



Nomadic

Pastoralism and

Everyday Peace

Key Evidence and
Lessons for Peacebuilding
and Conflict Mitigation from
Kenya's Turkana North

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RESOLVE
NETWORK

RESOLVE Network Research Report

Local Approaches to Peacebuilding in Sub-Saharan Africa Series

First published July 2024

The RESOLVE Network
Housed at the United States Institute of Peace
2301 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

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This publication and the research supporting it were produced with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Africa Bureau. No compensation was paid by USAID to any foreign government department or entities for the production of this research.

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<https://doi.org/10.37805/lpbi2024.2>

ABOUT THE REPORT

This research report is a case study on local peace practices within pastoralist communities in Kenya’s Turkana North (a subcounty of Kenya’s Turkana County). While significant existing research and analysis has focused on the concern that pastoralist communities across the African continent may contribute to growing violent conflict—and in particular to violent extremism—this report instead situates these communities within the theoretical framework of “everyday peace.” This framework centers on understanding the myriad ways in which ordinary people in conflict-affected contexts engage in small acts of peace and forge pro-social relationships that contribute to peace and stability within their communities. This report explores these everyday practices of peace within pastoralist communities in Kenya’s Turkana County, and Turkana North subcounty, a borderland territory that connects Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Uganda with a long history of conflict around inter-clan livestock raiding and cross-border movement/land access.

Informed by a multi-method research methodology that included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, historical profiling, transect walks, and non-participant observational data collected in August 2022, the findings from this study highlight both the existing local systems and resources for peacebuilding and conflict mitigation in pastoralist communities in Turkana, as well as the stressors and challenges that affect them. Lessons from this research contribute to our broader understanding of how policymakers and practitioners can work to better assess and coordinate violence prevention and reduction efforts in light of specific pastoralist needs and everyday practices of peace, particularly in areas impacted by violent conflict and/or violent extremism where pastoralist communities exist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank the team at Agency for Cross Border Pastoralists Development (APAD), led by the Executive Director, for their time and expertise to this research; Mr. Achegei Abdi Adan, the Kibish sub-county peacebuilding officer, who provided a better understanding of locale and the everyday community interactions; the local community and the rest of the respondents who willingly granted interviews and gave insightful information. Sincere gratitude goes to Miss Rachel Sullivan, Dr. Brandon Kendhammer, and members of the RESOLVE Network at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) for their patient and precision-guided advice that refined the study's argument. The author would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for providing invaluable feedback.

RESOLVE would additionally like to thank the peer reviewers of this report for providing invaluable feedback and members of the RESOLVE Network Secretariat who contributed to the report's development, editorial, and research management, including senior program officer Kateira Aryaeinejad, program officer Rachel Sullivan, senior program specialist Chris Sfetsios, and senior research advisor Dr. Brandon Kendhammer. Finally, RESOLVE would like to thank the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Africa Bureau for its generous and longstanding support for this report and RESOLVE's research initiative on Learning from Local Peacebuilding Approaches in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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ACRONYMS

APAD:	Agency for Pastoralist Development
APN:	African Peacebuilding Network
CRBM:	Campagna per la Riforma della Banca Mondiale
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FGDs:	Focus Group Discussions
IBLI:	Index-Based Livestock Insurance
IUCN:	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LAPSSET:	Lamu Port and South Sudan Ethiopia Transport
LPCs:	Local Peace Committees
NGO:	Non-governmental Organization
NPR:	National Police Reservists
SALW:	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SSRC:	Social Science Research Council
UNEP:	United Nations Environment Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past twenty years, tensions around the cultural and economic practices of pastoralism have become an increasingly discussed source of conflict across a wide stretch of the African continent, spanning the Sahel, Sudan, and Horn regions. Pastoralist ways of life face unprecedented pressure from “macro-economic and ecological changes, a crisis in the governance and security of remote rangelands, and social and political divisions.”¹ As a result, pastoralists are often scapegoated by politicians and security actors as uniquely prone to violent conflict, a risk to peace and order in the spaces they share. This narrative is simplistic and ignores the important impact, contributions to sustainable development, and role in local, bottom-up initiatives to build and maintain peace that pastoralist communities play within broader state and regional structures. New research is emerging to help us better understand the local complexities of conflict drivers and the possibilities of peacebuilding among pastoralists and those with whom they clash.² However, frameworks and approaches to pastoralism that focus on understanding and supporting existing practices of peace can help local, national, regional, and international actors support long-term violence reduction and resiliency within and around these communities, with particular emphasis on exploiting the peace resources they already possess.

