



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**DEPARTMENT OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (DDIS)**

**THE IMPACT OF ARMED GROUPS ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MARSABIT  
COUNTY: A CASE STUDY OF OROMO LIBERATION FRONT, 1991 –  
2021.**

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**DECLARATION**

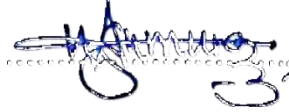
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I, the undersigned declare that this project is my original work and has not been presented to any other University

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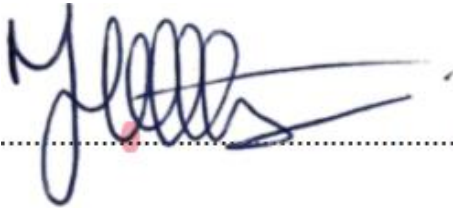


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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to my lovely wife Qabale Umuro and children Kame Umuro, Ibrae Umuro and Adano Umuro for their enduring moral support and encouragement.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I sincerely acknowledge my supervisor Dr John Lekuto for his unreserved help and academic guidance which has facilitated the accomplishment of my work. I do express my gratitude and appreciation to him. I do also recognize the pivotal and critical role played by the University of Nairobi and Joint Command and Staff College Faculty for guidance and facilitation. Finally, I thank my colleagues and friends at work for their continued encouragement.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study interrogated the role of external militia on socio-economic development: A case of Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in Marsabit County. The objectives of the study were; to assess the state of socio-economic development in Marsabit County, examine the impact of armed groups on socio-economic development in the area; and assess how Oromo Liberation Front negatively impacted socio-economic development in Marsabit County. To extrapolate the impact of armed groups on socio-economic development in Marsabit County, the study used the Protracted SocioConflict (PSC) theory as originally founded by Edward Azar. To explain its findings, the studies used a case study and employed a qualitative research methodology. The study was conducted in Marsabit County. The target population was local leaders, businessmen/women, religious leaders, officials from NGOs in the region, leaders representing various women groups and the chiefs from the region. Purposive sampling techniques were used to select respondents for the study. Research instruments used include questionnaires and interview guidelines. Data was presented in descriptive prose. As part of ethical considerations, the researcher considered the anonymity of the respondents, their confidentiality and their informed consent. The study established that the presence of the Oromo Liberation Front in Marsabit County has negatively impacted the socioeconomic development in the county.

# TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS</b> .....	<b>xi</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>BACKGROUND TO THE STYDY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Research Problem .....	7
1.3 Research Questions .....	8
1.4 Research Objectives .....	9
1.4.1 Specific Research Objectives .....	9
1.5 Hypotheses of the Study .....	9
1.6 Justification of the Study .....	9
1.7 Literature Review.....	10
1.8 Theoretical Framework.....	18
1.8.2 Conceptual Framework of the Research Study .....	19
1.9 Research Methodology .....	20
1.9.1 Sample size .....	20
1.9.2 Data Collection and Instruments.....	21
1.9.3 Data Analysis .....	22
1.9.4 Data Presentation .....	23
1.9.5 Ethical Considerations .....	23
1.10 Scope and Limitations of the study.....	23

1.11 Chapter Outline.....	24
<b>CHAPTER TWO.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>STATE OF SOCIO ECONOMIC DEVELOPEMNT IN MARSABIT COUNTY.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.0 Introduction.....</b>	<b>25</b>
2.1.1 Gender.....	25
2.1.2 Age bracket of the participants .....	26
4.2.3. Level of Education of Participants.....	27
2.1.4 Length of time participants had worked for their organization .....	28
2.2 The State of Socio-Economic Development.....	29
2.2 The livelihoods.....	30
2.2.1 Human Development Index (HDI) .....	31
2.3 Agricultural activities.....	32
2.3.1 Main Crops Produced.....	32
2.3.2 Acreage under Food Crops and Cash Crops .....	33
2.3.3. Average Farm Sizes .....	33
2.3.4 Main Storage Facilities .....	33
2.3.5 Agricultural extension, training, research and information services .....	33
2.3.6 Apiculture (beekeeping).....	34
2.4 Infrastructure development .....	<b>34</b>
2.4.1 Road, Railway Network and Airports.....	35
2.4.2 Information, communication and technology .....	35
2.4.3 Energy Access.....	36
2.4.4 Housing types.....	36
2.5 Land and Land Use .....	<b>37</b>
2.5.1 Land ownership categories/classification .....	37
2.5.2. Mean Holding Size.....	37
2.5.3 Percentage of Land with Title Deeds.....	38

2.5.4 Incidences of Landlessness .....	38
2.5.5 Settlement patterns .....	39
2.6. Employment.....	40
2.6.1 Wage Earners .....	40
2.6.2 Self-Employed .....	40
2.6.3 Labour Force .....	40
2.6.4 Levels of Unemployment.....	41
2.7 Oil and Other Mineral Resources .....	41
2.7.1 Mineral and oil potential .....	41
2.8 Inter-communal conflicts in Marsabit County.....	42
3.2 Research finding of impact of OLF on socio-economic developemt.....	52
3.3 Chapter summary.....	52
<b>CHAPTER THREE.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>IMPACT OF OLF ON SOCIO-ECONMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MARSABIT COUNTY.....</b>	<b>49</b>
3.0 Introduction.....	49
3.1 Impact of OLF on the socio-economic development in Marsabit County.....	49
3.1.1 Retarded Social Services.....	49
3.1.2 Death, Injuries and Property Destruction.....	50
3.1.3 Interference with Food production.....	51
3.1.4 Insecurity.....	52
3.2 Research finding of impact of OLF on socio-economic developemt.....	52
3.3 Chapter summary.....	52
<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>MEASURES TO REDUCE CONFLICT BY ARMED GROUP IN MARSABIT COUNTY.....</b>	<b>58</b>
4.0 Introduction.....	58
4.1 To assess the measures used to reduce conflict by armed groups in Marsabit County .....	58
4.2 Traditional Leadership and Inter-Ethnic Conflict Resolution .....	59



4.3 Involvement of Women Group Leaders .....	62
4.4 Youth Leaders' Engagement .....	62
4.5 Civil and Religious Groups Actions .....	63
4.6 Government Response to Conflict in Marsabit County .....	65
4.7 Role of International Community in the Resolution of Conflict in Marsabit County .....	69
4.8 Intervention of the International Community in Marsabit County Conflict .....	70
4.9 Findings of the measures used to reduce conflict by armed groups in Marsabit County .....	71
Chapter summary .....	75
<b>CHAPTER FIVE.....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>76</b>
5.0 Introduction.....	76
5.1 Summary .....	76
5.1.1 Analyze the state of socio-economic development in Marsabit County .....	76
5.1.2 Impact of OLF on the socio-economic development in Marsabit County.....	77
5.1.3 Assess measures used to reduce conflict by armed groups in Marsabit County.....	78
<b>5.2 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>5.3 Recommendations .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE .....</b>	<b>86</b>

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>AU</b>	- Africa Union
<b>CEWARN</b>	- Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
<b>HoA</b>	- Horn OF Africa
<b>IDPs</b>	- Internally Displaced People
<b>IGAD</b>	- Intergovernmental Authority for Development
<b>KNCHR</b>	- Kenya National Commission for Human Rights
<b>NFD</b>	- Northern Frontier Districts
<b>NPPPP</b>	- Northern Province Progressive People's Party
<b>OLF</b>	- Oromo Liberation Front
<b>PSC</b>	- Socio Conflict Theory

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

<b>Inter-ethnic conflicts</b>	Refer to a conflict between two or more contending ethnic groups who identify themselves primarily based on ethnic criteria and who make group claims to resources based on their collective rights.
<b>Oromo Liberation Front</b>	Is an organization established by the Oromo nationalists in 1973 which was meant to promote the Oromo people's self-determination against the rule of the Abyssinian Empire and subsequent Ethiopian regimes. The group is also known as Adda Bilisummaa Oromo according to the Oromo language.
<b>Armed Group</b>	Armed organizations that challenge the state's monopoly of legitimate coercive force. They include a variety of actors including opposition and insurgent movements.
<b>Environmental Degradation</b>	Depletion or destruction of potentially renewable resources such as air, water, soil, forest or wildlife by using at a rate faster than they can be naturally renewed.
<b>Militia</b>	This is a fighting organization that operates like an army but whose members are non-professional soldiers or citizens.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

Since most African states reverted to democratic rule at the turn of the century, the armed groups' conflict nature has moved to terrorism and insurgencies from political violence precipitated by military interventions. In most Third World countries, terrorist acts became an armed group conflict inherent in current and future conflicts. Further, the World Trade Center 9/11 al-Qaeda-led attacks, which resulted in approximately 3,000 deaths, in the US made the terrorism concept popular among states and broadened state protection and intervention.<sup>1</sup>

As a result, most rebel movements began to identify with and receive support from international terrorism groups, to the point where non-state domestic armed conflicts were internationalized across the continent. In response, more than ever before, resistance to state authorities was met with brutality and joint government forces. Even in nations thought to be stable politically, the development increased the intensity of armed groups' conflict.

Hence, socioeconomic challenges of the armed groups' conflict are experienced more in terms of their propensity in disrupting society's functioning by causing widespread environmental, material and human losses exceeding the affected community's capability in coping with the use of their resources; and causing harms able to render previously productive populations unproductive. Armed groups' conflict creates scarcity, raises the prices of basic goods and

<sup>1</sup>“Armed Conflicts and Economic Wellbeing in Africa”  
AEHW2015.... [https://www.wur.nl/upload\\_mm/3/a/2/aab1bb3c-5b8e-4150-a89b-147593c3b5f4\\_Ezeoha%20AE%20%5BAEHW%202015%5D.pdf](https://www.wur.nl/upload_mm/3/a/2/aab1bb3c-5b8e-4150-a89b-147593c3b5f4_Ezeoha%20AE%20%5BAEHW%202015%5D.pdf)

services and lowers the standard of living by disrupting production. Because of the imminent dangers of armed group conflict, they are appealing to perpetrators as bargaining chips.<sup>1</sup>

The armed group's conflict dynamism in intensity and scope in the region is accounted for by the African states' unique political and economic characteristics – “the first is the large disparity in the sizes of African countries, which means that the spillover of conflict incidents between countries tends to be faster and wider than the spillover of economic progress. The second reason is that there has recently been an increase in the number of democracies, increased investment flows and liberal economic reforms leading to improved market access.”

While there is scientific evidence explaining how growth in the economy may be aided by the developments, little evidence exists on contradictory interaction implications between citizens' well-being, economic growth and armed groups. An alternative explanation is armed conflict's cyclical and pervasive nature which is thought to have eroded Africa's positive economic growth in recent decades. The pattern is a way that the armed groups' conflict intensity keeps a cyclical dimension, moves from one country or area to the next and they change their targets and tactics. For instance, in the mid-2000s, countries in Africa that had previously been regarded as having the most stable democracies (for example, Ivory Coast and Kenya) had severe armed groups, conflict and insurgencies on a global scale deemed to cause massacre and displacement. Contrary, between 1997 and 2012, countries prone to conflict historically like Liberia, Rwanda, Angola, Burundi, Sierra Leone, the Congo Republic and Senegal saw a significant decrease in armed group conflict and internal political crisis.<sup>2</sup>

The Horn region, which refers to as IGAD, is one of Africa's conflict zones. In terms of African politics, the region is known for its high levels of poverty, hostility and volatility. The majority

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<sup>1</sup> Herbst, J. Economic Incentives, Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa, *Journal of African Economies*, (2000), 9(3): 270-294

<sup>2</sup> “Armed Conflicts and Economic Wellbeing in Africa AEHW2015  
[https://www.wur.nl/upload\\_mm/3/a/2/aab1bb3c-5b8e-4150-a89b147593c3b5f4\\_Ezeoha%20AE%20%5BAEHW%202015%5D.pdf](https://www.wur.nl/upload_mm/3/a/2/aab1bb3c-5b8e-4150-a89b147593c3b5f4_Ezeoha%20AE%20%5BAEHW%202015%5D.pdf)”

of the people in the area have witnessed numerous inter and intrastate armed group conflicts. While the wars in the region are intertwined, the majority of armed groups fighting in the region are intra-state, inter-state and inter-community. Numerous intra and inter-state wars have raged in the Horn of Africa. Several countries including Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia, have been involved in significant armed group conflict in the last ten years. War has also been witnessed in Djibouti, albeit on a smaller scale. “Armed group conflict in the IGAD region has been exacerbated by inter-state conflict in many countries, with varying frequency and intensity.”<sup>3</sup>

Rather than being an exception, violent conflict is common in the Horn of Africa. The battles are fought at the regional, local and state levels. The conflict of armed groups involves a variety of participants, including governments, groups and national groups. Internal actors are primarily assisted by external players. Most armed group conflicts in IGAD are transboundary as a result of ethnic identity transcending borders and the region's colonial history. As a result, people are frequently displaced and the flow of refugees contributes to regional destabilization.<sup>4</sup>

The diversity of armed group conflict in the Horn of Africa has reignited interest in the origins of armed group conflict and its potential causes. In many countries worldwide, a decline in socio-economic development and human suffering has been caused by the conflict between armed groups over natural resources. In pastoral communities, ethnic conflict is not a local phenomenon but a global phenomenon. Deep divisions have resulted from the conflict, which has manifested itself in a variety of ways, including ethnic hostilities, interstate armed groups and intra-state and extra-state armed groups.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Assefa, H. Inter- community Conflict in the Horn of Africa, 35. 1996).  
<http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:2376/nLib9280809083.pdf#page=43>

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

<sup>5</sup> MuhabieMekonnenMengistu. Conflict Causes in the Horn of Africa. (2015).  
<http://article.sciencepublishinggroup.com/pdf/10.11648.j.ajap.20150402.12.pdf>

The boundaries drawn by the colonial government in Africa have contributed to conflict escalation. Boundaries limit ethnic communities' desire to control and retain resources that span territories. As a result, boundaries have been identified as among the root causes of ethnic armed groups conflict. Because of the boundaries, different ethnic groups have found themselves in the same county, even if they are not compatible. Pastoralists and agriculturists are two examples. This has given rise to opportunities for conflict. The Horn of Africa (HoA) associates with various armed groups and ethnic conflicts both within and across borders.

According to the KNCHR (Kenya-National-Commission-for-Human-Rights), Kenya is a large multi-ethnic country with over forty ethnic groups. Kenya has seen its fair share of armed group conflict, ranging from religious conflict, land conflict, ethnic clashes and the 2007 post-election violence. Several factors contribute to the high levels of conflict in these regions, including resource competition, ethnic rivalry, marginalization, claims, the proliferation of small arms and cattle rustling.

West Africa has seen an increase in civil war, armed conflict, political unrest and rioting. "Côte d'Ivoire, a member of UMEOA, has experienced increasingly violent conflict, beginning with a coup at the end of 1999 and progressing to a full-fledged armed conflict in 2002, this armed conflict was declared over in July 2003, but violence erupted on occasion (e.g. during a ceasefire break in November 2004); during this turbulent period, the country was divided into a rebel-held north and a government-held south and conflict had far-reaching political consequences with its resolution being on the agenda of international stakeholders such as the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), France and several African presidents."<sup>6</sup>

Even though there are debates on the armed conflict's origin in Côte d'Ivoire, probable causes are racism, ethnic discrimination, political bias regarding eligibility to run for office, legal issues concerning scarce natural resources and land tenure and a lack of government services.

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<sup>6</sup> "Mehler A: Côte d'Ivoire: Chirac allein zu Haus? Hamburg: Institut für Afrika-Kunde (IAK). 2004."

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the Ivorian conflict's consequences. Foreign direct investments in Côte d'Ivoire, for example, are estimated to have declined by over 60% during the sociopolitical crisis that was witnessed prior to the armed conflict. The armed conflict that followed shattered numerous research endeavours and resulted in an estimated 500,000 refugees and 750,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), 80 per cent abandonment of health facilities and a 75 per cent decline in health staff.<sup>7</sup>

In Kenya, Marsabit is the largest county, with a population that has grown from 291,077 in 2009 to 459,785 in the 2019<sup>8</sup> census. Except for Mount Kulal (near Loiyangalani), Mount Marsabit (where Marsabit Town is located) and Hurri Hills, the county's physical environment is desert or semi-desert. Arable farming is restricted to 3% of the total land area of the county and is concentrated primarily in the areas surrounding Mount Marsabit. As a result, the area's inhabitants' livelihood systems have historically relied on pastoral production, with farming in the region remaining limited. Laisamis, Saku, North Horr and Moyale constituencies are the four sub-counties of Marsabit.

The county is also home to many ethnic groups, the most notable of which are the Gabra, Rendile, Borana, Burji, Samburu, Turkana, Dassenach, Wayu and Somali communities.

Almost all the county's ethnic groups have made a living from pastoralism. Historically, the Rendille and Gabra herd sheep, goats, cattle and camels whereas the Samburu and Borana primarily herd cattle and the Burji are entrepreneurs and small-scale farmers.<sup>9</sup>

Marsabit was part of NFD formerly the Northern Frontier Province (NFP) before independence and Ghai correctly noted that the NFD was not fully integrated into Kenya until shortly before

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<sup>7</sup> "Betsi N.A., et al., Effect of an armed conflict on human resources and health systems in Côte d'Ivoire: prevention of and care for people with HIV/AIDS. AIDS Care. 2006,"

<sup>8</sup> "Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), n.d., Kenya Population and Housing Census, August 2009– Population Distribution by Sex, Number of Households, Area, Density, and County, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), Nairobi"

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*



independence).<sup>10</sup> As the British prepared to relinquish control of the Kenya Colony, the NFD was transferred to the Somali Republic. These plans sparked hope for reunification among Kenyan Somalis and their ethnic kin. However, ethnic groups in Marsabit were divided on secession issues. Except for Waso Borana, the Gabra and Borana were not interested in joining Greater Somalia. Simultaneously, ethnic groups such as the Garreh, Somalis and Rendille backed secession. The Borana and Gabra were concerned that their incorporation into Somalia would result in the loss of their lands and political rights. Even though the Gabra, Borana and Somalis belonged to the same linguistic family and practised nomadic pastoralism, religious and cultural differences influenced the realization of a united front.<sup>11</sup>

The County has experienced a wave of incessant violent conflicts which sometimes spread from across the border in Ethiopia. These conflicts were associated with marginalization, inter-communal conflict, underdevelopment and competition for meagre resources and have significantly affected the socio-economic development of the county.<sup>12</sup>

Although the conflicts in Marsabit County were inter-ethnic, there is evidence that an armed group like Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) was greatly involved in the conflicts for its interest. Their involvement has led to deaths, tribal animosity, displacement of populations and negatively impacted socio-economic development in the county.<sup>13</sup>

The Ethiopian government is also constantly wary of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), a political organization advocating for people of Oromo's self-determination. The Borana in Kenya were occasionally suspected of harbouring OLF fighters and this has caused friction

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<sup>10</sup> "Bosire Conrad Mugoya, 'Political Structures and Politics of Counties in Kenya' in Steytler Nico and GhaiYash P. (eds), *Kenyan-South African Dialogue on Devolution*, 2015, Juta, South Africa."

