano Platform for Peace, Kenya has seen intermittent violence that may be divided into high-level conflicts marked by the ethnic-based struggle for state authority and low-level, ongoing conflicts fueled by resource rivalry.²²⁵ Thus, on a small scale at the local level, peace-building efforts have

²²² Interview with a local chief from Bomet County held on 19th July 2021.

²²³ Interview with a local chief from Bomet County held on 19th July 2021.

²²⁴ Interview with a local chief from Bomet County held on 22nd July 2021

²²⁵ Uwiano Joint Secretariat, *Uwiano Platform for Peace: Experiences and Lessons Learned*, (Nairobi, 2012), viii.

involved getting people together to have a conversation about how to settle their dispute over the management of resources like grazing land, usually under the direction of the local authorities.²²⁶ The local chiefs²²⁷ revealed that just as the rest of the country embraced the Uwiano Platform so did the Kipsigis and Gusii communities. The Platform allowed the people to come together and communicate their issues in public while calling a truce. The local chiefs²²⁸ revealed that the people from Nyamira and Bomet counties were able to report incidences of conflict by sending messages to a toll free code – 6397. This facilitated in the community members taking an active role in participating in peace building.

Eight participants from the FGD-4²²⁹ indicated that the use of senior elder networks along the Sotik Borabu border was also used as a mitigating strategy to end the conflict in the region. The respondents indicated that this strategy involved settling disputes in the presence of senior members in the two communities. One of the chiefs²³⁰ reminisced on the times the community members would visit the senior persons in the community for guidance and wisdom in solving their differences. During this time, the senior networks would have a feast together with the conflicting parties to solve their differences. The respondents admitted that the strategy was effective during the early 2000s, however, with globalization and modernization, more young people have taken different ranks and do not consult the seniors for any advice, rather do whatever they please. This finding was similar

²²⁶ K., Solonka. "Post-conflict peace building in East Africa: The case of Sotik and Borabu constituencies in Kenya, 1990-2012." PhD diss., University of Nairobi., 2013.

²²⁷ Two interviews with local chiefs from Nyamira County held on 30th August 2021 and 25th August 2021.

²²⁸ Two interviews with local chiefs from Nyamira County held on 30th August 2021 and 25th August 2021.

²²⁹ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

²³⁰ Interview with a local chief from Nyamira county held on 25th August 2021

to that of Onyango,²³¹ who established that in West Pokot the grass-root peace building was attained by bringing together senior citizens who spearheaded the peace building initiatives. This technique included butchering a goat and the utilization of goat blood for purging. Sharing a feast among the warring networks' senior citizens was an indication of serene concurrence. According to the participants of the FGD-3 the approach of bringing the community members together has been effective in promoting peace between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities.

4.3 Involvement of Women in Peace Building

Women from the Gusii and Kipsigis communities are actors in the process of conflict resolution along the Sotik/Borabu region. Violent conflict and its consequences make it critical for women to have a substantial role in reducing the effects of violence, not just for themselves but also for their families and communities. As a preventative precaution, the FGD-1²³² disclosed that the Sotik/Borabu Women Peace Drive was launched as a local initiative by women from both the Kipsigis and the Gusii in reaction to the intermittent violent conflict that lasted from 1992 to 2010. This program highlights the importance of women in society and aims to bring women from both sides of the border together. Local radio talk programs, which frequently broadcast on subjects of peace, female leadership, and empowerment, have proven to be particularly helpful for the Women Peace Drive. One of the female administrators revealed:

²³¹ E., Onyango. "Cross-Border Conflict Management Measures Adopted by Non-Governmental Organizations in Kenya: A Survey of West Pokot County." Phd Diss., Africa Nazarene University, 2019.

²³² Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

As a member of the Sotik/Borabu Women Peace Drive, I am proud of the initiatives that we engage to end the conflict in the region. The drive has brought women together to push for change in society from our own homes to our leaders to resolve the conflict along the borders. Although our efforts were not as effective as we would have wanted during the years 1992-210, we are still pushing towards seeing the two communities co-exist peacefully. Our initiatives start from our homes where we encourage our children to live in harmony with each other. (Ward Administrator from FGD-1, 11th August 2021)

Women, whether literate or not, are generally powerful members of any community.²³³ As active participants in decision-making processes and community-based conflict efforts, they can play a key role. They are the first to fall victim to violence in high-risk regions, such as near community borders, and they suffer the most. Opiyo²³⁴ observed that in conflict-prone areas, groups of women often live in fear of being attacked and violated. Further, The Kenya Human Rights Commission reported sexual abuse against women is a common phenomenon during the conflict.²³⁵ As such equipping the women with tools of peacebuilding is essential since they are the group that falls victim to violent crimes. The local chiefs revealed that the women along the Sotik/Borabu region started to hold meetings whereby, leaders would be invited to educate them on conflict resolution. One of the village elders said:

²³³ F., Opiyo, W., Oliver, S., Janpeter, and M., Stephen. "Resource-based conflicts in drought-prone Northwestern Kenya: The drivers and mitigation mechanisms." (2012).