This is particularly important given the increased prevalence of terrorism and violent extremism in areas across the broader Sahara and Sahel where pastoralist communities also exist. Approaches in the past have at times, either equated or categorized conflict and violence with and across pastoralist communities as violent extremism, and even suggested an increased susceptibility among pastoralist communities to recruitment in violent extremist and terrorist groups. These approaches, again, are not only simplistic, but at best fail to understand the sheer diversity of pastoralist communities and the peacebuilding roles

1 Mike Jobbins and Andrew McDonnell, *Pastoralism and Conflict: Tools for Prevention and Response in the Sudano-Sahel*, 1st ed. (Washington, DC: Search for Common Ground, 2021), 16.

2 See, for instance, the collection of research on pastoralism and conflict summarized by Mary Boatemaa Setrana and Patience Adzande, “Farmer-Pastoralist Interactions and Resource-Based Conflicts in Africa: Drivers, Actors, and Pathways to Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding,” *African Studies Review* 65 no. 2 (2022): 399–403.

they can play, even in times of violence and conflict. At worst, such approaches risk only further stigmatizing and marginalizing pastoralist populations, aggravating local conflict dynamics and undermining shared violence prevention goals.

In line with the RESOLVE Network’s ongoing research-based efforts to better understand and more clearly articulate the meaning and value of “local” engagement in peacebuilding and P/CVE,³ this report attempts to fill this gap by examining the existing local systems and resources available for peacebuilding and conflict mitigation within pastoralist communities through a case study focused specifically on pastoralist communities in Kenya’s northern Turkana region. Northern Turkana is a borderland territory that connects Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Uganda, with a long history of conflict around inter-clan livestock raiding and cross-border movement/land access. This area provides an interesting case study for consideration in contexts impacted by violence, conflict, and complex transborder dynamics. While the northern Turkana region was not known to be impacted by terrorism or violent extremism at the time of writing nor at the time of the research, the case study provides important insight into potential avenues for prevention in contexts that are impacted by such violence. The local dynamics of the Turkana region will inevitably differ from those elsewhere. Still, the author hopes that this analytic and methodological approach will offer new avenues and opportunities for researchers and peacebuilders to better conceptualize, understand, and approach sources of both peace and conflict in pastoralist communities across the continent.

This report situates itself within the theoretical framework of “everyday peace.” The notion of everyday peace centers on how ordinary people forge “pro-social relationships” and engage in other routinized “small acts of peace” in order to “navigate through life in societies affected by violent conflict.”⁴ Drawing on original fieldwork undertaken in the northern Turkana region in August 2022, key findings and considerations based on this research, as detailed in this report, include the following:

1. Although pastoralists in Turkana are faced with many conflict drivers and challenges, they also participate in practices that enable peace and are capable of turning the tide of protracted conflicts that have long

³ See Brandon Kendhammer and Wyatt Chandler, *Locating the “Local” in Peacebuilding*, (Washington, DC: RESOLVE Network, 2021).

⁴ Roger Mac Ginty, *Everyday Peace: How So-Called Ordinary People Can Disrupt Violent Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 2.

bedeviled the area. As they do so, they are uniquely harnessing the many small-scale “hyperlocal” activities that help them to navigate their daily lives in order to avoid conflict and maintain peace with their neighboring communities. However, this is not to say that these resources of everyday peace-making are always successful or sufficient to address the conflict drivers that often exist in and across these communities.

2. Everyday practices—including local trade, sharing of resources including water and pastureland, intercommunal relationships and networks, and traditional cultural events and ceremonies—can each function as key activities fostering everyday peace within northern Turkana pastoralists and surrounding communities. These practices enable the establishment of intercommunal connections and communications and social and resource sharing in areas experiencing scarcity and episodic, ongoing conflict. In doing so, they function as important sources of continued communication and mutual support necessary to sustain peace.

3. There are important challenges to maintaining these everyday practices of peace. While various governmental and nongovernmental resources are at times available within the region, issues including drought, changes in the natural environment, and continued acts of banditry and related violence impact many of these sources of everyday peace. Changes in climate, in particular, significantly impact local livelihoods, resources, and conflict/peace dynamics given the centrality of livestock (and therefore water and pasture) to pastoralist lifestyles and wealth in northern Turkana.