<sup>11</sup> "SchleeGünther, 'Traditional Pastoralists: Land Use Strategies' in Schwartz Horst Juergen et al. (eds), *Range Management Handbook of Kenya*, Nairobi, 1991."

<sup>12</sup> "Bosire Conrad Mugoya, 'Political Structures and Politics of Counties in Kenya' in Steytler Nico and GhaiYash P. (eds), *Kenyan-South African Dialogue on Devolution*, 2015, Juta, South Africa."

<sup>13</sup> "Steven L. Danver. Native Peoples of the World: An Encyclopedia of Groups, Cultures and Contemporary Issues. Routledge. (2015). pp. 24–25."

between the Gabra and Borana. The armed group establishes operational bases in Kenya from which it launches an offensive against Ethiopian forces.<sup>14</sup>

Based on the marginalization and perennial conflicts, the county development index remained low even with the devolution of governance and resources. This is profoundly necessitated by the involvement of armed groups that have existed in the county for more than a decade. Nonetheless, the government continues to put in place appropriate measures to address the conflicts in Marsabit County.

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

Pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in Kenya have faced numerous challenges over the years, ranging from socioeconomic marginalization to frequent and severe armed group conflict over natural resources. Among the challenges facing the population, armed group conflict has been identified as a primary impediment to developing the rangelands, which account for more than 80% of Kenya's total landmass. There is an urgent need to take stock of our current conflict analysis and the lessons learnt from our conflict mediation and management experience.<sup>15</sup>

For along time, the viability of the region's systems of livelihood has been weakened due to a variety of reasons, among them, the deterioration of institutional arrangements for pastoralists which governed the management of the natural resource. This is due, in part, to policies and actions by the State that did not recognize the right of pastoralists to manage their rangelands, and thus have ignored their institutional system. One of the reasons for their livelihood loss of some resilience is the expropriation of rangeland. This has led to thousands being pushed out

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid*

<sup>15</sup> "Understanding and managing pastoral conflict in Kenya | Eldis. <https://www.eldis.org/document/A29142>"

<sup>17</sup> "Natural resources management in Kenya–Ethiopia border areas. <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/133574/5976.pdf>"

of pastoralism, settling in or near urban centres, and forced to seek alternative livelihood opportunities.<sup>17</sup>

The main source of conflict in Northern Kenya is ethnic conflict over natural resources. Some of these armed groups clash resulting in death, disruption of lives and property destruction. For many decades, armed groups conflict between communities in Marsabit County has existed. The majority of wars are sparked by fierce competition for scarce resources like pasture, grazing land and water. Since cattle raiding is a common practice in cattle-raising communities, it is used as a way of restocking livestock particularly after their animals reduce due to livestock diseases or severe drought. Further, the source of the conflict is also external because of crossborder conflict and political dynamics that are intertwined in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya. Similarly, there is a possibility of an armed criminal syndicate that take a side in the conflicts that occasioned low socio-economic development and loss of lives. Kenya is especially concerned with the challenges and pragmatic measures are being implemented to curb the insecurity menace and bolster the socio-economic prosperity of the people.

This study, therefore, discusses the state of socio-economic development in Marsabit County, the impact of armed groups on socio-economic development in an area and how the Oromo Liberation Front negatively impacted socio-economic development in Marsabit County.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

- (i) What are the existing socio-economic programs in Marsabit County?
- (ii) What is the impact of OLF on socio-economic development in Marsabit County?
- (iii) What are the measures in place to address conflict caused by armed groups in Marsabit County?

## **1.4 Research Objectives**

The general objective of this study was to evaluate the impact of armed groups on socioeconomic development in Marsabit County, using Oromo Liberation Front as a case study.

### **1.4.1 Specific Research Objectives**

- (i) To examine the state of socio-economic development in Marsabit County.
- (ii) To assess the impact of OLF on socio-economic development in the County.
- (iii) To explore the measures used to re-address armed group-related conflicts in Marsabit County.

## **1.5 Hypotheses of the Study**

The following assumptions guided the study,

- (i) There has been minimal socio-economic development in Marsabit County for several decades.
- (ii) Armed groups have a profound impact on socio-economic development in Marsabit County.
- (iii) The presence of the Oromo Liberation Front negatively impacts socioeconomic development in Marsabit County.

## **1.6 Justification of the Study**

Armed group conflict has multiplied and been recurrent in Northern parts of Kenya over the last two decades, particularly in pastoral areas, which are the most vulnerable. The conflicts are rife in these ASAL regions and frequently coexist with food insecurity and high poverty levels. Most of these resource-related conflicts have gone on for a long time and have become resistant to many resolution attempts. Research on inter-communal conflicts in ASAL areas such as Marsabit County has been conducted but not adequately, particularly, on the impact of trans-

border-based conflicts. This necessitated the study which examined the impact of militia group conflicts on socio-economic development in Marsabit County of Kenya.

This study examined the causes of conflict in Marsabit County besides the OLF impact and resolution mechanisms adopted. By doing this, the study generated findings that add to the existing literature on conflict among the pastoralist communities of northern Kenya. As such, the findings will help other researchers better understand the impact of armed groups on socioeconomic development in the county and beyond. The research findings will also be used by policy makers and security practitioners to identify long-term solutions to the impact of armed groups' conflict in Kenya, Africa and the world at large.

## **1.7 Literature Review**

In Kenya's northern border, Marsabit County, cattle rustling and arms trafficking are the driving force of the local conflict. Similarly, scores of people have died in politically motivated ethnic conflicts. On 25 August 21, two people were killed during two villages' attacks in Marsabit's Forole settlement.<sup>16</sup> The killing and theft of livestock from the Gabra pastoralists in the attack demonstrate how possession of light weapons and small arms and cattle rustling are associated.

Prolonged conflict has resulted in illegal firearms concentration within the county, with war hardened warriors that can even outnumber the security forces. Likewise, Kenya has more civilian weapons than any other East African country. Kenya has 740 000 illegal firearms, according to a 2017 small arms survey, the highest number in the region.<sup>17</sup> The illegal weapons are thought to have come from a variety of sources like Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan

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<sup>16</sup> "Cross-border arms trafficking inflames northern Kenya's.... <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/cross-border-armstrafficking-inflames-northern-kenyas-conflict>"

<sup>17</sup> "Cross-border arms trafficking inflames northern Kenya's.... <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/cross-border-armstrafficking-inflames-northern-kenyas-conflict>"

through the porous borders. Other sources are armed groups like South Sudanese rebel groups and terrorist groups like al-Shabaab and OLF.

Residents claim that livestock theft has been commercialized. The livestock is sold or bartered to get more income or weapons, allowing attackers to undertake more cattle raids. On the contrary, victims conduct retaliatory attacks to obtain more livestock income or weapons for defending themselves. Even though the conflict is majorly between local communities, the availability of firearms from neighbouring countries makes it an international one; hence, as communities that are targeted seek to gain access to weapons for self-defence, a criminal economy thrives.<sup>18</sup>

These areas are drought-prone environments with limited primary resources. Environmental degradation has exacerbated the problem by increasing competition for resource access and controlling livelihoods. Water access is a key concern, affecting the ability to generate income and keep livestock. This unbearable situation has been exacerbated by most of the county's proximity to many conflict zones in the region, as well as the lack of adequate border controls, making the areas easy to the passage and trading points for contrabands and illegal weapons.

Generally, official governance institutions are not able to reach pastoralist communities and have a conflicted history with pastoralist settlements. “The lack of government presence, combined with fierce competition for scarce resources, widespread availability and ownership of firearms, a lack of capacity in rule of law institutions and general socio-economic misery, has created a fragile environment that is highly conducive to the existence of an armed group like OLF and arms proliferation.” Similarly, the conditions are self-perpetuating and the high insecurity level necessitates firearms possession for economic activity and survival.

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<sup>18</sup> “Case Studies and Testimonies of the Pastoralist Communities.  
[http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SALW\\_publication.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SALW_publication.pdf)”

The Oromo Liberation Front is still a major player in the conflict between communal armed groups in Northern Kenya. Community alliances are frequently formed across Kenya-Ethiopia borders with their kin to fight local armed groups' conflicts. The rag-tag factor also has a greater impact on the planning and conducts of these inter-ethnic rivalries. The Turbi massacre is an example of the group's engagement in a similar fight between the Gabbra and Boran communities. This is further evidenced by the Ethiopian forces' continuous engagement of the group in Kenya across the common border causing heightened tensions between the two countries.<sup>19</sup>

In Marsabit, tribal conflicts have become a common occurrence, with livestock rustling and assassination/killings on the rise recently. Similarly, communities have shifted from large-scale raids to smaller-scale but more frequent raids and assassinations. Historically, livestock rustling is a practice which the elders regulate and sanction. However, in the last few years, the Gabra and Borana communities have undergone cultural changes resulting in urban conflicts, selected individual assassinations and internationalized and commercialized livestock thefts, contrary to the early scholars' views who dismissed pastoralist conflicts as mere cattle rustling cultural practices.<sup>20</sup>

Socio Services for the Retarded Conflict has two major effects on education. Conflict restricts access to educational facilities, stifling human development in a community. This is caused by disruptions in learning facilities, which can lead to school closures. The conflict between armed groups also leads to dropout because many young people choose to engage in conflict. In comparison to other regions, education in pastoral areas is low. In recent years, due to the high rate of armed group conflict learning calendar was significantly affected in some areas of the county resulting in school closure.

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<sup>19</sup> "Cross-border arms trafficking inflames northern Kenya's.... <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/cross-border-armstrafficking-inflames-northern-kenyas-conflict>."

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*

In Kenya, some counties also experience school closures due to conflicts. Samburu with 29 per cent of schools closed, followed by Marakwet at 26 per cent and Turkana at 15 per cent.<sup>21</sup> Some respondents agreed that the school drop-outs phenomenon was exacerbated by inter-ethnic armed groups' conflict, specifically among youth enlisted as warriors in conflicts. It was further ascertained that the conflict has had a direct impact on formal education, as it has resulted in teachers abandoning schools due to insecurity.

The conflict has pushed more community members into poverty and destitution, reducing already scarce economic resources. The conflict between armed groups disrupts a variety of activities in a community, including limiting access to services and facilities related to healthcare because conflict causes income loss, limiting people's access to health services. In some cases, conflict causes the destruction of health facilities and the fleeing of health personnel, further limiting community members' access to health care. The direct result was a shortage of health practitioners who left the community to work in other areas. As a result, community members have been denied access to critical health services. The health of community members has suffered due to a lack of better working conditions and security.<sup>22</sup>

One of the direct consequences of conflict is death, injury and property destruction by warring parties. Scholars like Schilling et al., opine that raiding's direct impact on human well-being is injuries and numerous deaths. For example, between 2019 and 2021, health centres in Marsabit recorded approximately 600 deaths associated with raids. Similarly, according to the CEWARN report, 640 deaths occurred in West Pokot and Turkana Counties in 2019 which are

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<sup>21</sup> Gambari A. "The character, Fundamental Issues and Consequences of the Conflict in the horn of Africa", (1991).

<sup>22</sup> "Assessment and Conciliation Report on: Existing Approaches and Best Practices in Cross Border Peace Building and conflict Mitigation and strengthened CSOs across the Ethio-Kenya Border by: Integrated Agriculture Development Consult (IADC) Dec 2008; Addis Ababa."



counties facing similar challenges. This indicates that the number of deaths has risen steadily over the years.<sup>23</sup>

According to Schilling et al., inter-communal conflict frequently results in death or the incapacity of the breadwinner due to injuries. He also noted that the majority of deaths and injuries suffered during the conflict were suffered by women and children rather than men. However, in terms of property destruction, he claimed that there are no differences in gender in who lost more property. Between 2016 and 2020, over 1000 people were displaced by interethnic conflicts. The majority of the displaced people were women and children.<sup>24</sup>

Insecurity and fear have the greatest impact on food production, particularly at the household level, reducing livestock quality and quantity. Armed group conflict also limits livestock trading by causing market closures. Furthermore, the presence of conflict has an impact on crop farming activities because it forces farmers to stay away from farms during the conflict period.

As a result, conflict can be said to trap communities in a cycle of poverty. Despite the country's good rains in 2000-2001, food production remained low.<sup>25</sup>

The low food production due to armed groups has also been witnessed in the counties of Tana River, Trans Nzoia, Marakwet and Turkana. From 2015 to 2021, maize production was the lowest in those counties from 18,300 tonnes to 1486 tonnes because of the situation.

According to Schilling et al., "Basic commodities are generally unavailable and scarce, resulting in exorbitant prices and communities do not engage in productive economic work.

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<sup>23</sup> "Schilling, J., Akuno, M., Scheffran, J. and Weinzierl: On raids and relations climate change, pastoral conflict and adaptation in Northwestern Kenya (under review). In climate change and conflict: where to for conflict sensitive climate adaptation in Africa? (2012): Ed. Bronkhorst, S. and Bob. Durban: Human Sciences Research Council."

<sup>24</sup> Interview with cohesion officer held April 16th 2017, Marsabit

<sup>25</sup> Ahmed, A. M. Effects of conflict among The Pastoral Communities. (2014).

[Http://Www.Academia.Edu/Download/39039234/Effects\\_Of\\_Conflicts\\_Among\\_The\\_Pastoral\\_Communities.\\_Case\\_Study\\_Of\\_Mandera\\_County.Pdf](http://Www.Academia.Edu/Download/39039234/Effects_Of_Conflicts_Among_The_Pastoral_Communities._Case_Study_Of_Mandera_County.Pdf)

Eaton contends that the commercialization of raiding has had a significant impact on pastoral livestock production. Raids resulted in the loss of over 50,000 livestock among the Pokot and Turkana from 2016 to 2019.<sup>26</sup> The impact of conflict on the production of livestock in Marsabit was investigated and revealed that frequent cattle rustling cases led to both communities losing large livestock herds, which was exacerbated by a lack of compensation as expected or agreed upon in various declarations.

According to the district peace committee records, the magnitude of livestock loss is best captured. Over 100,000 cattle were stolen between 2015 and 2020, a period of 15 years. The conflict has had devastating consequences for districts, villages and households. A single attack can result in the loss of a household's entire livelihood and wealth. Therefore, most households are unable to recover economically, putting the household's long-term economic viability in jeopardy. For example, one participant stated that livestock worth over Ksh 400,000 had been stolen in one month, leaving many people impoverished in the communities.

According to Schilling et al., between 2018 and 2020, over 20 homesteads were looted and destroyed in the county. Aside from the direct loss of resources, the conflict between armed groups has had an indirect impact on human well-being through insecurity. "Human security entails recognizing that traditional forms of state security are no longer capable of protecting citizens and that development must be viewed as more than just economic growth and instead as proper survival through freedom from want and fear."<sup>27</sup> Security is a situation in which communities and individuals can manage stress, enjoy their values and rights and meet their basic needs. As such, security provides freedom from fear and want, as well as freedom from indignity and dangerous consequences.

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<sup>26</sup> "Eaton, D. Violence, Revenge and the History of Cattle Raiding along Kenya-Uganda border. (2008): Halifax Dalhouse University"

<sup>27</sup> CEWARN: CEWARN country updates: September-December. Addis Ababa, CEWARN (Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism); 2010.<http://www.cewarn.org/index.php/reports/archived-earlywarningreports/alerts/uga-1/2009-4/42-uga-sept-dec09/file> 49.

Schilling et al., posit that there is a pervasive sense of insecurity along the Turkana South and North Pokot borders. Insecurity and its prevalence perception have three primary consequences, all of which harm people's well-being. First, resources are being used inefficiently in an insecure area. Second, major facilities, particularly schools and markets, have been closed. Third, insecurity is a significant impediment to investment. Prolonged clashes and conflict escalation have resulted in a breakdown in communication between adjacent/neighbouring communities, as well as the loss of long-term socio-networks, such as strong bonding through inter-clan marriages and other institutions, which are critical in terms of coping with uncertainty. High levels of insecurity in villages, as well as poverty and destruction, have resulted in urban migration.<sup>28</sup> In addition, the frequent closure of the Marsabit – Moyale highway significantly affected the business and transportation in the county.

Managing ethnic conflicts in Africa, according to Luling, necessitates communities and States to reconsider their use of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms that might be more beneficial in the current African situation than Western conflict resolution models. Conflicts between competing groups have occurred throughout Africa's history, necessitating the development of a variety of conflict resolution techniques. To resolve contemporary ethnic conflicts in Africa, pre-colonial conflict management methods have been frequently overlooked. “Even when conflicts arose, there were means to resolve them; even though the Gabra and Borana conflict is inter-ethnic, it is necessary to investigate its dynamics to establish why traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have failed to resolve the conflict.”<sup>29</sup>

According to Emeka, most African countries are concerned about resolving ethnic conflicts properly. He goes on to say that many of these states have devised a variety of methods for resolving their differences at the moment. The problem is that the approaches and methods

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<sup>28</sup> “Spring, C. Mesjasz, J. Grin, and P. Dunay (Eds.), *Globalization and Environmental challenges: Reconceptualization security in the 21st century*” (vol.3, pp.45-61). Berlin Springer; Hardt, J. (2011).

<sup>29</sup> Luling, V. “Genealogy as theory, genealogy as tool: aspects of Somali clanship. *Social Identities*”, 12 (4), 47185. (2006).

used to resolve the conflict do not provide real solutions to the existing problems; instead, they only temporarily mitigate them. To achieve better results, long-term measures should be devised. As a result, it's critical to look at some of the African states' conflict resolution strategies to figure out how to best resolve the conflicts. Inter-ethnic cooperation, constitutional amendments, economic deregulation, local autonomy, avoiding divisive politics and welfare programs are among the strategies being pursued. The informal systems of ethnic conflict resolution should be prioritized by African nation-states. These should primarily consist of local efforts being deployed. These unofficial systems are thought to be extremely effective in resolving ethnic disputes.<sup>30</sup>

Joint community delegations and elder councils are two special considerations in the African setting for resolving ethnic conflicts. For example, some efforts include the Dukana/Makona community-led cross-border peace initiative, which established peace between the Borana and the Gabra in June 2006. It further established long-term stability along the Ethiopia/Kenya border. To resolve discontinuous strife among ethnic bunches within the region, the Halona Declaration has been broadly received and connected within the more extensive Borana land and its surroundings. The Negelle Borana Peace Conventions were drafted by agents of ethnic bunches living within the Somali and Oromia Region's Borana and Guji pastoralist zones, with the active participation of regional and federal government officials. These methods are not mentioned in the Kenyan constitution, but they are more likely to yield better results in terms of conflict resolution. Since Kenya's independence, several strategies for resolving ethnic conflicts have been implemented in Marsabit County, which has resulted in a relatively peaceful situation between communities since 2009.

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<sup>30</sup> Emeka, O. The African Union and conflict resolution: Reflection on the civil war in Sudan: *Nigeria Journal of International Affairs*, 31, 89-107. (1999).