²³⁴ T., Ayot. *Ethnic Conflict in Kenya and its Impact on the Policy*. Paper presented at the CODESRIA General Assembly. 1995.

²³⁵ Kenya Human Rights Commission and the National Network for IDPs in Kenya, *Gains and Gaps: A status Report on IPDs in Kenya 2008-2010*. 2011

In 2007, just before the general elections in Kenya, I had the opportunity of being invited by a group of women along the Sotik/Borabu region to talk to them about conflict resolution. I was able to educate the women on how they can start a ripple effect on peacebuilding and conflict resolution from their own homes. At the time, the women were willing to learn, however at the same time, they feared that the male figures in their lives whether spouses, fathers, and sons would not understand their desire to mitigate the conflict along the border. Regardless of their fear, the women explained to me they were tired of losing their husbands and children to conflict hence, their desire to learn about conflict resolution. (Village Elder from Bomet County, 8th July 2021)

Despite the horrific experiences that women have experienced as a result of conflict, they have already proved via their initiatives that they are powerful and determined actors in the peace, and thus mitigation, process.²³⁶ As a result, it is critical to enlist their support to ensure long-term stability.

Further, according to Kraetli and Swift²³⁷ young men and women are the most affected groups when conflict arises, since they lack any form of income. In many cases following a conflict, women have become breadwinners in the region. This was established to be the case in the Sotik/Borabu region from the 1992 to 2010 period. The respondents from FGD-2²³⁸ revealed that during the period, the women were the breadwinners in most cases. This is because men lost their main course of income which is livestock keeping thus

²³⁶ K. Ngeiywa. *Deterring Cross-Border Conflict in the Horn of Africa: A Case Study of Kenya-Uganda Border*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2008.

²³⁷ Krätli, S., & Swift, J. (1999). *Understanding and managing pastoral conflict in Kenya: A literature review*.

²³⁸ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

leaving the responsibility of providing for the family to the women. Thereafter, the families started looking up to the women. This then facilitated the Kipsigis and Gusii women to form *Chamas*. The respondents from FGD-2²³⁹ explained that *chamas* are established by a group of people who contribute a specific amount of money either daily or weekly which is given to every individual at an agreed time. These *Chamas* were aimed at not only raising money among the members but also, promoting peace in the region. During the 18-year period that is from 1992 to 2010, the women started to use their *chamas* to spread the message of peace along the Sotik/Borabu border at the same time, provide for their families.

According to Omwenga²⁴⁰ women are essential to the well-being of a society. The women along the Sotik/Borabu border have proven their importance by demanding that the chiefs in the region take an active stand in resolving conflict in the region while involving the women as well. One of the chiefs from Nyamira County revealed that after the 2007/2008 post-election violence, women demanded that they be included in the efforts of resolving conflict in the region. The chief explained that the women stormed into his predecessor's office and demanded that the community acknowledge women as peacekeepers along the border. Since then, he and his predecessor have always involved women in any initiative and activities on peacebuilding in the region.

The findings indicated that women are ready to take their place in resolving conflict in society. Women have refused to be sidelined in any initiatives on peacebuilding hence, they have started to join in the fight to end conflict along the Sotik/Borabu region. Seven

²³⁹ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

²⁴⁰ M. Omwenga. "Cross-border Conflicts between the Kipsigis and Gusii of Kenya, 1963-2002." Phd Diss., Kenyatta University. 2016.

women from the FGD-1²⁴¹ agreed that during the period 1992 to 2010, women along the border became more vocal than ever concerning ensuring conflict is mitigated in the area. The seven female respondents²⁴² revealed that the fight for peace cannot be attained by men only, hence they encourage all women and young girls to join in mitigating conflict for the longevity of the society.