## 1.8 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical context of this study reflects an understanding of the ideas and definitions applicable to the research context, which applies to the broader fields of expertise being discussed. This study was guided by Edward E. Azar's Protracted Socio-Conflict (PSC) theory. According to Azar, most underdeveloped countries' armed groups stem from longrunning socio-conflict. Because the various factors that Azar considered are present in the Marsabit armed groups conflict, this theoretical aspect is critical in understanding the Marsabit conflict. First, Azar contends that communal composition is the most important of all factors that lead to Protracted Socio-armed groups conflict.<sup>31</sup>

Societies experiencing protracted socio-armed groups conflict have a multi-communal composition, and Marsabit County, which consists of over thirteen (13) ethnic groups, formed whether as a result of former colonial powers' divide-and-rule policies or historical rivalries.

Second, Azar contends that Protracted Disarticulation between the state and society as a whole characterizes socio-armed group conflict. According to Azar, individual or communal survival is dependent on meeting basic needs. Some of the groups rarely meet these basic needs in a world of physical scarcity. While one group of people may have an abundance of those needs met, others do not. Typically, individuals will collectively express grievances arising from deprivation of needs. Failure to address such issues and the authority's grievances create a niche for a PSC (ibid).

International connections are another important factor that makes Azar's theory relevant to this study. The communities that inhabit Marsabit County have a global link, particularly with Ethiopia; a good example is the Gabra, Borana and Dassanech communities, which live on both sides of the Kenya-Ethiopia border and thus face cross-border conflict; this has a significant

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<sup>31</sup> A critical discussion of ethnic conflict as a type of... <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/critical-discussion-ethnicconflict-type-dealing-those-mandela>

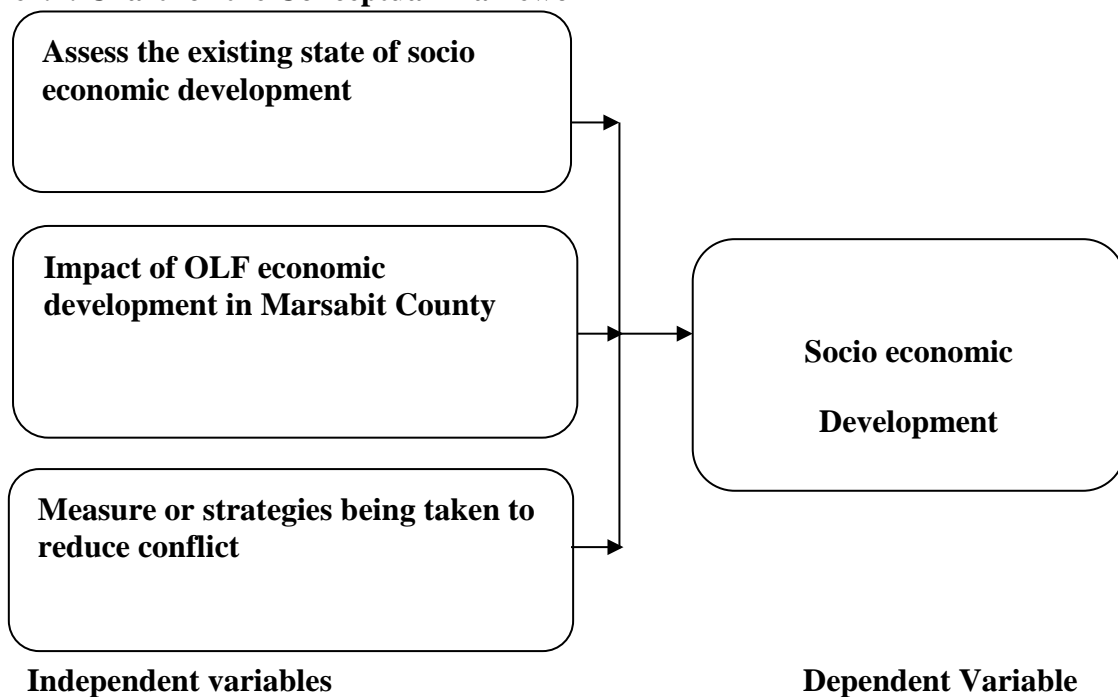
impact on security in Marsabit County. Azar identifies four potential consequences of long-term armed conflict: deterioration of physical security; institutional deformity; psychological disorientation, increased dependency and clemency.

This theory was important to the study as it helped in understanding how armed group conflicts affected and influenced socio-economic development in Marsabit County.

### 1.8.2 Conceptual Framework of the Research Study

The conceptual framework depicts the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables. The independent variables are access to the state of socio-economic development, the impact of armed groups in an area and determining the Measure and strategies being taken to reduce conflict in Marsabit County. Thereby impact of armed groups on socioeconomic development, a case study of the Oromo Liberation Front in Marsabit County is our dependent variable.

**Figure1.1: Chart for the Conceptual Framework**



Source: Author (2022)

## 1.9 Research Methodology

This section introduces the research design and methods used in the study. It includes a description of the case study, tools used to collect the data and the data collection procedure and analysis method.

### 1.9.1 Sample size

The sample size is the smaller set of the larger population. A stratified random sampling method was applied. “The method is deemed suitable because it offers an equivalent opportunity to the respondent for selection to participate in the study,” Gill et al. In obtaining the study’s minimum population, Yamane’s formulae was adopted by the researcher

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

N - is the target population n - is the sample

size e - is the marginal error always less

than 5%

According to Hussey and Hussey (1997) no survey can ever give 100% surety or pronounce error-free and less than 5% error limits and more than 95% confidence levels.

The margin error is always 5%.

$$n = \frac{80}{1 + 80(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{80}{1 + 0.2}$$

n = 66

Hence, the sample size was 66

Stratified sampling by use of the formula was used to distribute the 66 sampling units to the conveniently identified population.

By using Yamane’s formula of sample size with a 95% confidence coefficient and an error of 5% a population of 80, translated to 66 as the total sample size. Stratified random sampling was used to the sample size of each category of the people in the community. This ensured equal distribution of chances to sampling units in the research. The sample distribution is shown in the table below.

**Table 1.1: Sample Size Distribution**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Population(N)</b>	<b>Sample (n)</b>
Women	25	19
Men	55	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>66</b>

### **1.9.2 Data Collection and Instruments**

Primary and secondary sources of data were utilized in this study. Being a case study, interviews and questionnaires were applied to collect primary data.

The study collected both primary data and secondary data. Questionnaires were used to obtain primary data. The questionnaires contained both qualitative and quantitative data. The instrumentation was pilot-tested and submitted to a validity and reliability testing data collection process using 10% of the sample size. The data-gathering process was overseen by the researcher.

#### **1.9.2.1 Validity of the Instrument**

The correctness and significance of conclusions formed from study findings are referred to as validity. It is used to determine whether research measures what it intends to measure and to



approximate the truthfulness of the results<sup>32</sup>. The research instrument's validity was established by the expert opinion of the research supervisor, who assisted in the analysis and confirmation that the questionnaires addressed all of the research questions.

### **1.9.2.2 Reliability of the Instrument**

The degree to which a research instrument produces consistent results is measured by its reliability<sup>33</sup>. Research is considered reliable if we get the same results repeatedly. Piloted data was entered into SPSS, and then reliability was computed using captured data. The reliability was done using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient which was useful in determining the reliability index of the instruments. A correlation value of  $>0.7$  is regarded as high enough to consider the instruments to be dependable.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, the questionnaire yielding a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.734 was adapted for use given that this was higher than the set coefficient of 0.7.

### **1.9.3 Data Analysis**

The technique used in data analysis was quantitative for questionnaires and qualitative for interviews. It analyzed the data in the exploration of various concepts to provide more understanding of the topic as well as for the current concept's awareness creation. The data collected through a cross-sectional review will be analyzed through statistical tools such as SPSS analysis.

Content analysis is mainly used as a research tool since it helps to make valid inferences by interpreting textual materials and allowed the researcher to systematically evaluate past texts from various literature associated with the impacts of armed groups on socio-economic development. Content analysis will help in interpreting responses from the literature gathered

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<sup>32</sup> Mugenda, A., & Mugenda, O., *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi: ACTS Press. (2019).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> Cooper, D.R., & Schindler, P. S. *Business Research Methods* (12th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Irwin, (2014).

as well as to conduct an effective analysis of the data collected. This made it easier to infer the data collected during the study.

#### **1.9.4 Data Presentation**

Data presentation was done qualitatively to examine the impacts of OLF on socio-economic development in Marsabit County. Any quantitative information added is aimed at emphasizing qualitative research. This is so since the study aimed at examining the impacts of armed groups on socio-economic development in Marsabit County.

The main method of data collection used was a cross-sectional review. This examined the impacts of armed groups on socio-economic development in Marsabit County.

#### **1.9.5 Ethical Considerations**

The investigator ensured that the permit to conduct the investigation was collected from the relevant authorities prior to the data collection. In this case, the researcher obtained an introduction letter from the University with which, a research permit was obtained from NACOSTI. The researcher also made certain that respondents were handled with respect and were informed that their involvement is completely voluntary. The researcher created a favourable data collection environment for the participants.

At any point throughout the data-collecting process, respondents had the option to leave or stop participating. The approval was obtained long before the study starts and the consent forms were signed. Participants were fully informed about the investigation's aim and were treated with secrecy and confidentiality, as their identity and the information they provide remain confidential and anonymous. There was no emotional burden for the participants because their involvement is voluntary.

#### **1.10 Scope and Limitations of the study**

The research was carried out in Marsabit. It focused on the sources and historical roots that underpin the existence of armed groups in Marsabit County, the consequences of armed groups

in Marsabit County and the solutions that the government and community leaders have tried to address the challenges posed by armed groups. Even though this research utilized primary and secondary data, it relied heavily on secondary data due to geographical distance and the cost of conducting surveys. Furthermore, armed groups are a sensitive issue, respondents were expected to be skeptical of the research's intentions, particularly when it came to questions about the frequency of raids among communities.

### **1.11 Chapter Outline**

In this study, Chapter one introduced the study and set the tone by highlighting the statement of the research problem, the theoretical framework and the methodology. It further outlined the research questions and the objectives. The chapter subsequently reviewed the literature in related thematic areas as follows; state of socio-economic development in Marsabit County, impacts of armed groups on socio-economics in an area and how the Oromo Liberation Front negatively impacted the socio-economic development in Marsabit County. Chapter two focused on the demographic information and the state of socio-economic conditions of Marsabit County. Chapter three covered the impact of the Oromo Liberation Front on socioeconomic development in Marsabit County, while chapter four explored the measures used to redress armed groups-related conflicts in Marsabit County. Chapter five concludes the research and gave recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **STATUS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MARSABIT COUNTY**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The chapter looks at the demographic information and analyses the state of socio-economic development in Marsabit County. It reviews the empirical studies of the state of socioeconomic development.

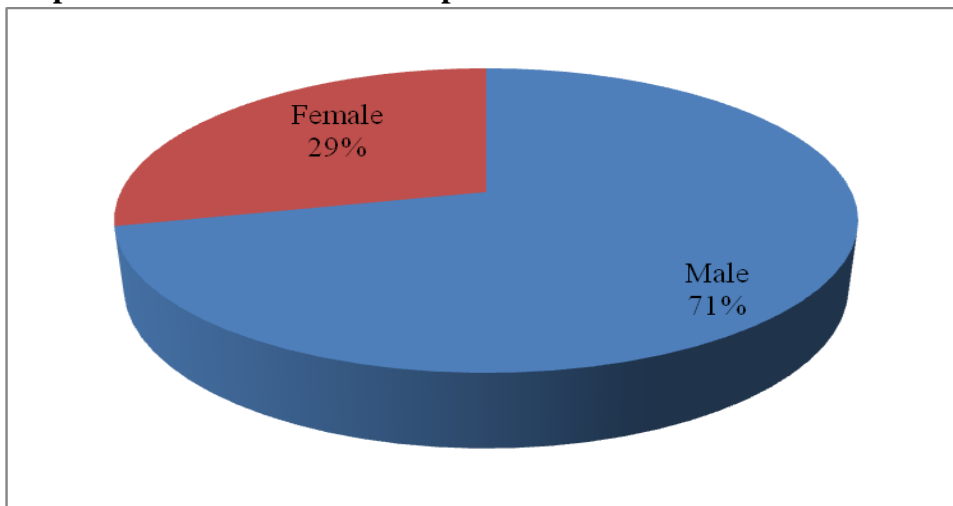
#### **2.1 Demographic information.**

The study sought to establish information on certain aspects of respondents' backgrounds including their gender, age, level of education and the length of time they had worked for their organizations. Demographic factors reveal the sample size composition which helps to capture different respondents' experiences. Therefore, allows the researcher to effectively capture the respondents' general characteristics which are critical in discussing the research findings. The implication of the demographic information for this study was that the researcher was able to gather and analyze information from the diverse sections of the society hence bringing out a holistic approach to issues related to the impact of armed groups on socio-economic development in Marsabit County.

##### **2.1.1 Gender**

Based on the sample, the male respondents were 47 which represents 71% of the total sample, while the females accounted for 19 (29%). Thus, the majority of the participants who participated in the research were male. The high number of male participants is a result of the patriarchal nature of the pastoral communities and the cultural belief that men are more involved in conflict-related matters, including conflict research than women.

**Graph 2.1 Gender of the Participants**



**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

### **2.1.2 Age bracket of the participants**

The research sought to establish the age bracket of the respondents. From the findings, 33 (50%) of the respondents were between 18 and 34 years; 15 (23%) of the respondents were between 35 and 44 years, while 10 (15%) of the respondents were between 45 and 55 years of age and 8(12%) were aged more than 55 years. The study reveals that the youths were more than any other age bracket; possibly the high literacy rates among the youths as compared to other age brackets may explain their high participation in the study because they could respond to the questionnaire. The diversity of armed group conflict in the Horn of Africa has reignited interest in the origins of armed group conflict and its potential causes. In many countries worldwide, a decline in socio-economic development and human suffering has been caused by the conflict between armed groups over natural resources. In pastoral communities, ethnic conflict is not a local phenomenon but a global phenomenon. Deep divisions have resulted from the conflict, which has manifested itself in a variety of ways, including ethnic hostilities, interstate armed groups and intra-state and extra-state armed groups.<sup>35</sup>

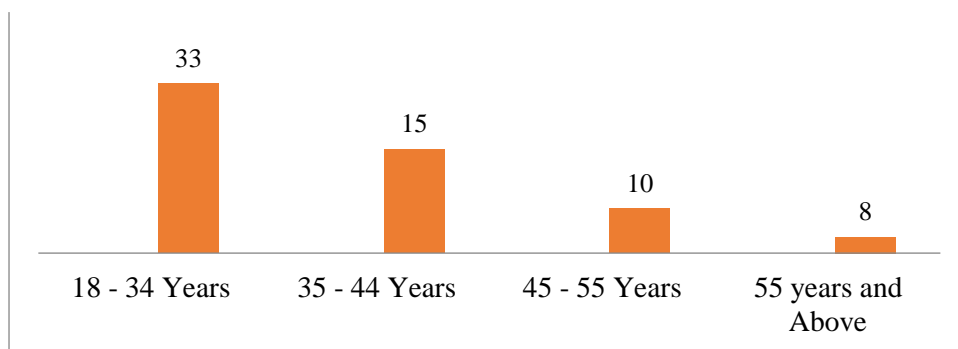
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<sup>35</sup> MuhabieMekonnenMengistu. Conflict Causes in the Horn of Africa. (2015). <http://article.sciencepublishinggroup.com/pdf/10.11648.j.ajap.20150402.12.pdf>

The boundaries drawn by the colonial government in Africa have contributed to conflict escalation. Boundaries limit ethnic communities' desire to control and retain resources that span territories. As a result, boundaries have been identified as among the root causes of ethnic armed groups' conflict. Because of the boundaries, different ethnic groups have found themselves in the same county, even if they are not compatible. Pastoralists and agriculturists are two examples. This has given rise to opportunities for conflict. The Horn of Africa (HoA) associates with various armed groups and ethnic conflicts both within and across borders.

According to the KNCHR (Kenya-National-Commission-for-Human-Rights), Kenya is a large multi-ethnic country with over forty ethnic groups. Kenya has seen its fair share of armed group conflict, ranging from religious conflict, land conflict, ethnic clashes and the 2007 post-election violence. Several factors contribute to the high levels of conflict in these regions, including resource competition, ethnic rivalry, marginalization, claims, the proliferation of small arms and cattle rustling.

**Graph 2.2 Age of the participants**



**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

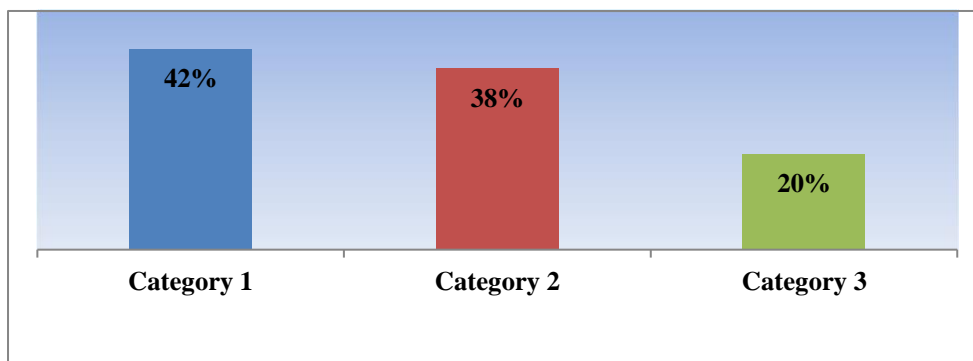
#### **4.2.3. Level of Education of Participants**

Respondents were required to indicate their level of education, presented in three levels; - Primary school level, Secondary school level and College levels. The researcher established that 28 (42%) participants were primary school leavers, mostly engaged in cattle herding and small businesses such as *bodaboda* riding. The secondary leavers constitute 25 participants which represents 38%, while 13 respondents representing 20% of the sample had attended

various post-secondary institutions. This indicates that the residents of Marsabit County have gradually embraced education over the years, leading to a high number of educated respondents. However, retrogressive cultural traditions still exist, with a majority of the youths involved in tribal militias' practices which compromise their desire to pursue education as shown by 42% of respondents being primary school leavers.

### **Graph 2.3 Level of Education**

The graph below represents the education level of the respondents with category 1 representing the primary level; category 2 secondary level; and category 3 representing the post-secondary level.

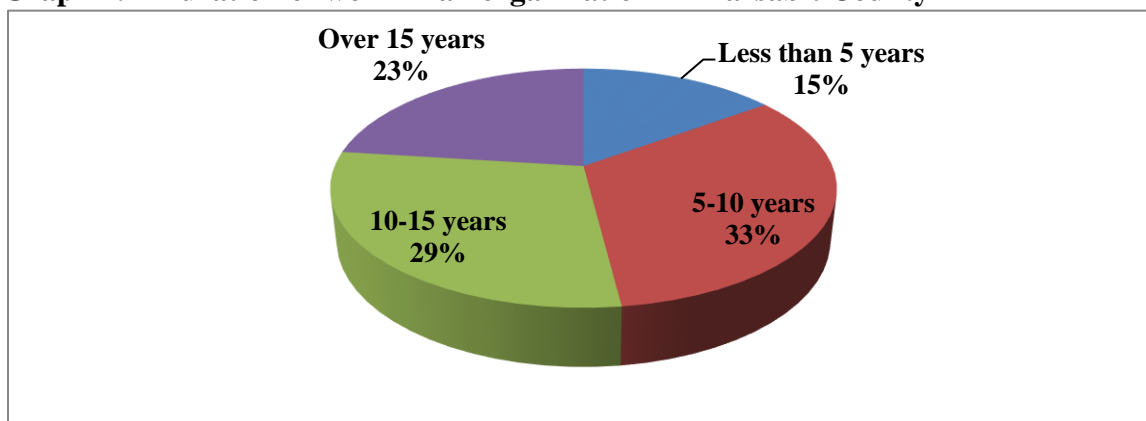


**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

#### **2.1.4 Length of time participants had worked for their organization**

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they had worked for their organizations in Marsabit County. 19 of them representing 29% had worked for their organizations for 10 to 15 years, while 15 participants representing 23% had worked for their organizations for over 15 years. 22 respondents representing 33% had worked in the area for a period of 5 to 10 years. Finally, 10 respondents representing 15% have worked in the area for less than 5 years. This is a clear indication that a majority of the respondents had worked in the county for more than five years.

**Graph 2.4 Duration of work in an organization in Marsabit County**



**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

## **2.2 The State of Socio-Economic Development**

In essence, socio-economic development is a political notion and undertaking that cannot be divorced from politics or state-society policies. Advancement in socio-economic terms comprises a change in people's lifestyles due to improved education, incomes, skill development and employment. Access to progress's advantages, as well as similar open doors for economic and social mobility, is at the heart of socio-economic advancement. Economic upgrade, as defined by Razack, is a process that affects development and financial progress with a heavy emphasis on the end goal of maximizing a state's prosperity. These goals are accomplished through business formation and maintenance, assessment base expansion and personal life fulfilment.<sup>36</sup>

Since social networks vary in terms of their political and geographic weaknesses and strengths, each network will confront its own set of economic development obstacles. Whereas the truth is that ethnic conflicts affect the economy, as Oucho shows, the financial interests of a country or network may have a considerable impact on ethnic conflict, hence causing significantly more economic obliteration. It quickly devolves into a never-ending problem. According to Ghani and Lockhart, ethnic conflict has traditionally been viewed as the most favourable factor

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<sup>36</sup> Razack, A., Devadoss, S. & Holland, D. A general equilibrium analysis of production subsidy in a Harris-Todaro developing economy an application to India *Applied Economics*, 41(21). 2767-2777. (2009).



influencing Africa's direct rate of growth. Ethnic clashes continue to dominate the news today, many years after independence, ranging from central Africa to weights have influenced the growth of clashes. For instance, the 2017–2018 dry seasons, which wiped out the ethnic group's entire stock in Marsabit County, intensified the pastoralists' pressure to attack neighbouring communities in an attempt to recapture their lost run.<sup>37</sup> This is a way of restocking back their livestock for livelihood.

Inter-clan conflicts are ill-defined, and as a result, they are portrayed in many ways; researchers disagree on what defines a dispute. One school of thinking in North America views battle as a fight of enthusiasm between two communities. For instance, according to Kenneth Building: "Clashes of interests occur when reforms benefit one community while harming the other, each in their way. A dispute is a scenario in which each group strives to undermine the welfare of the other in an allegedly competitive battle for resources." According to another school of thought, Johan Galtung, "poor shape and additional roughness" characterize the conflict condition.<sup>40</sup> This indicates profound disagreement between scholars.

## **2.2 The livelihoods**

Marsabit County is home to many ethnic groups including the Borana, Gabra, Rendille, Burji, Samburu, Turkana, Dassenach, Wayu and Somali communities – most of who practice pastoralism, entrepreneurship and small-scale farming.<sup>38</sup> Historically, human development emerged in response to mounting economic progress' criticism as a proxy for measuring living conditions. Economic growth affects human outcomes, but so does the allocation of resources and income. Economic prosperity and human development do not necessarily go hand in hand. Purposeful policies executed at different levels must establish the link.

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<sup>37</sup> Ghani, A., & Lockhart, C. Fixing failed states: A framework for rebuilding a fractured world. Oxford University Press. (2009). <sup>40</sup>Shanti. (2012). "The concepts of conflict management, and conflict Resolution Preservatives com. Retrieved 2018 from [http://www.preservearticles.com/2013032928770the\\_concepts\\_of\\_conflict-conther\\_management\\_and\\_conflict-resolution.bunl](http://www.preservearticles.com/2013032928770the_concepts_of_conflict-conther_management_and_conflict-resolution.bunl).

<sup>38</sup> *ibid*

Composite human indicators should be utilized to track human development progress. The indices in question are: “the Human Development Index (HDI), the Human Poverty Index (HPI), the Human Gender Development Index (GDI), the Gender Inequality Index (GII), and the newly adopted Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).” According to the 2013 National Human Development Report, Marsabit Count’s Inequality Adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) was 0.692, while the national GGI score was 0.62. In 2019, the GGI measure was 0.568, indicating a rise. Marsabit County’s IHDI in 2020 was 0.326, somewhat less than the national average of 0.383.<sup>3940</sup> The low figure is evidence of poor living conditions in Marsabit County.

**2.2.1 Human Development Index (HDI)**

The human development index aggregates a variety of indicators, the most important of which are health, knowledge and income, to assess a country's average advancement. As a result, the optimal HDI value is near or equal to one. Kenya National Human Development Report states, “Marsabit County's HDI was 0.348 in 2019, compared to a national HDI of 0.520.” Meaning the county had a substantially lower HDI score than the national average. When compared to the 2018 report's prior HDI, there was a little decline. This is also lower than the previous 0.438 HDI in the 2017 report. Potential human development loss caused by discrepancies between men and women in reproductive health, labour market and empowerment results is quantified by the Gender Inequality Indicator (GII), a composite score. The ideal situation depicted in Figure 2 is one in which there is no inequality.<sup>41</sup>

**Table 2.3: Socio-Economic Indicators in Marsabit County**

<b>General Information</b>	<b>Marsabit</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Kenya</b>
<b>Population</b>	291,166	42	821491

<sup>39</sup> “Republic of Kenya. Marsabit Second County integrated development plan 2018-2022. <https://repository.kippira.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/90/2018->

<sup>40</sup> %20Marsabit%20County%20CIDP.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y”

<sup>41</sup> ibid

<b>Poverty rate (per cent)</b>	42.2	44	45.2
<b>Population with primary education (per cent)</b>	70.4	17	66.6
<b>Population with secondary education (per cent)</b>	8.9	41	12.7
<b>Qualified medical assistance during birth</b>	17.4	41	12.7
<b>HIV prevalence in 2011 (%)</b>	1	2	6.2
<b>Improved water (per cent households 2009)</b>	77.6	8	66.5
<b>Improved sanitation (per cent households 2009)</b>	35.4	41	87.8
<b>Paved roads (as a percentage of total roads in 2012)</b>	-	47	9.4
<b>Electricity (% households 2009)</b>	7.5	26	22.7
<b>Funding per capita in Ksh (2010/11) (total)</b>	1297	6	909

Source: Marsabit County CIDP

## 2.3 Agricultural activities

### 2.3.1 Main Crops Produced

Production of crops in Marsabit County is deteriorating because of irregular rainfall and an increase in the frequency of repeated droughts. Crop farming occurs during the wet seasons in several areas surrounding Mt. Marsabit and in the Moyale sub-county. Agriculture employs approximately 2% of the population. The county's primary economic crops include millet, beans, teff, maize, fruits and vegetables. Among the fruits farmed are avocados, oranges, bananas, and mangoes. Khat is similarly farmed commercially in the Saku Constituency and parts of Moyale. Miraa is cultivated commercially, whereas fruit trees are cultivated largely for domestic consumption and local market sale.<sup>42</sup> The minimal crop production and agricultural employment were acerbated by inter-ethnic conflicts where OLF was involved.

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<sup>42</sup> “Republic of Kenya. Marsabit Second County integrated development plan 2018-2022. <https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/90/20182022%20Marsabit%20County%20CIDP.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>”

### **2.3.2 Acreage under Food Crops and Cash Crops**

The entire area devoted to cash and food crops cultivation is 5,060 acres. Though, with 1,582,750 hectares of fertile land, the county has considerable agricultural potential. Due to the region's varied climatic conditions, the majority of it is undeveloped.<sup>43</sup> Nonetheless, the high agricultural potential can only be realized with sustainable peace.

### **2.3.3. Average Farm Sizes**

The county's farm size is an average of 0.8 hectares, with title deed farms accounting for approximately 2% of the total. The farms are concentrated in the mountainous districts of the Moyale and Saku constituencies. The remaining part is used by the community for grazing.

### **2.3.4 Main Storage Facilities**

In urban regions, the most typical food storage methods are bags and wooden granaries. Additionally, there are a few modern companies in the towns of Moyale and Marsabit, such as the National Cereals Produce Board's silos (NCPB). The NCPB facility stocks grains, seeds and fertilizer for farmers to buy as well as for emergency food distribution by development agencies and the government.<sup>44</sup> As farmers cannot produce many agricultural products due to various reasons large-scale facilities were not required.

### **2.3.5 Agricultural extension, training, research and information services**

The county government, civil society organizations and training and research institutions like NGOs, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations mostly provide agriculture extension services in four ways: through a beneficiary-driven and demand-driven strategy; through the sharing of indigenous knowledge and technology; through networking and collaboration; and through cost-sharing with beneficiaries. A range of extension

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<sup>43</sup> *ibid*

<sup>44</sup> *ibid*

approaches are used to address livestock keepers and farmers, they include training for livestock keepers in grazing zones, exchange visits/tours, trade shows/exhibitions, field days, on-farm demonstrations and workshops. A demonstration farm in Sagante ward was previously managed by the government, it acted as a learning facility and demonstrated a variety of farming technologies and approaches. The county interacts with research institutions such as the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization in generating and utilising knowledge specific to a certain area (KARLO).<sup>4546</sup> Availability of such institutions for farmers to learn significantly improves their capacity.

### **2.3.6 Apiculture (beekeeping)**

Apiculture is one of the most promising business endeavours in the county. There are 5,890 beehives in the county, with clusters located on Mt. Kulal, on the edges of Marsabit forest, and in other isolated pockets of woodlands and forest. However, the county lacks honey refineries that are established, making it difficult to add value to and process honey products. Honey and propolis are two bee-hive products that have made their way into the food supply chain. The county does not use beeswax, a typical hive product used in candle manufacturing.<sup>47</sup> Honey and propolis are two bee-hive products that are used as food or sold to generate income.

## **2.4 Infrastructure development**

To the modern economy, infrastructure is critical and is the county's growth's primary driver. The section discusses Marsabit County's existing infrastructure, which includes roads, airstrips, energy access and housing, as well as information, communication, and technology infrastructure, which includes television, radio, fibre optic cables, landline telephones, mobile phone connections and post offices.

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<sup>45</sup> “Republic of Kenya. Marsabit Second County integrated development plan 2018-2022.

<https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/90/2018->

[%20Marsabit%20County%20CIDP.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y](https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/90/20182022%20Marsabit%20County%20CIDP.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y)”

<sup>47</sup> Republic of Kenya. Marsabit Second County integrated development plan 2018-2022.

<https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/90/20182022%20Marsabit%20County%20CIDP.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

### **2.4.1 Road, Railway Network and Airports**

Currently, Marsabit County's road network is around 5,000 kilometres long. There are 312 kilometres of paved road, 580 kilometres of gravel road and 4,108 kilometres of dirt road. However, during wet seasons, the bulk of roads become impassable. The building of the north-south motorway connecting Ethiopia and Isiolo - Marsabit has opened the region to investment, significantly enhanced connectivity, lowered the cost of delivering goods and services to the County and facilitated cross-border trade between Ethiopia and Kenya. Along with the enhancement of the town's scenic appeal, the highway construction project included many social responsibility efforts, including improved drainage within the town and the construction of the road within the town totalling over 12 kilometres. The county has already benefited from the project's tarmacking of the Isiolo - Moyale road.<sup>48</sup> Marsabit County's sub-counties are all served by eighteen airstrips. All of the airstrips are currently in operation and in good condition.

The county is without a railroad, a harbour or a jetty. "Railway transport, on the other hand, is projected to expand in importance once the Lamu Port - South Sudan - Ethiopia Transport Corridor (LAPSSET) project is finished

### **2.4.2 Information, communication and technology**

Whereas the post office has been of service to the county for years, postal service development and usage have remained stagnant in comparison to the growth of mobile telephony. There are two post offices in the county, one in Moyale and one in Marsabit, both of which have a capacity of 1000 boxes. 557 landline connections are available, while mobile phone service is available in all major cities and many rural areas. The National Optic Fibre Backbone (NOFBI) and Safaricom installed a fibre optic network in Marsabit, enabling the upgrade of mobile service connectivity to 3G from 2G. There are television services in all major towns, and three local FM stations — Star, SIFA and Radio Jangwani (Catholic Church)— are based in Marsabit

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<sup>48</sup> Dolfima, W. Finch, J., & McMaster, R. Market and society: how do they relate, and how do they contribute to welfare? *Journal of Economic Issues*, 39(2), 347-356. (2005).

and transmit throughout the region. The establishment of a Huduma Centre in Marsabit would act as a one-stop shop for government services, increase efficiency and increase access to ICT services.

### **2.4.3 Energy Access**

Marsabit County relies heavily on wood fuel for cooking and lighting, with kerosene being used mostly for illumination. Households' primary source of energy is determined by their socioeconomic status and the availability of low-cost alternatives. As a result, 92.6 percent of families cook exclusively with firewood, 5.6 percent with charcoal, 1.4 percent with paraffin, and 0.2 percent use biomass residue. Only Marsabit, Moyale, Sololo and Laisamis have power. Rather than relying on the national grid, the county is powered by diesel generators and solar energy. Ethiopia supplies electricity to Moyale and Sololo. Despite tremendous advancements in rural Kenya's availability of electricity, the majority of homes in Marsabit continue to light with firewood. The total number of electrified homes is estimated to be 1,273, with 92.6 percent of families cooking primarily with firewood, 5.6 percent with charcoal, 1.4 percent with paraffin, and 0.2 percent using biomass residual. 57.2 percent of houses are light with firewood, 27.5% with paraffin, and 3.6 percent with electricity.<sup>49</sup>

### **2.4.4 Housing types**

Households with mud/wood walls account for 34.2 percent of all households, while those with stone walls account for 0.4 percent, wood 5.7 percent, mud/cement 5.7 percent, brick/block 4.3 percent, tin 0.5 percent, grass straw 22.8 percent corrugated iron sheets 0.5 percent, and rest 26 percent. According to the floor type classification, 91.3 percent have earthen floors, 0.4 percent have tiled floors and 8.3% of households have cement floors. The majority of the households

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<sup>49</sup> “Republic of Kenya. Marsabit Second County integrated development plan 2018-2022. <https://repository.kippira.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/90/20182022%20Marsabit%20County%20CIDP.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>”

are grass-thatched roofs (37.5%), followed by corrugated iron sheets roofs (31%), Makuti (palm leaves) (1.3%), roof tiles (0.1%), concrete (1.1%) and other materials (29%).<sup>50</sup>

## **2.5 Land and Land Use**

### **2.5.1 Land ownership categories/classification**

The land possesses aesthetic, cultural, and historic characteristics and is a critical factor in economic output. The County's land is essentially divided into four land types: game reserves, townships, agriculture, and grazing fields, with community grazing pastures accounting for the majority of the territory. A spatial plan and a national land-use policy's absence have facilitated the expansion of informal settlements, inter-tribal conflict, agricultural and grazing land pressure, unplanned urban centres, environmental degradation, congestion, and insufficient infrastructure services to name a few. Only 2,082 square kilometres within Marsabit sub mountainous county's region are suitable for farming, out of 70,082 square kilometres in Marsabit County. While adjudication is still ongoing in this case, some lands have been registered and title deeds handed to landowners. On the other side, "land records inherited from defunct Local Authorities are still manually managed, complicating storage, security, and access." A land information management system that is effective is necessary.<sup>51</sup> This will help in land acquisition and use as a factor of production.

### **2.5.2. Mean Holding Size**

Except for a few adjudicated portions in the Moyale and Saku constituencies, the majority of the county's land is owned communally. "The average holding size in adjudicated regions is 0.8ha, which is slightly less than the national average of 0.97ha per household." Land adjudication has begun in some regions, with hopes to expand the procedure across the entire county. The transition from pastoral to sedentary lifestyles has placed pressure on available

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<sup>50</sup> *ibid*

<sup>51</sup> "Dolfima, W. Finch, J., & McMaster, R. Market and society: how do they relate, and how do they contribute to welfare?. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 39(2), 347-356. (2005)."



grazing areas. Additionally, the number of conservancies has increased in recent years, which could have a significant impact on future land use.

### **2.5.3 Percentage of Land with Title Deeds**

Only around 2% of the country's land is recorded formally. Land registration has been completed in the Marsabit Mountain areas, including Dakabaricha and Marsabit Township with land owners being given 4,841 title deeds. This represents fewer than 2% of all landowners. This is a small number in comparison to the national average of 39.4 percent of landowners who have gotten title deeds.<sup>5253</sup>

### **2.5.4 Incidences of Landlessness**

Individual rights are not guaranteed on the vast majority of Marsabit County's communally owned territory. In some regions, the absence of established property rights continues to be a significant impediment to communities adopting best land-use practices and also contributes significantly to bad land governance. Additionally, the absence of title deeds impedes smallscale business development by preventing them from obtaining loans due to a lack of collateral. Landlessness is rare in rural areas since the majority of the land is communally owned and maintained. Communities are displaced as a result of periodic combat, but they typically return to their homes as the situation stabilizes. Conflicts are frequently triggered by competition for grazing land and water sources, but they are mostly triggered by politics.

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<sup>52</sup> “Republic of Kenya. Marsabit Second County integrated development plan 2018-2022.

<https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/90/2018->

<sup>53</sup> [%20Marsabit%20County%20CIDP.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y”](#)

### **2.5.5 Settlement patterns**

The county's settlement patterns are spread and scattered, largely dictated by water availability, land productivity, transportation accessibility, and other services like security. As a result, the majority of communities are concentrated in areas with a high potential for relative gains, such as security, pastures, water, and other social services. As a result of the communities' nature, the cost of providing social services and infrastructure is astronomical. The county is predominantly rural, with a few settlements in the country's two largest towns, Moyale and Marsabit. Chalbi, North Horr, Kargi, Korr, Loiyangalani, Dabel, Godoma and Nana are rising urban areas, as are Sololo, Turbi, ManyattaJillo, Karare, Logologo, Laisamis and Merille along the Isiolo-Moyale route. The number of villages along the Great North Road is continuously expanding. As a result, urban planning that spans into South Sudan and southern Ethiopia through Marsabit County from Lamu Port is expected to attract a big influx of people from other counties seeking new economic prospects in Marsabit County. This vast undertaking offers enormous potential for job growth, enhanced telecommunications, electricity, and efficient transportation, as well as connecting Marsabit County to international markets.