4.4 Youth Empowerment and Employment

All over the world, the concept that the youth are the future has been encouraged and emphasized. This has been evident in both the developed and developing nations such as Kenya. Along the Sotik/Borabu region, the concept has been maintained with a majority of the respondents agreeing that the youth are the future of the region. From the focus group discussions, it was evident that youths are considered to be an important part of the society hence, the emphasis on the community leaders from Nyamira and Bomet in promoting youth empowerment. One of the local chiefs from Nyamira said:

Our time to lead as elders is over. Right now, the best decision we can make as leaders and adults of this society is to prepare our youths for the future. This can only be attained if we talk to our youth and empower them on all matters affecting the communities. We have to teach the youth the importance of co-existing since we are moving to a world where being a community is a necessity. Educating our youths on togetherness and unity will go a long way in ensuring the sustainability

²⁴¹ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

²⁴² Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

of both the Gusii and Kipsigis communities along the border. (Local Chief from Nyamira County, 25th August 2021)

Respondents from FGD-3²⁴³ explained that youth empowerment was an effective strategy in promoting peace building. This was established by Makoloo *et al*,²⁴⁴ who found that the lack of identity by young people is linked to the increasing level of poverty during the late 90s aggravated the youths along the Sotik-Borabu border. This is because, after completing primary education, the young men and girls could not attend high school due to the lack of school fees. As such, and to ensure that the youths whose education has been cut short do not turn to violence, a local chief²⁴⁵ revealed that they have to empower them by offering the youth training and job opportunities.

Further, a local chief from Bomet County²⁴⁶ revealed that following the conflict in 1992-2020, the two community members have always turned to youth sports as a technique of bringing the two communities together to settle their differences. From the participants of the FGD-1²⁴⁷, it was indicated that the Borabu/Sotik Youth Peace Forum was established following the continued conflicts along the border. The forum is made up of young people from both ethnic groups who gather monthly to discuss and arrange peace-building activities in the area. These events include cross-border sports such as soccer tournaments and road peace marathons, in which participants are encouraged to advocate conflict resolution through peaceful means. One local elder²⁴⁸ revealed that the sporting activities

²⁴³ Focus group discussion held on 7th July 2021 in Bomet County

²⁴⁴ M., Makoloo, and P., Yash. *Kenya: Minorities, indigenous peoples and ethnic diversity*. London: Minority Rights Group International, 2005.

²⁴⁵ Interviews with a local chief from Bomet county held on 19th July 2021

²⁴⁶ Interviews with a local chief from Bomet county held on 19th July 2021

²⁴⁷ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

²⁴⁸ A local elder from Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

that have been practiced by the youth from the years 1992-to 2020 have given the elderly hope that their young ones are on the right track to establishing peace and reconciliation. Further, the local elders indicated that although the sports activities undertaken by the youths have not been successful in reconciling the two communities in the past, it is an initial step in mitigating the conflict.

In addition, as part of empowerment, a chief from Bomet county revealed that Non-Governmental Organizations have been active in empowering the youths through the planting of trees. The respondent from FGD-3 and FGD-1²⁴⁹ explained that over the years, 1992 to 2010, NGOs have visited the two communities and engaged their youth in tree planting. This activity though may be considered small but has had ripple effects in the region. The ward administrators concurred and explained that through tree planting, the youths in the region came together more so, following the 2007/2008 post-election violence, and started to practice farming. Both the Kipsigis and Gusii youths started farming together and selling the produce harvested. These findings were comparable to those of Solonka, who found that NGOs sponsored adolescents from the Gusii and Kipsigis communities who banded together and began planting trees, which they were to sell once they matured to supplement their income. Youth sports teams were also formed, with young people from the Kipsigis and Gusii tribes coming together to play sports, primarily football.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ Focus group discussions held in Bomet county on 7th July 2021 and Nyamira County on 11th August 2021.

²⁵⁰ K., Solonka. "Post-conflict peace building in East Africa: The case of Sotik and Borabu constituencies in Kenya, 1990-2012." PhD diss., University of Nairobi., 2013.

Orchardson²⁵¹ observed that the youths are often incited into engaging in violence by the community members along the Sotik/Borabu region. This was acknowledged by the chief elders who also revealed that this phenomenon has changed with most of the youths refusing to take part in cattle raiding after the 2007/2008 post-election violence. The elders from the FGD-4²⁵² revealed that after the post-election violence, some NGOs started to educate the young people in the region on the importance of peacebuilding and refused to be used to instigate conflict and violence. This was aligned with Lokiyo²⁵³, who established that by educating the youths on the importance of peace and conflict resolution, they can easily disseminate the message of peace if the will is there and if it is exploited well. Further, Kester explains that peace education is founded on the pillar of active citizenship and encouraging learners to be actively engaged on issues to do with democracy.²⁵⁴

Job employment was identified to be a strategy along the Sotik/Borabu border in mitigating conflict. According to the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC), it is mainly the youth who are involved in the general conflict and also in cattle theft in the region.²⁵⁵ The local chiefs from both Bomet and Nyamira county revealed that they understood the impact conflict has had on the youths in the community as such, the chiefs revealed that they have attempted to change the lives of the

²⁵¹ Orchardson, I.Q. (1971) *The Kipsigis, Nairobi*: EALB.