Additionally, “there are several national and county-level flagship projects, such as Lake Turkana Wind Power, Bubisa Wind Power, Kalacha and Elmolo Bay Wind Power, an abattoir in Segel and Loiyangalani Resort City, that are considered potential drivers of new settlements and will require effective planning and control; major projects in surrounding counties, such as Isiolo Resort City and Isiolo International Airport, will have spillover effects that must be considered while developing the county's spatial framework.” Additionally, effective integrated urban design is essential for existing metropolitan areas.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> “Dolfima, W. Finch, J., & McMaster, R. Market and society: how do they relate, and how do they contribute to welfare? *Journal of Economic Issues*, 39(2), 347-356. (2005).”

## **2.6. Employment**

### **2.6.1 Wage Earners**

Marsabit has a fairly small population of persons who work in the formal economy. Only 7% 2 of the county's residents are employed. This is due to a lack of literacy and industry, and a dearth of qualified labour because of the country's lack of vocational and technical training institutes. As a result, additional effort and investment in education are essential, as is the promotion of young internships to promote the employability of youth and help kids to still be competitive in the job market.

### **2.6.2 Self-Employed**

Self-employment employs around 18% of rural area people and 10% of the urban regions' people. This is quite low and reflects a scarcity of start-up funding, a dearth of business skills among the populace, a slow business growth rate, and managerial talents. Loans and grants to youth and women's organizations should be used to promote small and medium-sized businesses. Fresh produce marketplaces and jua-kali sheds have been constructed in each constituency of the government, through the ministry of trade and industry to promote small business development.

### **2.6.3 Labour Force**

This comprises 49.1 percent of the population in the county, or nearly half. Although the labour market has the potential to absorb additional individuals, unemployment remains high due to a lack of opportunities, with the majority of capable employees unemployed. It is necessary to enhance labour force skills, increase the employability of youth through student placement schemes, internship programs, targeted training and establish a link to the private sector, foster an investment-friendly environment conducive to business development services provision and job creation.

## **2.6.4 Levels of Unemployment**

Marsabit has a 65 percent unemployment rate, with young people making up the majority of the unemployed. Despite the county government's efforts to close the skills gap among young people by constructing four youth polytechnics in the sub-counties over the last two years, with another planned to open in the Saku sub-county, enrollment is still low. It is necessary to add youth learning and training centres, as well as career opportunities, linking children to diverse opportunities throughout the country and investment in youth entrepreneurship programs.

## **2.7 Oil and Other Mineral Resources**

### **2.7.1 Mineral and oil potential**

Mica and blue quinamine are mined in South Horr's and Laisamis sub-county, but on a limited scale by artisanal miners. Sand harvesting on a small scale occurs in Moyale, Bubisa, Kargi and Segel as well as other areas of the county. The Saku Constituency's Gof Choppa, ManyattaDabba, and neighbouring areas are undergoing open-cast quarrying. Chromite mining occurs in the Moyale Constituency, while petroleum prospecting occurs in Maikona, Laisamis, and Kargi. Salt, talc, chromite, rare earth, magnesite, iron ore, garnet, tourmaline, graphite, asbestos, nickel, nepheline, beryl, and Copper are only a few of the mineral formations in the county that are considered to have significant potential.<sup>55</sup> In general, there is a dearth of information on prospective mining locations. As a result, geological surveys are necessary to ascertain the exact extent of mineral deposits, as is the creation of a policy for natural resource exploitation and an enabling framework encouraging prospectors to perform mineral exploration.<sup>56</sup> Although there is a scarcity of information on the minerals prospect, the county is considered to have sufficient potential.

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<sup>55</sup> *ibid*

<sup>56</sup> Republic of Kenya. Marsabit Second County integrated development plan 2018-2022. <https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/90/20182022%20Marsabit%20County%20CIDP.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

## 2.8 Inter-communal conflicts in Marsabit County

Marsabit County's mostly pastoralist communities of the Borana, Gabra, Rendille, Burji, Samburu, Turkana, Dassenach, Walu and Somali communities have a long history of interethnic animosity.<sup>57</sup> The county experiences intermittent communal conflict arising from within the county or even from OLF and then enters from across the border with Ethiopia. Besides the threats from militia group, the communities and clans in Marsabit have a long history of competition for pasture and grazing land, which often lead to violence in the form of cattle rustling, ethnic violence, displacements, massacres and revenge attacks.<sup>58</sup> Recently the nature of this violence has changed as a result of the proliferation of small arms, devolution, climate change and northern Kenya becoming a focus for future national development.<sup>59</sup>

The conflicts in the county are highly complex and multi-layered. There is a long tradition of cattle raiding for prestige and bride prices, as well as competition over scarce and diminishing water and pasture resources in the region. However, 'commercial' cattle raiding, involving excessive violence also occurs for mass sale to urban markets.<sup>60</sup> Stress factors include climate change; environmental degradation; drought, famine and other natural catastrophes; landrelated conflicts (some relating to administrative and electoral boundaries); the politicisation of communal relations; the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs); tensions with agricultural communities; and human-wildlife conflicts aggravated by competing uses of land for commercial ranching and wildlife conservation are among the other factors driving conflict

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<sup>57</sup> *ibid*

<sup>58</sup> Sharamo, R. (2014). *The politics of pastoral violence: A case study of Isiolo county, Northern Kenya* (Working Paper 095). Brighton: Future Agricultures.  
[http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/pdf/outputs/Futureagriculture/FAC\\_Working\\_Paper\\_095.pdf](http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/pdf/outputs/Futureagriculture/FAC_Working_Paper_095.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, p.3.

<sup>60</sup> Okumu, W. (2013). *Trans-local peace building among pastoralist communities in Kenya: The case of Laikipi Peace Caravan* (Culture and Environment in Africa Series 3). Cologne African Studies Centre.  
[http://www.zef.de/module/register/media/f089\\_Okumu\\_Trans-local%20Peace%20Building%20Among%20Pastoralists%20Communities%20in%20Kenya%20the%20Case%20of%20Laikipia%20Peace%20Caravan.pdf](http://www.zef.de/module/register/media/f089_Okumu_Trans-local%20Peace%20Building%20Among%20Pastoralists%20Communities%20in%20Kenya%20the%20Case%20of%20Laikipia%20Peace%20Caravan.pdf)

in the county. The conflicts have become increasingly intractable as a result of weakened traditional governance systems; the breakdown of inter-communal social contracts; elders' loss of control over the youths; the persistence of *moran* (warrior) culture and the politicisation of peacemaking processes. In addition, one report suggests that the conflicts have intensified partly as a result of the weakness or unwillingness of the state to protect its citizens in these areas.<sup>61</sup>

The conflicts in the pastoralist drylands are also being transformed, moving away from traditional resource-based incidents to being driven by economic and political gain. They are fuelled by drivers from institutional, political-economic and social spheres operating at national, regional and even global levels. The 'institutional factors driving conflicts include contested borders, weak land tenure rights, and failures of policing and justice; politiceconomic factors include extractive commercial enterprises without adequate benefit sharing, land alienation, divisive politics and corrupt local administrations; whilst social factors relate to historical marginalisation and exclusion, as well as issues of identity, gender and ethnicity. Efforts to build peace at one level are impacted and negated by processes at another.<sup>62</sup>

Because of the discussed factors among many more, Borana, Gabra, Rendille, Burji, Samburu, Turkana, Dassenach, Walu and Somali communities in Marsabit County have traditionally clashed. However, the most common conflicts are between the Borana and Rendille. The majority of wars are sparked by fierce competition for scarce resources like pasture, grazing land, and water and cattle raiding. However, as aforementioned, the source of this conflict is external because Oromia's conflict and political dynamics in southern Ethiopia are so intertwined with north Kenya that a severe and protracted conflict in Oromia could spread to

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<sup>61</sup> Mbugua, J. K. (2013). *Inter-communal conflicts in Kenya: The real issues at stake in the Tana Delta* (Issues Briefs N.1). Nairobi: International Peace Support Training Centre.

<http://www.ipstc.org/media/documents/IPSTC%20ISSUE%20BRIEFS%20NO1-2013.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> Gibbons, 2014, p. 1

northern Kenya. Massive displacement and a new humanitarian crisis are the immediate dangers in Kenya's Marsabit Isiolo, and Moyale counties.

The conflict situation was worsened by the involvement of OLF from Ethiopia and the availability of illegal weapons. Based on a 2018 small arms survey, “the number of illegal arms in civil possession in the county was estimated at 20,000.”<sup>63</sup>

The major inter-ethnic feuds in Marsabit County are predominantly between the Borana, Gabra and Rendille communities. These three warring communities previously lived harmoniously together, sharing resources and household necessities. They intermarried and agreed on mechanisms to manage shared pasture and water points during periods of drought and in the rainy season. However, the situation has changed over the past decades particularly between the Borana and Gabra communities as people have fled their homes and settled elsewhere due to incessant conflicts.<sup>64</sup>

As a result of the conflicts, the Gabra people displaced the Borana community from Hurri Hills and they were forced to resettle at Elle Borr. Consequently, the Gabra people were also evicted from the Gabra Scheme area of the Saku Constituency during the 2020 conflicts and they resettled in the Jirime location in central Marsabit. These incidents point to an increasing rift between the two ethnic groups, which revolves around land politics. Attempts by the political elite to bring zones with plenty of pasture within “their” tribal boundaries have inflamed the situation.

The study established that the components adding to pastoralist conflicts are multi-dimensional and have outcomes that negatively impact the pastoralists' way of life. A holistic approach to mitigating and properly responding to relevant actors for ensuring lasting peace for sustainable development is required. The insufficiency of policy on the Pastoralist Development Program

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<sup>63</sup> Dolfima, W. Finch, J., & McMaster, R. Market and society: how do they relate, and how do they contribute to welfare? *Journal of Economic Issues*, 39(2), 347-356. (2005).

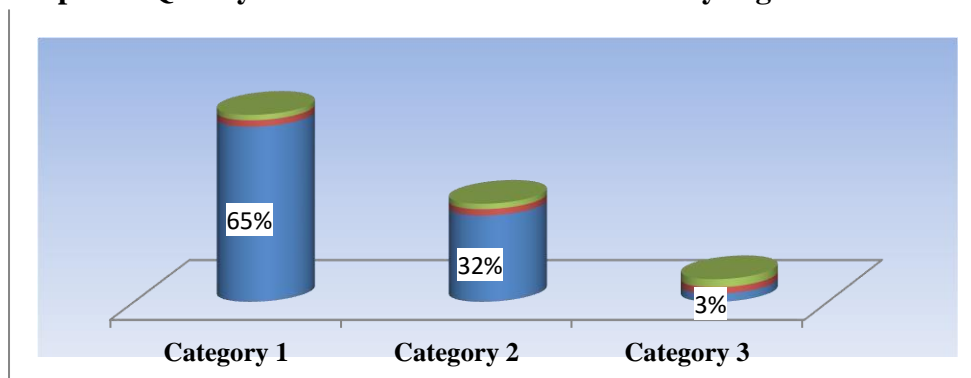
<sup>64</sup> Pandasani, M. How does politics affect economies? Retrieved 13 April 2018.

in Kenya has been comprehended to have tremendously contributed to the wider underdevelopment found in locale along these lines offering to ascend to extreme rivalry for the rare assets accessible and notwithstanding prompting strife among the networks living in the region.<sup>65</sup>

## 2.9 Research findings on the status of Socio-Economic development in Marsabit

Based on the data derived from the questionnaire, 32% of the respondents strongly agree that the quality of health care in Marsabit County is good while 65% strongly disagree with the statement. 3% of the respondents were uncertain of the state of healthcare in the county, particularly because they rely on traditional methods. These responses are presented in the pie chart below.

**Graph 2.5 Quality of healthcare in Marsabit County is good**



**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

Graph 2.5 above is the graphical representation of respondents' responses to the statement that the quality of healthcare in Marsabit County is good. In the graph, category 1 represents respondents who Strongly Disagree; category 2 is for those who Strongly Agree while category 3 is for the respondents who are uncertain of the state of healthcare in the county.

On the other hand, 23% of the respondents agree that the roads to the nearest towns are accessible while 70% strongly disagree with the statement. 7% were uncertain of the

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<sup>65</sup> "Abdow, A. The factors that influence the extent to which community leaders play their role in conflict resolution: a case of Mandera district in Kenya. Unpublished research project report for Masters of Arts in project planning and management. University of Nairobi, (2010). 2-15."



accessibility of roads nearest to towns, probably since they live in the interior and hardly come to towns.

In terms of the poverty level in the county, 78% of respondents agree that the poverty rate in the county is high while 22% disagree. On the other hand, 39% of the respondents strongly agree that clean water is available in Marsabit County while 61% strongly disagree with the statement.

The research also established that a majority of the Marsabit population is youthful with a significant population (38%) having completed high school education. There is also a substantially large population (42%) that left school at the primary school level. Based on this, the study interrogated the population on the state of economic activities in the county and established that there are several economic activities conducted in the area.

Among these are, crop production involving the production of miraa, avocados, oranges, bananas, and mangoes. Crop production in Marsabit County is, however, greatly affected by unstable and irregular rainfall and an increase in the frequency of droughts. The county's farm size is an average of 1.0 hectares. However, due to the region's varied climatic conditions, the majority of it is undeveloped, with title deed farms accounting for just 2% of the total landmass. Since farmers do not produce much in terms of agricultural products, large-scale storage facilities are not found in the county with typical storage methods being bags and wooden granaries.

To improve productivity, the county government, civil society organizations and NGOs have been providing agricultural extension services. In doing this, a range of extension approaches is used including training livestock keepers in grazing zones, exchange visits/tours, agricultural shows and on-farm demonstrations and workshops.

Apart from crop production, there is also beekeeping, livestock keeping and small-scale trade and tourism activities. These activities are, however, generally affected by a poor or insufficient

road network that hampers movement. For instance, during wet seasons, the bulk of roads become impassable. This situation has, however, improved with the construction of the Isiolo – Marsabit – Moyale road and the construction of several airstrips in the area.

Among the general findings is that socio-economic development in Marsabit County is a political notion and undertaking conjured along with politics and state policies. Moreover, advancement in socio-economic terms in the county comprises a change in residents' lifestyles due to improved education, skill development and employment.

It is also important to highlight that on the basis of this chapter's establishments, Marsabit County qualifies to be classified as poor as the development index, housing styles and poverty rates indicate. Nonetheless, the potential for advancement is great with programs like LAPSSET Corridor coming up.

#### **2.10 Chapter conclusion.**

The main aim of the chapter was to examine the state of socio-economic development in Marsabit County. The findings reveal that the county is endowed with several natural resources and has oil-extraction potential. However, irregular and unreliable rainfall hampers most of the economic activities in the area. Poor road networks further compound the problem. Despite these, there has been increased awareness and training on better agricultural methods and the provision of extension services to aid farmers and herders in their production activities.

The findings generated from the variables examined in this chapter including human development index, educational levels, electricity supply and paved roads among many others during the study reveal that economically, Marsabit County is underdeveloped though efforts are being made to improve the situation. The respondents, particularly, zeroed in on rainfall, land ownership rights and road networks as the mainstay of sustainable economic productivity in the county. Analysis of the findings revealed that the provision of extension services, land

tenure and improvement of farming skills are also critical determinants of sustainable socioeconomic development.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **IMPACT OF OLF ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MARSABIT COUNTY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The chapter looks at the impact of OLF on socio-economic development in Marsabit County. It reviews the empirical studies of OLF and its impact on socioeconomic development.

#### **3.1 Impact of OLF on the socio-economic development in Marsabit County**

Communities suffer a range of effects as a result of the conflict. The study will examine some of the consequences of violence related to group involvement in Marsabit County.

##### **3.1.1 Retarded Social Services**

The conflict has two significant ramifications for social services. Conflict restricts access to educational institutions, hence limiting a society's human growth. This was a result of the destruction of educational facilities and disruption of the learning calendar which may result in school closures. Conflicts also contribute to school dropout rates, since many pastoralists in Marsabit County were displaced by the conflicts thus affecting school-going children. Education in the County is also substandard compared to other regions. The sector has suffered since 1994 and even earlier, as many schools closed due to high levels of stress caused by disputes linked to OLF groups. Marsabit County had a closure rate of 4% during the peak of the conflict of 2021. However, there was improvement due to the local people and government security measures.<sup>66</sup>

According to several respondents, inter-ethnic warfare enhanced the rate of school dropouts, particularly among youths who enlisted as group fighters and communities' militia due to inter-

<sup>66</sup> IGambari A. The character, Fundamental Issues and Consequences of the Conflict in the horn of Africa, in Abraha T (2012): An Anthology for Peace and Security Research, Addis Ababa: Institute for Peace and Security Studies Addis Ababa University with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. (1991).

ethnic conflicts. Additionally, it was discovered that violence has had a direct effect on formal education, with teachers quitting schools due to fear for their lives. As a result of the violence and retarded education sector more community members have fallen into poverty and misery, further depleting already precious economic resources and preventing many from acquiring an education. The conflicts associated with OLF have disrupted a variety of community activities, including restricting access to healthcare services and facilities. Because conflict results in financial losses, thus, limiting people's access to health care. It has caused damage to health facilities and the flight of health personnel, complicating the provision of health services to community members.<sup>66</sup>

The ethnic violence between Borana and Gabra has had both direct and indirect implications, the most immediate being a shortage of health practitioners who have fled to another region in the country. As a result, members of the community have been denied critical health services and treatments.

### **3.1.2 Death, Injuries and Property Destruction**

The immediate repercussions of inter-ethnic include death and injury, as well as property damage caused by battling parties. Individuals' lives are always lost. Schilling et al. assert that the most direct consequences of raids on the well-being of humans are injuries and numerous deaths. Between 2018 and 2021, health centres in Marsabit County recorded deaths as a result of raids. According to the USAID report, 150 persons have died between 2018 and 2021 in the County. According to this poll, the number of deaths has increased over time, as one respondent indicated that inter-communal fighting frequently results in the death or incapacitation of the

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<sup>66</sup> “Assessment and Conciliation Report on: Existing Approaches and Best Practices in Cross Border Peace Building and conflict Mitigation and strengthened CSOs across the Ethiopia-Kenya Border by: Integrated Agriculture Development Consult (IADC) Dec 2008; Addis Ababa.”

breadwinner due to injuries.<sup>67</sup> These perennial killings and injuries were linked to OLF outfits where they were hired to perpetrate inter-ethnic conflicts.

Additionally, it was determined that the majority of deaths and injuries sustained during the conflict were women and children rather than men. However, it was said that in terms of who has lost the most property due to property destruction, there are no gender differences. The Boran-Gabra conflict displaced a total of 1050 individuals between 2018 and 2021, the majority of them were women and children.<sup>69</sup>

### **3.1.3 Interference with Food production**

Insecurity and worry have a substantial impact on food production, particularly at the household level, leading to lower quality and quantity of animals. Conflicts also suffocate the livestock trade by forcibly closing marketplaces. Additionally, the presence of violence affects agricultural production, as it forces farmers to leave their farms during times of war. As a result, it is possible to argue that war traps communities in a cycle of poverty. Despite abundant rainfall in 2019 and 2021, maize output was lower in the County compared to the previous year due to conflict. Reduced crops could have been a result of the tribal conflict during the period. Saku Sub County had the highest tonnage of maize production from 2017 to 2018, growing from 1486 tonnes to 18,300 tonnes due to County Government support to farmers. Due to incessant skirmishes associated with OLF particularly between Gabra and Borana communities over the years, the production significantly reduced.<sup>68</sup>

Reduced food production and reliance on food help revealed that inter-communal warfare has resulted in decreased commerce and trading activities in the major towns and centres.

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<sup>67</sup> “CEWARN: CEWARN country updates: September-December 2009. Addis Ababa, CEWARN (Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism); 2010.<http://www.cewarn.org/index.php/reports/archived-earlywarningreports/alerts/uga-1/2009-4/42-uga-sept-dec09/file>” <sup>69</sup> *ibid*

<sup>68</sup> Ahmad, Y. The Socio-Economics of Pastoralism: a Commentary on changing techniques and strategies for livestock management. In: Squires, V.R., Sidahmed, A.E. (eds). *Drylands. Sustainable use of rangelands into the twenty-first century*. IFAD Series: Technical Reports. Rome: IFAD. (2001).

Frequently, basic items remained unavailable or rare, resulting in exorbitant pricing. The livelihoods of the people were jeopardized as a result of resource depletion and reduced food availability. Further, according to several respondents, interethnic tensions in the area have resulted in low food production as a result of dispossessed communities' fields being neglected. Both the Borana and Rendille farmers in Saku Sub County were unable to work efficiently due to the instability generated by inter-ethnic rivalry.<sup>69</sup>

Eaton asserts that the commercialization of cattle rustling had a profound effect on pastoral livestock production. Between 2018 and 2020, raids between communities have resulted in the loss of approximately 2,000 livestock. The impact of conflict on livestock production in Marsabit was investigated, and it was discovered that frequent instances of cattle rustling resulted in both communities losing large herds of livestock, which was exacerbated by a lack of compensation as anticipated or agreed upon in various declarations. The amount of cattle lost is best reflected in the district peace committee's records. Between 2018 and 2020, over 2,000 animals were taken. This ascertains that individuals and even neighbourhoods were all severely impacted by the violence. A single attack, for instance, can obliterate a family's whole livelihood and riches. As a result, the majority of households are economically unable to recover, threatening the household's long-term economic viability.<sup>70</sup>

### **3.1.4 Insecurity**

Apart from direct resource depletion, conflicts have resulted in indirect consequences such as insecurity, which have a detrimental effect on human well-being. Human security entails an acceptance that traditional state security measures are capable of protecting citizens and that development must be measured in terms of decency and freedom from want and fear, rather

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<sup>69</sup> Khisa, C. S. Trends in Livestock Rustling and the Dynamics of Socio-Economic Development in Samburu and Marsabit Counties in Kenya. *Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 3(4). (2016). <http://www.strategicjournals.com/index.php/journal/article/view/392>.

<sup>70</sup> "CEWARN: CEWARN country updates: September-December 2009. Addis Ababa, CEWARN (Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism); 2010.<http://www.cewarn.org/index.php/reports/archived-earlywarningreports/alerts/uga-1/2009-4/42-uga-sept-dec09/file>"

than economic prosperity. Security is a state in which communities and individuals are capable of coping with stress, exercising their values and rights, and meeting their basic needs. As a result, security assures the absence of fear and want, as well as the right to dignity and protection from harm.<sup>71</sup>

According to Schilling et al., there is a widespread sense of extreme vulnerability within Marsabit County and along the Kenya-Ethiopia border. Insecurity and its perceived prevalence of it have three basic implications, all of which are negative to people's well-being. To begin, insecure areas squander scarce resources inefficiently. Second, critical infrastructure, such as schools and markets, has been closed. Third, investment is significantly harmed by insecurity. Long-term disputes and conflict escalation have harmed relations and coexistence between communities, resulting in the loss of social networks developed over time, including strong links made through inter-clan marriages, unnecessary fear and other institutions that are crucial for coping with uncertainty.<sup>72</sup>

People's high levels of insecurity, along with poverty and despair, have led to an increase in urban migration and migration to other parts of the country like neighbouring Isiolo County. There has been an upsurge in the number of demonstrations and counter-attacks, particularly between two Borana and Gabra communities. Their conflict is not new and has resulted in uncertain security scenarios like the closing of the roads connecting Moyale and Marsabit town, impairing transportation and business in the county.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> "Brauch, P. M. Link and J. Schilling (Eds.), *Climate Change, Human Security and Violent Conflict* (vol.8, pp.207-221). Berlin Heidelberg: Springer (2008)."

<sup>72</sup> "Brauch,,P. M. Link and J. Schilling (Eds.), *Climate Change, Human Security and Violent Conflict* (vol.8,pp.207-221). Berlin Heidelberg: Springer(2008)"

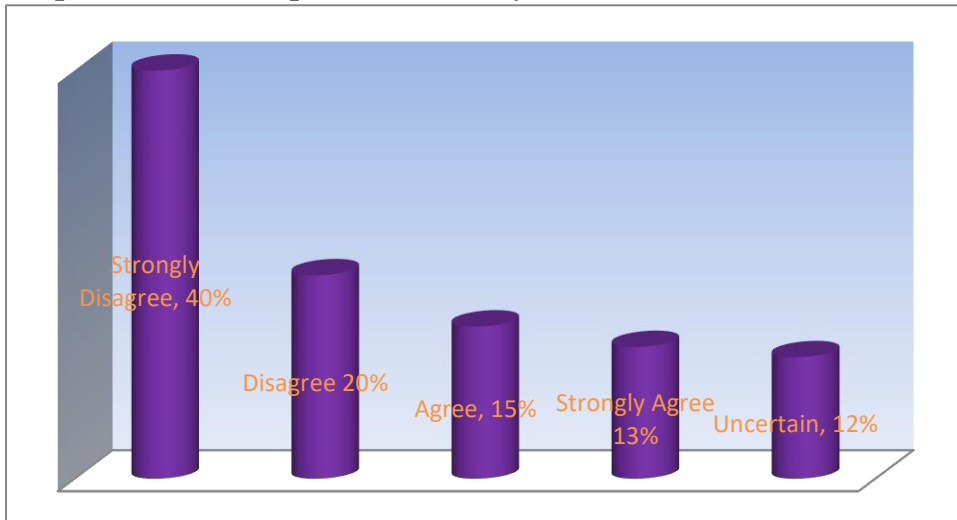
<sup>73</sup> "Schilling, J., Opiyo, F. E., & Scheffran, J. (Raiding pastoral livelihoods: motives and effects of violent conflict in north-western Kenya. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice*, 2(1), 25. 2012).  
<https://pastoralismjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/2041-7136-2-25> (Accessed October 3, 2016)."



### 3.2 Research findings on the Impact of OLF on Socio-economic Development in Marsabit

According to the findings of the study, 13% of the interviewees strongly agree that a police station is near their areas of residence, while 40% strongly disagree. On the other hand, 20% of the respondents disagree with the statement that a police station is near them. The following pie chart summarizes their responses.

**Graph 3.1 There is a police station in your area**

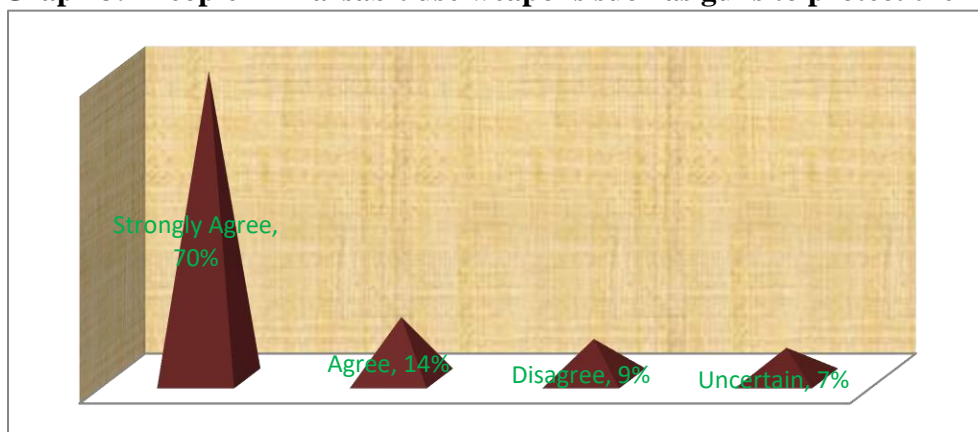


**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

Furthermore, 86% of the respondents agree that the police take their time before responding to conflict incidences in the county while only 3% disagree with the statement. 11% of the respondents were uncertain of police involvement in the conflict in the area, particularly because they live in the peaceful regions of the county with few incidences of conflict.

What makes the operation of the police in Marsabit County difficult, however, is the presence of illegal guns among the civilian population instead of relying on the police for protection as shown by 63 % of respondents who strongly agreed that residents in the county attempt to protect themselves against their enemies rather than seeking help from the police. This is made easier given the fact that the weapons are easily accessible.

**Graph 3.2 People in Marsabit use weapons such as guns to protect themselves**

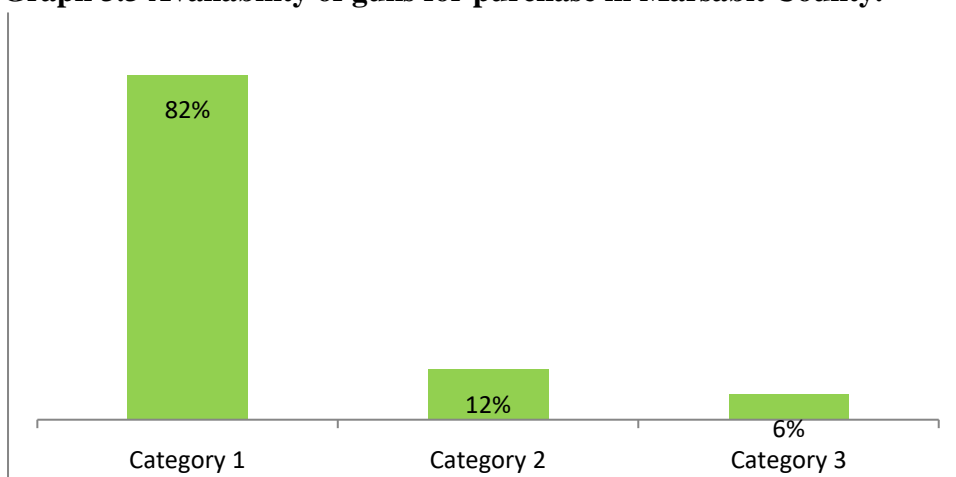


**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

According to the research findings, 82% of respondents agree that weapons are available for purchase within Marsabit County. Only 12% of the respondents disagree with this statement.

The following pie chart summarizes the responses to this statement.

**Graph 3.3 Availability of guns for purchase in Marsabit County.**



**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

In graph 3.3 above graph, category 1 represents the respondents who Agree that weapons are available for purchase within Marsabit County; category 2 represents those who Disagree while category 3 represents the uncertain respondents.

According to 93% of the respondents, the main cause of armed conflict in Marsabit County is the perennial scarcity of resources for the community in the area. 5% of the respondents

mentioned other causes including cultural issues and political differences while 2% of the respondents were uncertain of what causes conflict in the county.

According to 53% of the respondents, OLF plays a great role in the conflict in the county. They do this by facilitating weapon trade and transfers in the vast region. Despite this finding, 47% of the respondents disagree with this statement indicating that local factors particularly politics and the existence of militias play a crucial role in the conflict in the county.

In general, the chapter established that the impact of OLF on socio-economic development in Marsabit is far-reaching. Conflict associated with militants affects the provision of social services, causes injuries and deaths and disturbs the general security condition in the area. The conflict has for instance restricted access to schools in the process limiting the growth of human capital in the county. For instance, Marsabit County had a closure rate of 4% during the conflict of 2021. The displacement of school-going children and high school dropout rates due to insecurity by OLF has led to substandard educational rates in the county compared to other regions in Kenya. However, there was improvement due to the local people and government security measures.

Besides education, the study established that conflicts associated with the militant group have disrupted a variety of community activities, including restricting access to healthcare facilities due to damage caused to health facilities and health personnel.

Insecurity caused by rag-tag has also substantially impacted food production leading to lower quality and quantity of animals and agricultural produce. Conflicts also suffocate the livestock trade by forcibly closing marketplaces. For instance, despite abundant rainfall in 2019 and 2021, maize output was lower in the County compared to the previous year due to increased conflict. The reduced food production has led to reliance on food help. Frequently, basic items remain unavailable resulting in exorbitant pricing. This has left the county in a cycle of poverty.

### **3.3 Chapter Summary**

The purpose of the chapter was to assess the impact of OLF on socio-economic development in Marsabit County. The findings reveal that communities suffer a range of effects as a result of the conflict. Conflict in Marsabit County has several significant ramifications. The immediate repercussion is death and injury, as well as the destruction of property. However, the majority of deaths and injuries sustained in the county during conflicts are by women and children. Other affected areas include restricted access to educational and health facilities and a substantial impact on food production.

The conflicts have also led to the forcible closure of livestock marketplaces retarding trade in the county. Apart from direct resource depletion, conflicts in the county have resulted in indirect consequences such as insecurity, which have a detrimental effect on human well-being.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MEASURES USED TO REDUCE CONFLICT CAUSED BY ARMED GROUPS IN MARSABIT COUNTY

#### 4.0 Introduction

The chapter assesses the measures being used to reduce conflict caused by armed groups in Marsabit County. It reviews the empirical studies of OLF and its impact on socio-economic development.

#### 4.1 To assess the measures being used to reduce conflict caused by armed groups in Marsabit County

The sort of violence that Marsabit County inhabitants were concerned about was an inter-ethnic dispute. In July 2005, 60 people were massacred at the Turbi trade centre on the road connecting Marsabit and Moyale, including 22 children due to tribal animosity. According to Mwangi's allegation, 200 heavily armed fighters surrounded the centre in 2006 and fired bullets into the elementary school, killing eight pupils in their morning classes. Few administrative police officers and home guards sought to protect the residents until their ammunition ran out. During the incident, about 300 livestock were stolen. Soon afterwards, ten members of a church group in Bubisa, 80 kilometres away, were slashed and speared to death in vengeance for members of the tribe who were accused of the massacre.<sup>74</sup> The massacre was only one chapter of a conflict that had lasted at least since 2003 in Marsabit County. The wide speculation was that the OLF outfit was involved due manner it was executed and livestock was driven to neighbouring Ethiopia.

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<sup>74</sup> Mwangi, O.G. 'Kenya: Conflict in the "Badlands": The Turbi Massacre in Marsabit District', *Review of African Political Economy* 33.107: 81–91. (2006).

Subsequently, the government deployed security forces into the area and set up many security posts along the common border to counter OLF threats and protect the people. In addition, relative peace was also achieved from 2008 to 2013 through local leaders' tenacious efforts.<sup>75</sup>

#### **4.2 Traditional Leadership and Inter-Ethnic Conflict Resolution**

Processes of resolving the traditional dispute were an integral aspect of a social system that is time-tested, well-structured aiming at reconciliation, maintaining social connections and their enhancement. African peoples' customs and traditions profoundly influenced the methods, processes and rules. The significance and utility of those processes stemmed from their stated objective of "restoring equilibrium, settling the conflict and resolving disputes". Due to their informality, traditional practices were less intimidating. Additionally, they acclimated individuals to a familiar environment. Chiefs, elders, family leaders and others were accountable for not just settling conflicts, but also for preventing or intercepting them. Because the emphasis was on mending relationships and reconciling groups, group ties and rights anticipated likewise resolving or intercepting problems and were therefore as significant as individual ones.<sup>76</sup>

According to a report by the Kenya Human Rights Commission, in Africa, an active role is played by traditional leaders in traditional conflict resolution. In rural contexts, traditional leaders were responsible for decision-making and resolving minor difficulties. Three key reasons why traditional and informal justice were preferred by modern African states were discovered in a study on traditional leadership's function in Zimbabwe. The first was that, in rural areas, formal state justice was limited, not appropriate for resolving conflicts in rural areas it was a limited structure in most countries, leaving insufficient resources to deal with minor

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<sup>75</sup> Mwangi, O.G. 'Kenya: Conflict in the "Badlands": The Turbi Massacre in Marsabit District', *Review of African Political Economy* 33.107: 81–91. (2006)

<sup>76</sup> Bar-Tal, D. *Intractable conflicts: Socio-psychological foundations and dynamics*. Cambridge University Press. (2013).

criminal cases in rural areas. According to Tinashe, the traditional authority was critical in resolving community conflicts in rural Zimbabwe. The leaders were viewed as the traditional law's custodians, receiving the preponderance of cases involving violence of any kind, whether political, domestic or antisocial in origin. Elders seek assistance and notified authorities only when circumstances got serious. They appeared to lack, however, the strength and awareness necessary to effectively prevent and respond to violence.<sup>77</sup>

The traditional judicial system, which was presided over by traditional authorities throughout Africa and Zimbabwe in particular, was primarily concerned with restoring social peace and harmony. This was accomplished through the coordination of disputants and their supporters. The notion of reconciliation or re-establishment of peace had been seen to be central to the traditional African adjudication system.<sup>78</sup>

The Kenya Human Rights Commission asserted that traditional rulers played a critical role as mediators in violent conflict. Rather than punishment, the penalties were typically aimed at restoration or compensation in an attempt to restore the status quo. Additionally, in pre-colonial Africa, many societies' traditional leaders' forums assumed a higher adjudicatory role for serious transgressions, like witchcraft and murder, when a fatal penalty was considered. Otherwise, their role as leaders had been to reconcile conflicting groups and to foster an atmosphere conducive to resolving their disputes.<sup>79</sup>

According to the findings on the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution, the majority of respondents said that traditional leaders possessed the ability to foresee problems before they

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<sup>77</sup> Tinashe, R. Transforming post-conflict relationships via peace gardens in Masvingo, Zimbabwe (Doctoral dissertation) (2018).

<sup>78</sup> Melil, K. M. Understanding Cattle Rustling and The Role of Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanisms among the Tugen, Ilchamus and Pokot of Baringo County, 2000-2015 (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi). (2018).