²⁵² Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

²⁵³ E., Lokiyo. "Transborder conflict between the Turkana and Pokot in Kainuk and Alale divisions, Kenya 1995–2013." PhD diss., MA dissertation. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, 2014.

²⁵⁴ Kester, K. (2007). Peace education: Experience and storytelling as living education. *Peace and Conflict Review*, 2(2), 1-14.

²⁵⁵ National Steering Committee on Peace building and Conflict Management (NSC) Secretariat (2011), *National Conflict Mapping and Analysis: Peace and Conflict Trends in Kenya* (Nairobi, 27).

youths by encouraging them to apply for jobs and recommending them for county jobs. A village elder from Nyamira County said:

Most of the youths in my region feel hopeless since a majority of them have acquired an education but have not yet secured jobs. The frustration that comes with being jobless and coming from poor families can destroy the youths of the Gusii and Kipsigis communities. When I talk with most of the youths in my areas they often explain that they would rather engage in cattle rustling since they are sure it will provide them with some money rather than staying idle. They tell me that they have applied for jobs with no success. Hence, to be of assistance, I offer them any available jobs including washing my office. (Village Elder from Nyamira County, 17th August 2021)

4.5 Involvement of Government and Other Organizations in Mitigating Conflict

The local chiefs²⁵⁶ interviewed revealed that the Government through Members of Parliament had attempted to mitigate the conflict experienced in the region following the 1997 elections. The local chiefs revealed that some Members of Parliament at that time were vocal on the need for the Gusii and Kipsigis to unite for development in the region. Government officials facilitated this by having meetings with the general public advocating for peace along the Sotik/Borabu border. In addition, one of the ward administrators narrated her encounter with one of the political leaders in 1998 during a meeting on peace in the region. The ward administrator said:

²⁵⁶ Interviews with two local chiefs from Nyamira county held on 16th August 2021 and 25th August 2021

In 1998, we had come out of a general election, but the conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis was still evident in the region. The Gusii were not in favor of the Moi regime while the Kipsigis wanted Moi to remain in power, hence the conflict along the border. At the time, one of the political leaders, who had lost an election came to the region and had a meeting with the local leaders in the region and explained the need of uniting the two communities. He was so passionate about uniting the Gusii and the Kipsigis. Although his efforts did not bear any fruits at the time it was a good attempt on his part, it was more than what other leaders have done in the region. (Ward Administrator from FGD-4, 24th August 2021)

According to Lokiyo²⁵⁷, parliamentarians are expected to be more proactive and neutral in shaping the political agenda for peace and prosperity, while addressing the needs of all people, to create confidence and avoid cross-border conflicts from escalating. It is also up to each Parliament to establish a means of allocating resources fairly, in collaboration with the Executive, to address the socio-economic needs of marginalized pastoral communities.²⁵⁸ The participants of the FGD-4²⁵⁹ revealed that the political leaders in the region have an essential role to play in spreading the message of peace. However, as it was evident, most of the political leaders have abandoned the region. They only come back when they want votes from the citizens.

²⁵⁷ E., Lokiyo. "Transborder conflict between the Turkana and Pokot in Kainuk and Alale divisions, Kenya 1995–2013." PhD diss., MA dissertation. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, 2014.

²⁵⁸ E., Lokiyo. "Transborder conflict between the Turkana and Pokot in Kainuk and Alale divisions, Kenya 1995–2013." PhD diss., MA dissertation. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, 2014.

²⁵⁹ Focus group discussion held on 24th August 2021 in Nyamira County

Further, the respondents from both the interviews and the participants from the FGD-2²⁶⁰ revealed that most of the assistance in mitigating the conflict in the area is usually spearheaded by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The study revealed that following the 2007/2008 post-election violence, the Red Cross team was there to help the community members. The local chiefs revealed that the Red Cross team did not only offer assistance in terms of food and clothing but also tried to address the issue of conflict in the region and stir the two communities into reconciliation. This finding concurred with Onyango²⁶¹ who established that the use of NGOs in Kenya has been effective in mitigating cross-border conflicts in Kenya and along the West-Pokot region.

4.6 Branding of Cattle

Cattle raiding was an acceptable cultural practice until recently. Raiding was intended to depict the more powerful community, organizations, or people who carried out successful raids. Raids were often used to restock cattle following droughts or other natural disasters. However, they frequently inspire retaliation, vengeance, and counter-retaliation, resulting in long-term conflict within the district. The conflict caused by cattle raiding along the Sotik/Borabu region was identified to be a hindrance to mitigating conflict in the region. However, branding is a technique where cattle and all livestock are tagged and have been accepted by the two community members as a measure to curb conflict. Branding means that each community members tag their cattle, such that if they are stolen, they can be easily identified.