<sup>79</sup> "Kenya Human Rights Commission. Outlawed Among Us. (2011)."

exploded. This was because when young men attacked the community, the elders enthusiastically encouraged them, while the women were eager to bless and congratulate the young men for a raid that is successful. This meant that the community's leaders were typically abreast of current events, planned raids and in case OLF was involved. Based on these capacities of the elders, they were severally facilitated to conduct inter-communal peace dialogue to resolve conflict as they had the power to put an end to the difficulties. Additionally, as elders were involved in all of the community's decisions, they had the obligation of making the best decision possible to ensure the resolution of ethnic conflicts. By making sound judgments in line with the cultural norms, the elders assume responsibility for ensuring that all community decisions were made to protect life and respect their neighbours. Any decision that could result in a conflict, such as organized raids or retribution, was re-evaluated by the elders to ensure that no conflict occurred. The majority of participants stated that when it comes to settling ethnic strife, traditional leaders could never be ignored from the equation. Traditional authorities in all communities have remarkably tried to establish lasting peace although varied dynamics continue to fuel conflict.<sup>80</sup>

Despite their relevance, the study established that the ability of communities in the county to use traditional peacebuilding means are 'being curtailed by modernisation, education (influencing the dynamics between elders and youth), the availability of firearms, and the commercialisation of the previously cultural practice of cattle rustling'. In addition, issues such as the proliferation of small arms, which span administrative and ethnic boundaries, cannot be effectively dealt with at the local level. However, there has been a lack of coordination and collaboration in peace and security between the local and national levels which limits the success of traditional mechanisms that often rely on government enforcement.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> "Kenya Human Rights Commission. Outlawed Among Us. (2011)."

<sup>81</sup> Gibbons, S. (2014). *Draft discussion brief: Towards peace and security in dryland Kenya: the demand for a new approach*. Pastoralist Parliamentary Group and Drylands Learning and Capacity Building Initiative for Improved Policy and Practice in the Horn of Africa.



### **4.3 Involvement of Women Group Leaders**

In contemporary societies, women leaders were also accountable for all significant choices affecting the community, including land, rites of passage, marriage and resource allocation.<sup>82</sup> They controlled the future of our villages and communities. Thus, if they decide that there would be no more attacks or clashes between groups that would become reality. Women Leaders can take initiative in transitioning communities away from the retrogressive cultural beliefs and behaviours that were lagging them behind in the twenty-first century. The research established that women's leadership in Marsabit County is committed to managing and ending conflict between communities.<sup>83</sup> The women's efforts were exhibited through peace meetings facilitated by various NGOs and peace ambassadors engaged in peace activities.

### **4.4 Youth Leaders' Engagement**

Youth members are a vital segment of society that can easily fuel confrontations. They were usually engaged in raids and all manner of tribal conflicts with the support of youth and community leaders. Those not involved in the conflict are considered weak and incapable of defending the community. With the level of pressure and incitement from leaders, it is nearly likely that the battle against interethnic conflict would never be won through any manner other than the decisions to engage youth and youth leadership in every community. It is believed that these clashes would become obsolete if community youth and youth leaders were encouraged to consider engagement in meaningful activities rather than conflicts<sup>84</sup>

Youth Leaders bore the responsibility and authority in societies in Marsabit County. They should strive to bind the people and ensure the social coexistence of the communities. The

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[http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/drought/docs/DRAFT\\_Peace%20and%20security%20brief\\_26%20Nov%202014.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/drought/docs/DRAFT_Peace%20and%20security%20brief_26%20Nov%202014.pdf)

<sup>82</sup> “MMARAU Institutional Repository. Role of Traditional Leadership Structures in Enhancing Inter-Ethnic Conflict Resolution in Laisamis Sub-County, Marsabit County, Kenya. 2021.

<http://ir-library.mmarau.ac.ke:8080/handle/123456789/11262?show=full>

<sup>83</sup> *ibid*

<sup>84</sup> *ibid*

youth have been advised to seek an alternative source of livelihood instead of engaging in vices through government programmes like Youth Funds, self-employment and advancement of education. Youth to desist from hate speech and incitement in public from or through the social media platform. Community leaders have also been challenged to support young people in changing their lifestyles and putting an end to the endless confrontations they are facing in life.<sup>85</sup> Such an effort will discourage the youth from even joining ragtag militias like OLF that fuel conflict in Marsabit County.

These attitudes implied that youth could choose to end interethnic violence, but that would require action on the part of the young people, who would make the conflict resolution process much easier in managing if they made the right choice and set aside their cultural beliefs. However, youth leaders felt that if they direct their energy and provide alternative ways of an individual's leadership ability and maturity besides conflict, the dispute would become outdated. This demonstrated the critical role of youth leaders in the entire inter-ethnic violence narrative in Marsabit County.<sup>86</sup>

#### **4.5 Civil and Religious Groups Actions**

While civic groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were commended for their anti-violence initiatives, where there was widespread distrust among regular Marsabit residents. Many people recognized the good impact of peace declarations negotiated by traditional leaders and backed by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This underlined their effectiveness in ending recurrent tribal violence. While the public was aware that certain NGOs had contributed to minimizing conflicts and avoiding one-time infractions from escalating into cycles of ethnic vengeance, they had also stated for some time that declarations cannot solve ethnic violence that began in towns due to political instigations.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> *ibid*

<sup>86</sup> *ibid*

<sup>87</sup> "Scott-Villiers, P.; BoruUngiti, H.; Kiyana, D.; Kullu, M.; Orto, T.; Reidy, E. and Sora, A. The Long

The numerous international NGOs in Marsabit were majorly sponsored by USAID and the European Union to carry out peace-building activities. Nevertheless, the local population had little understanding of what these organizations do although much faith that those projects could fix the basic problem. In collaboration with local leadership, NGOs usually called the public to a meeting where they were trained on sustaining peace through film depictions of the negative effects of violence. They also fund the local citizen efforts which are seen as having a tangible aim in bolstering peace in the County. NGOs were commended for their balanced approach to fostering peace dialogue and assisting victims of violence in their pursuit of justice.

<sup>88</sup> The research has established that the Non-Governmental organizations were actively undertaking peace-building and conflict resolution through peace workshops and events like Lake Turkana's annual Cultural event and ensuring basic socio-economic development to minimize competition for meagre resources.

The faith-based organization and religious leaders have also been committed to preaching coexisting in peace. They discussed the major underlying issues of the conflicts where communities seek the assistance of OLF and concluded that it had been brought in entirely by political completion as well as ownership of resource-based land. The religious leaders on numerous occasions convene a peace conference with Members of Parliament from Moyale, Marsabit North Horr, and Laisamis, as well as the county and National government leadership to resolve their disagreements and bring peace. Additionally, they selected one Gabra elder, four Borana elders, two Burji elders, and two Rendille elders, along with four Christian and four Muslim religious leaders to be in contact with the elected officials, monitor the situation and the communities.<sup>89</sup>

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Conversation: Customary Approaches to Peace Management in Northern Kenya and Southern Ethiopia, Future Agricultures Consortium Working Paper 22, Brighton: IDS (2011).”

<sup>88</sup> “Institute of Development Studies. Roots and Routes of Political Violence in Kenya’s Civil and Political Society: A Case Study of Marsabit County. 2014.

<https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/3963>”

<sup>89</sup> *ibid*

#### **4.6 Government Response to Conflict in Marsabit County**

Conflict fragmentation in Oromia has resulted in armed criminal syndicates gradual proliferation. Numerous armed smuggling syndicates operate on the Ethiopia-Kenya border. As a result, the Kenyan government is especially concerned with the probability of Oromia's severe schisms creating divisions within its own large Boran population's sub-groups. As such, the government through - the National Government Administrative Officers, the military and the Police - has made several efforts aimed at resolving the conflict and violence in the region.

In January 2014, two years after the Moyale clashes began and ten months after elections and the ensuing tension, Kenya's President, Uhuru Kenyatta, denounced Marsabit's political leaders of all stripes for failing to resolve the Moyale clashes and ordered security agencies to beef up security. The president stated that it was his responsibility to keep the country safe and further directed that the negotiations were the final opportunity that the government was offering Marsabit's leaders to resolve the problem, noting that the leaders could not continue bickering while residents continued to perish. As a result, they established an office and a secretariat to assist the County leadership during the negotiations.

Despite the president's denunciation, inhabitants of Marsabit feared that local officials were doing too little to curb violence. Rather than viewing local governments as institutions capable of resolving conflict, it appeared as though residents believed they were entangled in it. They argued that "the new decentralized county government strikes a balance between the governor's and county assembly's authority on the one hand and the centrally managed administration represented by chiefs, Sub County Administrators and County Commissioners on the other." This has necessitated a considerable power struggle between the county commissioner and the governor.

The government has also responded to the high levels of communal violence by proposing and embarking on a disarmament campaign in rural areas, alongside deploying the paramilitary

General Service Unit (GSU) to areas affected by sharp spikes in communal violence. Ruteere and Pommerole demonstrated how Kenyans viewed the police as a tool for maintaining law and order and defending specific groups' and individuals' rights. This perspective dated back to the colonial era when the police service is an extension of the government and they are mandated to bolster security across the country.

The people of Marsabit County in particular Saku Constituency have disapproved of the government's use of police in countering OLF challenges. Although conducting a hunt for killers, by all accounts, they rarely succeeded in apprehending the perpetrators, and their efforts were frequently sporadic. On the other hand, it was reported that raiders typically carry sophisticated weapons, whilst police forces were frequently under-armed and under-equipped. Additionally, the cops faced accusations of corruption. According to some, they sold 'protection' in addition to weapons to those willing to buy.

However, the Kenya Police Service has made a tremendous effort to quell the perennial insecurity problem in the county since 2006. The government has enhanced security along the common border by setting up border security posts for Rapid Border Response Unit (RBRU) in areas like Forole and Dukana. Additionally, the government help was credible as severally the offenders were arrested and taken to court. This will make communities satisfied and vengeance would be rare.<sup>90</sup>

The police also engage in gun battles severally with the cattle rustlers and successfully recovered stolen livestock. For example, on 06 November 2021, the Kenya Police were able to recover 324 goats and sheep that were stolen in Saku Sub-County. Similarly, when livestock was taken, the police gave the perpetrators' community and leadership an ultimatum to recover the animals. This order was followed through.

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<sup>90</sup> "Institute of Development Studies. Roots and Routes of Political Violence in Kenya's Civil and Political Society: A Case Study of Marsabit County. 2014.  
[https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/3963.](https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/3963)"

Another action of the police was the deployment of the local home guards. Local communities usually select house guards as they were more widely trusted to respond swiftly and effectively. The home guards played a key role in monitoring some of the most hazardous and hot spots areas to mitigate conflicts. They, however, had limited authority and were regularly accused of fueling strife by protecting only members of their community. There were cases where since the public did not feel protected by the government, they had taken matters into their own hands, enlisting the assistance of police reservists and vigilante groups. Due to this involvement, the government directed all home guards to surrender their guns and bullets for fresh vetting to ease in mop-up of illegal firearms as a way of ending ethnic feuds in the county.<sup>91</sup>

The police had some discretion in enforcing the law at all levels. While police personnel were state actors, they also had distinct identities that shaped how they exercised their authority. Some quarters of the respondents felt that the state security and judicial systems had failed to adequately handle the issue of conflict and assassination in Marsabit County. People adapted to violence as a result of their loss of faith in formal security institutions as women and children avoided venturing out and few home guards monitored some areas.<sup>92</sup>

Despite the challenges, the study established that since the beginning of conflicts in the county, the government has made profound efforts to curb the menace. Among the major strategies adopted by the government are the security force operations in the county to flush out the remnant of the OLF outfit as they committed many atrocities not just against the local people but also against local leaders and security forces. Various inter agencies' peace meetings and

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<sup>91</sup> "Institute of Development Studies. Roots and Routes of Political Violence in Kenya's Civil and Political Society: A Case Study of Marsabit County. 2014. <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/3963>"

<sup>92</sup> "Ruteere, M. 'More Than Political Tools: The Police and Post-Election Violence in Kenya', African Security Review 20.4: 11–20. (2011)."

caravans were organized severally by the government by bringing together leaders at all levels, faith-based organizations and social workers as determination to establish lasting peace.

Additionally, the government security machinery responds promptly to flare-ups and apprehends suspected criminals to be arraigned in court.<sup>93</sup> The government was concerned about the resident of the county and ensured the deployment of an adequate security force and also disarmed the local home guards as they were perceived to engage in crime using government weapons. All these efforts were geared toward curtailing the involvement of OLF in the inter-ethnic conflict in Marsabit County.

However, there are doubts that the government's efforts of using security apparatus could mitigate the violence in Marsabit, especially as similar schemes have not worked well elsewhere. In addition, the approach neglects the political dimensions of the problem, while poor infrastructure and poorly motivated police and security forces make policing and securing areas difficult. Moreover, the response to persistent violence in Marsabit is often very late and the effect of the violence is already great.<sup>94</sup>

Besides disarmament, the government has also focused on peacebuilding from below; involving communities in maintaining and negotiating peace. However, Gibbons argues that there needs to be a greater emphasis on the responsibilities of the state and political leadership.<sup>97</sup>

Furthermore, the literature suggests that Kenya's vulnerability to violence is worsened by the reactions of government officials to a series of attacks. Kenya's systems of violence are fed into the interconnectedness of internal and external stresses. However, the state ignores this interconnectedness and pursues a decidedly partisan and divisive approach that is likely to generate further violence rather than strengthen security and stability.<sup>95</sup> Thus, the government

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<sup>93</sup> MMARAU Institutional Repository, op cit.

<sup>94</sup> Scott-Villers, P., Ondicho, et al. (2014), 2-31. <sup>97</sup> Gibbons, 2014, pp. 2-3.

<sup>95</sup> Lind, J., Mutahi, P., & Oosterom, M. (2015). *Tangled ties: Al-Shabaab and political volatility in Kenya* (IDS Evidence Report N. 130, Addressing and Mitigating Violence). Brighton: IDS.

through the police has fuelled an unseemly politicisation of worsening violent insecurity that is undercutting effective efforts to address the problem. This politicisation has involved blaming the opposition for attacks, scapegoating certain ethnic and religious groups, and stoking long-standing divisions.<sup>96</sup>

#### **4.7 Role of Regional and International Community in the Resolution of Conflict in Marsabit County**

Regional politics are among the factors in the conflict between armed groups in Marsabit County. Respondents, for example, stated that neighbouring Ethiopian politics influence local politics. The Oromo in Ethiopia are allies of Borana in Kenya and any attack on other communities is usually considered assisted by their kin.

Thus, conflict in Marsabit County has been internationalized by the porous borders between Kenya and Ethiopia. These conflicts have affected the Oromo in southern Ethiopia with a majority of them crossing the border to Kenya to seek safe havens. This increased cross-border movement of an armed group has intensified conflicts on the Kenyan side of Marsabit County where the Borana and the incoming Oromo team up to conduct raids on other communities in the county and beyond.

The Ethiopian government is constantly wary of the Oromo Liberation Front, because of its advocacy for the people of Oromo's self-determination in the face of what they call Federal Government rule. The Boran in Kenya is occasionally suspected of harbouring fighters since the OLF struggles against the government of Ethiopia. This has also caused friction between Gabra and Boran since OLF raids Gabra.

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[http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/6018/ER130\\_TangledTiesAl-ShabaabandPoliticalVolatilityinKenya.pdf?sequence=5](http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/6018/ER130_TangledTiesAl-ShabaabandPoliticalVolatilityinKenya.pdf?sequence=5)

<sup>96</sup> Lind et al., 2015, pp. 34-5



#### 4.8 Intervention of the International Community in Marsabit County Conflict

The international community plays a variety of roles in addressing conflict in Marsabit and pastoral communities in general. For instance, it initiated a multifaceted peace-building effort in the lead-up to the 2013 and 2017 elections. This included promoting peace messaging and providing media and basic mediation training among other activities.<sup>97</sup> In addition, they applied considerable pressure to ensure the implementation of constitutional reforms to mitigate the risk of a recurrence of violence. The international and local peace movements ‘eased tensions in the lead-up to the election and empowered groups to feel less threatened by each other.’<sup>98</sup>

The UN strategy to ensure stability in Northern Kenya has focused on three strategic areas which are governance and human rights, empowerment of poor and vulnerable populations and sustainable and equitable economic growth with peace and reconciliation as cross-cutting issues.<sup>99</sup> This international support has enabled the Kenyan government to put in place multiple bureaucracies, such as the County Peace Forum, Sub-County Peace Committees, Divisional Peace Committees (DvPCs), and Location Peace Committees (LPCs), to better manage conflict-inducing social cleavages. The conflict prevention efforts are coordinated by the National Steering Committee (NSC) on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management and involve large investments in new technology, early warning systems, and capacity-building programs for the country’s peace infrastructure.<sup>100</sup> The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) has also emerged as the principal formal bureaucratic institution at the

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<sup>97</sup> Elder, C., Stigant, S., & Claes, J. (2014). *Elections and violent conflict in Kenya: Making prevention stick*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace. <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/PW101-Elections-and-Violent-Conflict-in-Kenya-Making-Prevention-Stick.pdf>

<sup>98</sup> Halakhe, A. B. (2013). ‘R2P in practice’: *Ethnic violence, elections and atrocity prevention in Kenya* (Occasional Paper Series N. 4). Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. [http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/kenya\\_occasionalpaper\\_web.pdf](http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/kenya_occasionalpaper_web.pdf)

<sup>99</sup> Cox, F. D., Orsborn, C. R., & Sisk, T. D. (2014). *Religion, peacebuilding, and social cohesion in conflict-affected countries*. University of Denver.

[http://www.du.edu/korbel/sie/media/documents/faculty\\_pubs/sisk/religion-and-social-cohesionreports/kenya.pdf](http://www.du.edu/korbel/sie/media/documents/faculty_pubs/sisk/religion-and-social-cohesionreports/kenya.pdf)

<sup>100</sup> Elder et al, 2014, p. 5.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, p. 13

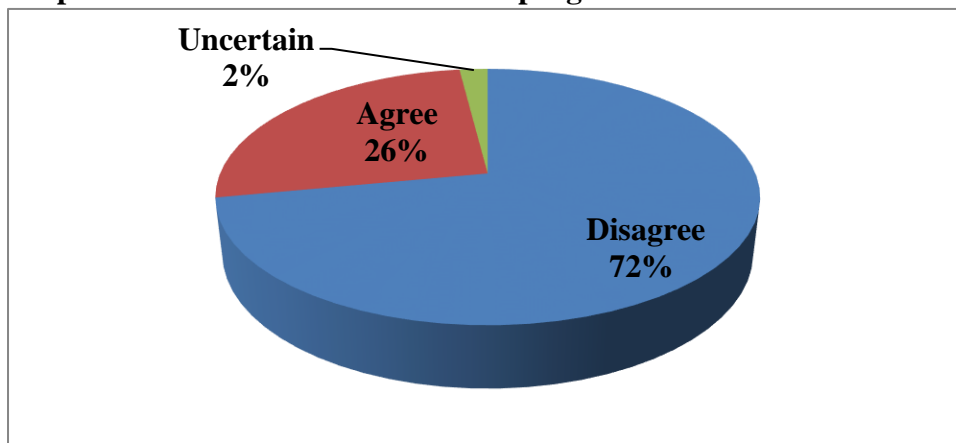
helm of nationwide efforts to change inter-ethnic group attitudes in Kenya and construct a more cohesive, peaceful national identity.