²⁶⁰ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

²⁶¹ E., Onyango. "Cross-Border Conflict Management Measures Adopted By Non-Governmental Organizations In Kenya: A Survey Of West Pokot County." Ph.D. Diss., Africa Nazarene University, 2019

Two of the participants from the FGD-3²⁶² revealed that they adopted branding of livestock to ensure that if any animal is stolen by their rivals it can be easily identified and retrieved. This is backed by Ngeiywa's²⁶³ conclusions that livestock branding is a way to track down stolen cattle in a certain community. It was established along the Kenya-Uganda border following independence as a means of reducing regional strife.

However, the author noted that for the strategy to be effective implementation must be enforced. The respondents from the FGD-2²⁶⁴ revealed that even with livestock branding, conflict resulting from cattle rustling remained to be a challenge along the border. This was in agreement with Ngeiywa, who stated that while the principle behind branding and identification is valid, the system cannot function effectively without continued community and law enforcement cooperation.²⁶⁵

4.7 Success of the Mitigation Measures Implemented from 1992 to 2010

The researcher enquired from the respondents whether the mitigation measures employed have been successful in the region throughout the years. The respondents from the FGD-1²⁶⁶ indicated that the majority of the strategies implemented during the years have not been effective. In the issue of livestock branding, the village elders revealed that the approach cannot be effective without having an effective rule of enforcement. The elder indicated that although the community members branded their livestock, this did not

²⁶² Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

²⁶³ K. Ngeiywa. *Deterring Cross-Border Conflict in the Horn of Africa: A Case Study of Kenya-Uganda Border*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2008.

²⁶⁴ Focus group discussion held on 30th July 2021 in Bomet County

²⁶⁵ K. Ngeiywa. *Deterring Cross-Border Conflict in the Horn of Africa: A Case Study of Kenya-Uganda Border*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2008.

²⁶⁶ Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

exempt the livestock from being raided. This finding was supported by Ngeiywa²⁶⁷ who argued that branding livestock is an effective approach, in theory, however, in its implementations, lack of proper enforcement will automatically result in its failure.

On the issue of involvement by the Government and other organizations promoting peace in the region, the local chiefs from Bomet County²⁶⁸ revealed that the approach has failed to be effective in the region. The local chiefs²⁶⁹ revealed that although some of the political leaders preach the message of peace in the region, most of them have a string attached to helping the communities resolve their issues. This was supported by local chiefs from Nyamira County²⁷⁰ who revealed that most of the Government officials who spread the message of peace in the region only do so when they want to be elected. This negates their responsibility to be active in peacebuilding. Further, the respondents revealed that assistance from NGOs is usually effective for a period. The efforts by NGOs to bring peace were established to be short-lived hence not sustainable. The respondents revealed that most the NGOs do not make follow-ups after helping resolve conflict, hence the two community members turn back to their old habits of violence.

To an average extent, the respondents indicated that the use of peace committees has been effective. The respondents revealed that following the 2002 general election, the two communities engaged in peace committees where they feasted together; and for the first time in a long time, the two communities agreed on a political stand. However, the local chiefs revealed that the peace committees have not always been effective since some

²⁶⁷ K. Ngeiywa. *Deterring Cross-Border Conflict in the Horn of Africa: A Case Study of Kenya-Uganda Border*. Naval Postgraduate School Monterey CA, 2008.

²⁶⁸ Interviews with two local chiefs from Bomet counties held on 19th July 2021 and 21st July 2021.

²⁶⁹ Interviews with two local chiefs from Bomet counties held on 19th July 2021 and 21st July 2021.

²⁷⁰ Interviews with two local chiefs from Nyamira counties held on 26th August 2021 and 30th August 2021

of the members were more consumed in meeting their interests rather than promoting peace in the society.²⁷¹

The use of women and youth empowerment by far was identified to be the most effective strategy in the communities in attaining peace. This may be grounded in that the strategies are advocated by the people who were most affected by conflicts along the border from 1992-to 2020. The participants from the FGD-1²⁷² revealed that the youth and women during the period were ready to change how the two communities operate in regards to conflict and the measures needed to mitigate the conflict. Further, the ward administrators revealed that from 1992 to 2010 through the help of women's groups and youths groups, a transition from the patriarchal systems that were previously practiced in the region was evident with more women taking on the responsibility as breadwinners and more youths being active in societal issues. This concurred with Solonka who established that effective implementation of peace projects in the Gusii and Kipsigis communities was critical in ending conflict after the 2007 post-election. Peace projects, according to the author, are critical in improving the livelihoods of community members from both ethnic groups; these peace projects included encouraging youth from both ethnic groups to come together and plant trees, which they would later sell to generate revenue to improve their livelihoods.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED). *Conflict Trends: Real Time Analysis of African Political Violence*. No.1. 2012.

²⁷² Focus group discussion held on 11th August 2021 in Nyamira County

²⁷³ K., Solonka. "Post-conflict peace building in East Africa: The case of Sotik and Borabu constituencies in Kenya, 1990-2012." PhD diss., University of Nairobi., 2013.

4.8 Conclusion

The third study objective was to analyze the mitigation measures implemented to end the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010). The mitigation measures in the region were employed during different times and their effect varies. Some of the mitigation measures adopted by the two communities over the years have been successful while others have failed. For example, the branding of livestock was established to have failed since it did not correspond with a good enforcement policy to ensure that the community members adhere to the branding of livestock policies. The sustenance of the branding approach is completely reliant on the available policies to enforce the technique to end the conflict in the region.

The involvement of the Government and other organizations was established to be short-term strategies that failed to be sustainable. This raises the question of corporate social responsibility by organizations and the need for Government to delve deeper into helping the society rather than enriching its own pockets. Organizations in the region and around the border need to take up the role of ensuring that peace activities and peace initiatives are not only one lone-day event. The organizations and in particular, Government need to ensure that activities and initiatives for peace are a continuous process. This is to bring about a culture of peace between the Gusii and the Kipsigis communities along the Sotik-Borabu border.

The use of peace committees was also established to be successful temporarily. This is because it was established that the peace committees grew weary of trying to bring the two communities together. Moreover, it was revealed that often the peace committee was involved in a similar way to the political leaders focused on meeting their interests.

The involvement of women and youth empowerment in peacebuilding was established to be the most effective mitigating strategies adopted in the region. The findings revealed that resolving conflict along the Sotik/Borabu has changed with more women taking active stands on peace and the youth getting involved in peace processes. The study established that women are integral players in establishing peace in society. It was revealed that involving women in peace initiatives increases their chances of success. In addition, it was evident from the data collected that women were tired of sitting on the sidelines and were ready to take up their position in making peace decisions. In addition, youths were identified as the future of the community. Thus, it was established essentially to train young people to engage in peace initiatives rather than in conflict or activities that may lead to conflict. The study concluded that any mitigation measures adopted in the region to end conflict must involve the youth and the women to be sustainable in the long term.

However, although the mitigating strategies were a good effort of establishing peace in the region at the time, it is evident that more and better strategies ought to have been implemented at the time. This is because a majority of the strategies implemented during the period 1992 to 2010 were found to be ineffective or unsustainable for the long-term coexistence of the two communities.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the summary of research findings, the conclusions drawn, and the recommendations of the study. This research investigated the reasons behind the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010)

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The first objective of the study was to determine the causes of the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010). This objective was met by collecting and analyzing data from the local chiefs, village elders, and ward administrators. The study found that cattle rusting was the major cause of conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis along the Sotik-Borabu border. Further, the findings identified other causes of conflict between the two communities namely; power, political influence, poverty, and scarce natural resources. The findings of the study revealed that the causes of conflict along the border were entrenched in the traditional beliefs and perceptions of each other. The need to be perceived more superior to the other during the period 1992 to 2010 has driven a wedge between the two communities resulting in more conflict.

The second objective of the study, to examine the impacts of the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010) was achieved. The findings indicated that the consequences of conflict along the border included; loss of cattle and human lives, destruction of property, displacement of people, social disorder, environmental degradation, and interference with education. The research findings revealed that the impact of conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border has had ripple effects.

This implies that one impact has resulted in other impacts. The consequences borne from the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict are an indication that tribal conflicts are dangerous and complex and thus must be addressed.

The third study objective was to analyze the mitigation measures implemented to end the Gusii and the Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border (1992 to 2010). This objective was attained by collecting primary data from the targeted respondents. The findings from the data collected revealed that it is critical to employ effective mitigating measures to ensure the end of the conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities. The results revealed that the two communities have over the years tried to promote peace, however, it has been short-lived. The study findings showed that empowering the youths and involving women in conflict resolution would help mitigate conflict in the long term. Moreover, findings also showed that bringing the community members from both ethnic groups to discuss their problems and form solutions would be effective since most of the community members would respond well to a solution formed by the members of the community rather than outsiders.