However, the international community has also been criticised for suppressing dissenting opinions and ignoring lingering grievances in favour of the short-term prevention of mass violence.<sup>104</sup>

#### **4.9 Research findings on the measures being used to reduce conflict caused by armed groups in Marsabit County**

From the findings of the study, 72% of the respondent indicated that the government disarmament program has not been effective in ensuring that individuals voluntarily submit their weapons to security authorities. This is particularly so because of a lack of trust in the government's ability and willingness to protect the disarmed locals. However, 26% of the respondents agreed that in some instances, government disarmament programs have been effective. 2% of the respondents expressed uncertainty about the effectiveness of government efforts towards disarming groups in the county. This information is represented below.

**Graph 4.1 Government disarmament programs have been effective in Marsabit County**

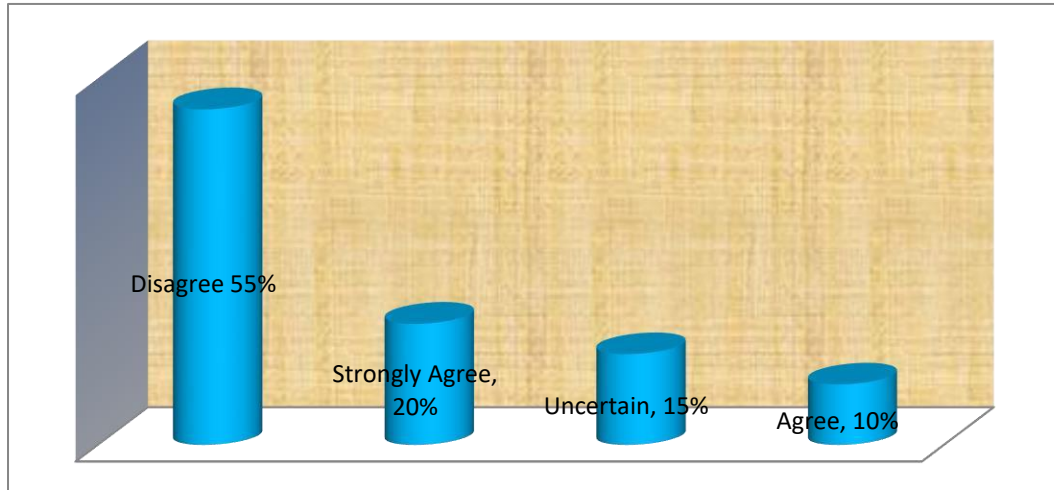


**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

20% of respondents Strongly Agree that community policing is effective in curbing conflict in Marsabit County. 10% of the respondents Agree while 55% Disagree. 15% of the respondents were uncertain of the effectiveness of community policing in curbing conflict in the county.

The pie chart below gives a summary of the respondents.

**Graph 4.2: Is Community policing effective in curbing conflict in Marsabit County?**

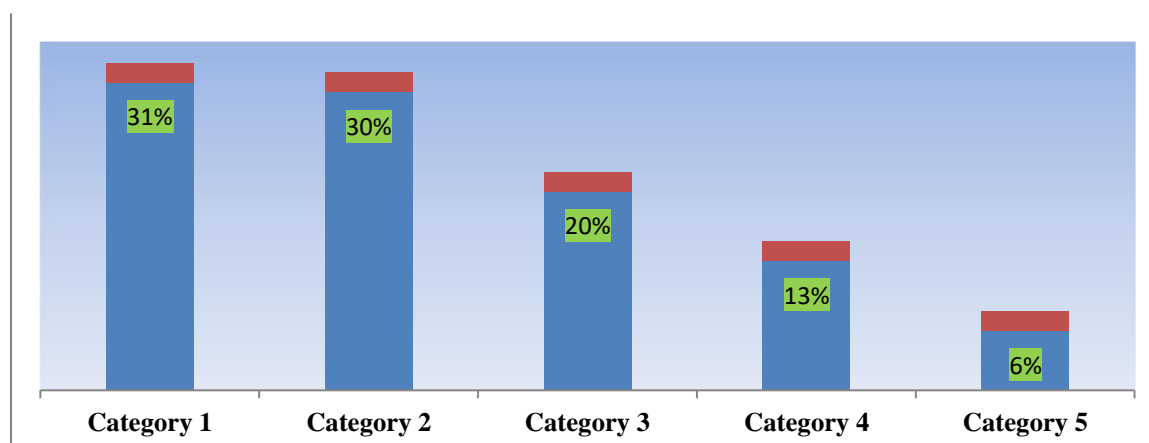


**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

Furthermore, 86% of the respondents strongly agree that there are conflict resolution mechanisms at most levels in the communities within the county. 1% of the respondents disagreed with this statement while 13% were uncertain of the existence or lack of conflict resolution mechanisms in the county. These are probably newcomers in the county who lack an understanding of the conflict and conflict resolution in the county.

Lastly, from the study, 13% of respondents strongly agreed that the government is participating proactively in conflict management in the county, while 20% agreed. 31% strongly disagreed while 30% disagree. 6% of the respondents were uncertain. These responses are represented in the pie chart below.

**Graph 4.3 government is participating proactively in conflict management in Marsabit County**



**Source:** Research field data, 2022.

In graph 4.3 above, Category 1 represents respondents who Strongly Disagree with the statement that the government is participating proactively in conflict management in Marsabit County. Category 2 represents those who Disagree; Category 3 represents those who Agree; Category 4 is for those who Strongly Agree while category 5 is for those Uncertain.

From the general discussion gathered after engaging with elders and other leaders, this study established that there are many cases of violence that the inhabitants of Marsabit County have faced in the last twenty years. For instance, 60 people were massacred at the Turbi trade centre. 300 animals were also stolen during the conflict. Ten more people were also massacred around the same time in Bubisa in retaliation. These massacres tell just a part of a story of a conflict that had lasted in the area since 2003. The belief was that the OLF outfit was involved due to the manner of the execution and because stolen livestock was driven to neighbouring Ethiopia. The severity of the conflict has necessitated the adoption of several methods in an attempt to reduce conflicts and their impact on the residents of the county. These methods are both formal as well as traditional.

The study found that in Africa, traditional leaders play an active role in conflict resolution. In rural contexts, the leaders are responsible for decision-making and resolving minor difficulties. There are several reasons why traditional and informal justice is preferred by modern African states. These include the fact that in rural areas, formal state justice is limited. The traditional authority is critical in resolving community conflicts in rural Africa as the leaders are viewed as the traditional law's custodians. The elders, however, lack the strength or support necessary to effectively prevent and respond to violence.

The study established that in Marsabit, traditional leaders possess the ability to foresee problems before they occur. Based on this, the elders are involved in facilitating intercommunal peace dialogue to resolve conflicts. Traditional leaders in all communities in the county have tried to establish lasting peace though they have not been able to achieve that fully.

At the local level, there is also community policing that has been busy for years trying to establish criminal elements in the county. Despite their efforts, they have not been very effective due to strong ethnic ties in the area.

Besides elders, women groups are also involved in peacemaking and conflict resolution in the county. The study established that women leaders in Marsabit are committed to managing and ending conflict between communities through peace meetings facilitated by various NGOs and peace ambassadors engaged in peace activities. Youths are also involved in peace settlements in the county. Since they are the ones most involved in conducting raids and conflicts in the area, they are also involved in ending the violence.

Apart from traditional structures, the youth and women groups, conflict resolution efforts in the county are also and majorly spearheaded by the government. Since the beginning of the Marsabit County conflict, the government has made profound efforts to curb the menace. The government has and is proactively participating in conflict management through disarmament programs.

Among the major strategies adopted by the government beyond disarmament include the use of security force operations to flush out OLF members. The government has also organized various inter-agencies peace meetings and caravans bringing together leaders at all levels, faithbased organizations and social workers as determined to establish lasting peace. The government has also repeatedly beefed up security by increasing the number of police in the county. These efforts often reduce conflict cases though only for a short while. The findings, therefore, indicate that more efforts are needed to redress the conflict situation in the county once and for all.

#### **4.9 Chapter summary**

This chapter aimed to examine the measures being used to reduce conflict caused by armed groups in Marsabit County. The findings reveal that intertribal conflicts have gripped the county for decades. The conflicts result in massive deaths and destruction or looting of property necessitating the adoption of measures to resolve them. The measures used are both formal and informal. In informal cases, elders are used to negotiating peace in the communities. In formal cases, the government is involved in the resolution of the conflict through the deployment of security personnel.

The findings generated from the study also established that the youth, women and civil societies play a crucial role in conflict resolution efforts in the county. Despite these efforts, the conflict still rages on. This means more efforts are necessary to bring the root causes of the conflict to an end.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the objectives of the research.

#### 5.1 Summary

##### 5.1.1 Analyze the state of socio-economic development in Marsabit County

The economic upgrade is a political notion and undertaking that cannot be divorced from statesociety policies. Advancement in socioeconomic terms comprises a change in people's lifestyles as a result of improved education, incomes, skill development and employment. Each social network will confront its own set of economic development obstacles. Economic growth affects human outcomes, but so does the allocation of resources. Marsabit County's HDI was 0.348 in 2020, compared to a national HDI of 0.520.

This indicated that the county had a substantially lower HDI score than the national average. The entire area devoted to food and cash crops cultivation is 5,060 acres. Fruit trees are cultivated largely for domestic consumption and local market sale. The county's average farm size is 1.0 hectares, with title deed farms accounting for approximately 2% of the total. The county lacks established agricultural products processing factories/refineries, making it difficult to add value to and process agricultural and livestock products.

The county does not have a railroad. Infrastructure available includes roads and airstrips, Information, communication and technology infrastructures like mobile phone services were available in all major towns and many rural areas of Marsabit County. There is low energy access since people relied heavily on wood fuel for cooking and lighting, with kerosene used mostly for illumination. Only Marsabit, Moyale, Sololo and Laisamis towns have power while the rest rely on diesel generators and solar energy.

A spatial plan and a national land-use policy's absence have facilitated the expansion of informal settlements and inter-tribal conflict. The transition from pastoral to sedentary lifestyles had placed pressure on available grazing areas. The county's settlement patterns were spread and scattered, largely dictated by water availability, land productivity and other services like security. Urban planning was crucial for long-term urban growth in the county's rising urban areas. LAPPSET Project spans southern Ethiopia and South Sudan from Lamu Port through Marsabit County and is expected to enhance socio-economic development in the region. The labour force comprises 49.1 per cent of the country's population. It was necessary to enhance labour force skills and increase youth employability. Loans and grants to youth and women's organizations are used to promote small and medium-sized businesses.

There was a dearth of information on prospective mining locations in Marsabit County. Geological surveys were necessary to ascertain the exact extent of mineral deposits. Part-time petroleum exploration was also conducted in Maikona, Laisamis and Kargi areas. There was a connection between the political framework and monetary development. Keizer calls attention to the effect that property rights are not likewise ensured for all communities. The insufficiency of policy on the Pastoralist Development Program in Kenya had contributed to the wider underdevelopment found in the locale along these lines.

### **5.1.2 Impact of OLF on the socio-economic development in Marsabit County**

Education and health sectors greatly suffered when there was conflict, as schools were closed and health services were disrupted. Interethnic rivalry enhanced the rate of school dropouts, particularly among youths/children due to the displacement of their parents. The conflicts associated with the OLF militia also affected the deployment of civil servants like teachers due to fear for their lives. Insecurity and worry had a substantial impact on food production, particularly at the household level. Conflicts also suffocated the livestock trade by forcibly



closing marketplaces. The presence of violence affected agricultural production, as it forced farmers to leave their farms during times of war.

Interethnic tensions had resulted in low food production as a result of dispossessed communities' fields being neglected. Between 2017 and 2019, raids between communities resulted in the loss of approximately 10,000 livestock. A single attack could annihilate a family's whole livelihood and riches. The general insecurity had negative implications on scarce resources, critical infrastructure and investment.

### **5.1.3 Assess measures being used to reduce conflict caused by armed groups in Marsabit County**

In response to deadly attacks like the 2005 massacre at Turbi which is on the road connecting Moyale and Marsabit where several people were killed including 22 children, the government conducted a security operation to flush out the OLF militia group from its hideout in Kenya and deployed security forces along the common border to counter OLF threats and protect the people.

Traditional leaders as the custodians of traditional law and customs in the communities have elaborately tried to end the conflict among societies. Traditional leaders were primarily concerned with restoring social peace and harmony. Traditional elders' peace meeting was severally organized to have amicable solutions to the animosity although marred by various challenges. The study confirms that the traditional authorities in all communities have remarkably tried to establish lasting peace although varied dynamics continue to fuel conflict.

Women Leaders have through their capacity started transitioning communities away from the retrogressive cultural beliefs which were seen as a catalyst for conflicts. The women's efforts were exhibited through peace meetings and workshops with the support of private initiatives and various NGOs as peace ambassadors.

Youth have also been encouraged to bind the people and ensure the social coexistence of the communities. The youth have been advised to seek an alternative source of livelihood instead of engaging in vices that fuel conflicts. There was an effort to also discourage youth from the joining ragtag OLF militia.

There was the establishment of the office and secretariat by the national government to assist the County leadership in negotiations to resolve the conflicts. Inter agencies peace meetings to bring together leaders at all levels, faith-based organizations and social workers as determined to establish lasting peace.

The government security apparatus responds timely to any attacks and apprehend suspected criminals to maintain law and order. Data indicate that adequate home guards were deployed to mitigate the conflicts although recently directed to give back their weapons and bullets for verification.

The research has established that the Non-Governmental organizations were vigorously undertaking peace-building and conflict resolution to curb the inter-ethnic conflict associated with OLF. The faith-based organization and religious leaders have also been committed to preaching coexisting peace by analyzing the underlying issues and making appropriate recommendations.

Community leaders in Marsabit County have been tasked to end the interethnic conflict. The youth also felt that if their leaders could properly direct their energy and provide alternative measures of a person's maturity besides conflict, combat would become outdated.

The people resorted to perennial violence as a result of their loss of faith in formal institutions. Peace declarations negotiated by traditional leaders and backed by the government failed to end recurrent political violence. While it was able to reduce the amount of violence, it has not adequately addressed the root cause of the conflicts. Further, the local politics have not only promoted violence but also stymied citizen-led peace initiatives.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

According to the study, the majority of respondents were fully aware of the factors that contributed to inter-ethnic violence in the area. Concerns about land and antagonism were cited as important sources of conflict among Marsabit county's communities, with pasture and water topping the list. In addition, political incitement for political dominance and engagement of OLF by some communities to outdo each other was also a major cause of the rift in the County. Leadership was critical in resolving conflicts between pastoral groups in northern Kenya, in particular, Marsabit County according to the literature. According to this research, Marsabit County has low socio-economic development and this has been a contributing factor in the conflicts.

Pastoralists and other communities with limited natural resources often agree on how to share those resources appropriately during the dry seasons. Before the villages began moving their livestock in search of pasture, it was observed that the elders from both communities gathered to discuss the logistics of the migration and reached an agreement on how to share water and pasture. These dialogues have been tremendously effective in minimizing friction between different communities in the County. However, their success had been entirely dependent on the leadership of the communities, which played a critical role in the settlement process. It was observed that the leadership structure in this community encompasses not only the administrative leadership of the chief, assistant chiefs, village elders, legislators, and other administrators but also young individuals selected as leaders by their age group as well as women leaders. The age group was critical to the community leadership structure, and was constantly active in discussions, as they were the ones who fought to fulfil their egos and demonstrate their strength and authority among the residents of Marsabit county's several towns. It was evident the government has placed various strategies to have lasting peace in Marsabit County and eliminate the threat of external militia.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, this study recommends that the multiple causes of the conflict in the county, the solution effort must incorporate advantageous concepts of political, social and legal connotations. While the already implemented measures have not borne much fruit, it is a good move to pursue the adopted policies to bolster security in greater Marsabit County.

Based on the Kenya Constitution, the government should protect against internal and external threats to Marsabit people against OLF threats and secure their properties. This calls for the elimination of this group from Kenya's territory through security operations and denying them support as well as a haven. To achieve this, both the national and county governments must examine the factors that make the group get support from a certain section of the Borana community. Those factors must then be eliminated through consultation with the local community elders.

Efforts should be made to redress regional inequalities and historic marginalisation by following the moral intent of Kenya's 2010 Constitution and sincerely implementing its provisions to devolve powers and resources to new sub-national county governments.

Mobilising political support for the security sector and policing reforms that aim to reign in abusive, predatory and corrupt practices as well as to promote accountability to a citizenry in need of protection. This could include fast-tracking security sector reforms, making sure that police are properly equipped and motivated and facilitating the movement of police vehicles by improving infrastructure in affected areas, addressing corruption, and sensitising the public on national cohesion in the affected areas.

The proliferation of ammunition, light weapons and small arms must be stemmed in the county. Similarly, the local populations should also be disarmed. This will assist in reducing hostilities among the communities. The commitment of state machinery to this duty should be done

impartially to regain the confidence of the public. Moreover, both national and county governments need to develop and service delivery plan to improve the socio-economic aspect of the people in Marsabit County to make them receptive to government policies like disarmament. This will also minimise the resource-based competition which leads to conflicts.

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## APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions (tick where necessary)

1. Gender (Please tick one)

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Age bracket (Please tick one)

18-34 Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
35-44 Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
45-54 Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
More than 55 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Level of Education (Please tick your highest education level)

Primary School Level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secondary School Level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Higher than Secondary School Level	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. How long have you worked for your organization? (Please tick one)

Less than 5 Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
5– 10 Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
11– 15 Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Above 15 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

**SECTION B: Socio- Economic factors in Marsabit**

Kindly indicate your level of agreement with the questions below. Tick appropriately on a scale of 1-5. 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Uncertain, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Is the quality health care of the area good					
The roads to the nearest towns are accessible					
The poverty level of the area is high					
Clean water is available to all					

**SECTION C: Armed Conflict conditions and its effects**

Kindly indicate your level of agreement with the following questions below. Tick appropriately on a scale of 1-5. 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Uncertain, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
The police station is near					
The police take their time before responding					
People use weapons such as guns to protect themselves					
The weapons are available for purchase within Marsabit County					
The armed conflict is because of the scarcity of resources for the community in Marsabit County					
Oromo Liberation Front militias are involved in Marsabit conflicts.					

**SECTION D: Measures and strategies being taken to reduce OLF conflict**

Kindly indicate your level of agreement with the following questions below. Tick appropriately on a scale of 1-5. 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Uncertain, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree

<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Has the government disarmament programme been effective in ensuring that individuals voluntarily submit the weapons					
Is community policing effective					
There is a conflict resolution mechanism					
The government is participating proactively in conflict management					



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