From the findings, it is evident that competition for scarce resources was a cause of conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border. This is in agreement with the conflict theory, which holds that one of the causes of conflict is due to unequally distributed resources. Concerning the transformational theory, the study revealed that the mitigation strategies adopted by the Gusii and Kipsigis communities aimed at bringing the two communities to coexist peacefully. The transformational theory makes emphasis the need to transform the asymmetric power and cultural imbalances between parties in conflict to find a solution to a conflict. By holding committees for peacebuilding and including women in peace

resolution activities, it was evident that the two communities were implementing the foundation of the transformational theory of ending the conflict.

5.3 Conclusion

The Sotik/Borabu border conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities started in the colonial period. The animosity between the Gusii and Kipsigis is entrenched in their traditional and cultural communities. The practices of the two communities of cattle rustling against each other were identified to be a major cause of conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border. Further, competition over natural resources and power was also identified to propel conflict. In addition, the impacts of conflict among the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities have been catastrophic with women and children being the most affected demographic. Loss of lives in a few instances is reported during the conflict. Moreover, the greatest impact has been the loss of property and in particular, houses and cattle. Such impacts leave the affected communities in distress and they have to find a way to recover their property and rebuild their houses hence, contributing to hardship within the region. Notably, some measures can be implemented to end the suffering that follows the conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii. The mitigating measures include educating and conducting meetings with the community members on the issue of peace, empowering women, and providing jobs to the youth. The conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii can come to an end if and when the two communities accept to do away with some of their traditional practices and embrace peaceful coexistence.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that the community members ought to be educated on the importance of peaceful coexistence in the region. All community members in the region should take an active role in educating other community members on the issue of peace. By educating each other on peaceful coexistence, awareness is raised, hence the communities can embrace a different way of living that leads to peaceful coexistence.

The study recommends that the Government should take a central role in ensuring the individuals who instigate conflict between the Kipsigis and Gusii people are arrested and prosecuted. More investigation into these crimes ought to be conducted in the region. This is because, the lack of adequate investigation of conflict makes the vice look normal to the community members, hence conflict will continue for years to come. Furthermore, security measures by the Government should be taken to ensure those affected by conflict are compensated and those instigating conflicts are arrested for justice to be maintained in the region.

Although there were allegations of sexual violence in the area throughout the conflict, many community members were unwilling to disclose it during the initial data collection activity of this study. This implies a lack of understanding of human rights, particularly the rights of women and children. As a result, more work should be done to raise knowledge about women's sexual and reproductive rights, with a particular focus on concerns such as gender-based violence against women and children's right to protection from such abuse. To achieve the buy-in needed to tackle such a difficult topic, such projects should include men, women, youth, community elders, and spiritual leaders.

The study recommends that the policymakers in Bomet and Nyamira ought to work hand in hand to formulate measures that can be easily accepted by the communities to end the conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis. Moreover, the policymakers ought to invite the Government for support so that the policies developed on peace can be implemented appropriately in the region.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

Further research can be carried out to explain more about the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik/Borabu border. The study was limited to only the period of 1992 to 2010. More studies can be carried out to explain the conflict between the two communities after 2010 and before 1992. Moreover, further studies can be conducted in Kenya investigating other communities that undergo conflict while sharing the same border other than the Kipsigis and the Gusii. The findings can help build a comparison framework between the causes, impacts, and mitigation strategies as experienced by other conflicting communities.

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APPENDIX I: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

CAUSES OF THE GUSII AND KIPSIGIS CONFLICT ALONG THE SOTIK/BORABU BORDER (1992 to 2010)

1. In your opinion, what has been the root cause of conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities along the Sotik-Borabu region during the period 1992 to 2010?
2. In your opinion, have leaders misused their positions of power among the two communities during the period 1992 to 2010?
3. In your opinion, how has power led to the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010?
4. In your opinion, how has political influence caused conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010?
5. Has poverty contributed to the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict during the period 1992 to 2010? (probe for explanation)
6. How have the scarce natural resources along the border fueled conflict during the period 1992 to 2010? (probe for explanation)
7. In your opinion, has cattle raided been a common phenomenon along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010? (probe for explanation)

IMPACTS OF THE GUSII AND KIPSIGIS CONFLICT ALONG THE SOTIK/BORABU BORDER (1992 to 2010)

8. Has the community recorded any loss of human lives as a result of conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010? (probe for explanation)
9. Have both communities lost any livestock as a result of conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010? (probe for explanation)
10. What other impacts have befallen the Gusii and Kipsigis following conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010? (probe for explanation)
11. How have social ties between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities changed following their conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border during the period 1992 to 2010? (probe for explanation)
12. Which community groups were most affected by the conflict between the Gusii and the Kipsigis (1992 to 2010)

**MITIGATION MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE GUSII AND KIPSIGIS
CONFLICT ALONG THE SOTIK/BORABU BORDER (1992 to 2010)**

13. What has been the response to the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict following conflict along the border (1992 to 2010)?
14. What mitigation strategies have been put in place to address the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010)?
15. Have the women in the communities been included in the mitigation strategies?
16. Did the Government contribute in any way to bringing peace along the Sotik Borabu border (1992 to 2010)?

17. Has any organization taken an active step to address the issue of conflict between the Gusii and Kipsigis communities (1992 to 2010)?

“THE END”

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CHIEFS

1. What are the causes of the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict? Explain.
2. How has cattle raiding led to conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii communities?
3. What are the negative impacts of the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict? Explain.
4. What are the positive impacts of the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict? Explain.
5. What mitigation measures can be implemented to end the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict?
Explain
6. What has the community done to end the Kipsigis and Gusii conflict? Explain.

“THE END”

APPENDIX III: SAMPLE SIZE OF THE STUDY

Table 1. Sample Size

Category	Population
Bomet Ward administrators	25
Nyamira village elders	10
Nyamira Ward administrators	20
Bomet village elders	10
Bomet chiefs	5
Nyamira chiefs	5
Total	75

Source Researcher 2018

APPENDIX IV: MAP OF THE GUSII AND KIPSIGIS LAND AREA

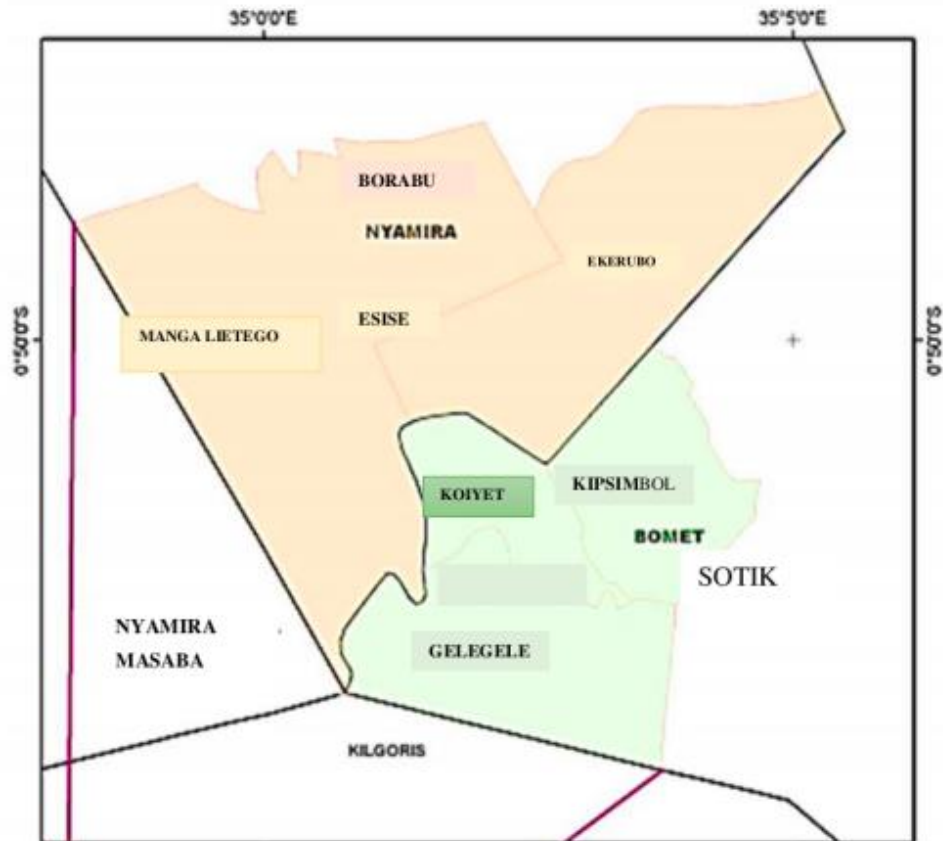


Figure 1: Map of the Gusii and Kipsigis land area

Published by Don Kaggikah (2017)

APPENDIX V: CHAPTER OUTLINE

- ❖ Chapter one covers the introduction to the study. It includes the background, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, and arrangement of chapters.
- ❖ Chapter two covers the causes of the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010).
- ❖ Chapter three delves into the impacts of the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010).
- ❖ Chapter four covers the mitigation measures to address the Gusii and Kipsigis conflict along the Sotik-Borabu border (1992 to 2010).
- ❖ Chapter five covers the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.