4. Instead of simply imagining pastoralist communities as inevitable sites of conflict, there is an opportunity for policymakers and implementers to examine, inventory, and analyze the resources that communities already rely on to prevent or mitigate conflict, and to consider how national, regional, and international initiatives might best build on and support these existing resources. This is true in both northern Turkana and potentially other contexts experiencing similar dynamics. Lessons from this research suggest that, in areas impacted by violent extremism and terrorism where pastoralist communities exist, policymakers and practitioners should consider opportunities to better understand and coordinate peacebuilding and conflict mitigation efforts in light of specific pastoralist needs and everyday practices of peace.

INTRODUCTION

Concern about violent extremist groups and terrorist activities across the African continent has increased substantially over the past few decades. Now considered the epicenter of global terrorist activities,⁵ recent data suggests that deaths “linked to militant Islamist violence” on the continent reached an all-time high in 2023, with a significant portion occurring across Sahelian states and in the country of Somalia.⁶ Attempts to make sense of and address violent extremism on the continent have taken many forms and been considered vis-à-vis a number of different potential local conflict drivers, impacts, and resiliencies. One such area of focus has been violent extremism’s relationship with pastoralism, an adaptive nomadic practice of livestock herding. This interest has only grown amid increased climate-related stressors that threaten to exacerbate local livelihoods, marginalization, and conflict.

Over the past twenty years, tensions around the cultural and economic practices of pastoralism have been frequently discussed as a source of conflict across a wide stretch of the African continent, spanning the Sahel, Sudan, and Horn regions. Pastoralist ways of life are thought to contribute significantly to country economies, biodiversity, and food supply,⁷ but are also threatened by ecological change and longstanding crises of insecurity and poor governance in the communities they inhabit and share. In West Africa, these challenges are further complicated by real and perceived links between Fulani pastoralists (including in Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Mali) and designated terrorist organizations.⁸ In East Africa, states must contend with how to address simultaneous ongoing challenges—

5 UN News, “Africa Now ‘Global Epicentre’ of Terrorism: UN Chief,” *United Nations*, January 24, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145852>.

6 Eighty percent of all deaths took place in the Sahel and Somalia, and the number of al Shabaab-related fatalities in Kenya doubled, *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, “Deaths Linked to Militant Islamist Violence in Africa Continue to Spiral,” <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/mig2024-deaths-militant-islamist-violence-africa-rise/>.

7 D.M. Nyariki and D.A. Amwata, “The Value of Pastoralism in Kenya: Application of Total Economic Value Approach,” *Pastoralism* 9, no. 9 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13570-019-0144-x>; and K. E. French, “The Contribution of 21st Century Pastoralists to Biodiversity Conservation and Emerging Bioeconomies,” *Journal of Ethnobiology* 37, no. 3 (2017): 514–21, <https://doi.org/10.2993/0278-0771-37.3.514>.

8 Promise Frank Ejiofor, “We Don’t Have Anything’: Understanding the Interaction between Pastoralism and Terrorism in Nigeria,” *Conflict, Security & Development* 22, no. 4 (2022): 345-85, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2022.2122695>.

including security concerns posed not only by cross-border terrorist groups but also, inter/intra-ethnic conflict, pastoralist militias and associated cattle raids. In Kenya, for example, efforts to address al-Shabaab terrorist activities along the northeastern Somali border and parts Coastal Kenya, are carried out at the same time as efforts to address and manage pastoralist banditry and conflict in the northwest region.⁹ Such efforts are not always analogous, nor should the dynamics they seek to address necessarily be considered as the same.

For countries seeking to simultaneously manage threats from violent extremism and improve and address pressures impacting pastoralist communities, a better understanding of pastoralist everyday experiences and practices of peace—as opposed to just manifestations of conflict—is warranted. While new research focused on the local complexities of conflict drivers and possibilities of peacebuilding among pastoralists and those with whom they clash is steadily emerging,¹⁰ there is a pressing need for improved frameworks and approaches that can help local, national, regional, and international actors support long-term violence reduction and resiliency within and around pastoralist communities—emphasizing, in particular, the peace resources they already possess. Doing so can help move beyond simplistic narratives associated with pastoralist conflict, inform proactive violence prevention efforts, and identify distinctions between pastoralists and violent extremists and groups operating in the broader region.

To fill this gap, this report explores practices of peace within pastoralist communities in Kenya’s Turkana County. The report’s findings are informed by a diverse, multi-method research methodology that included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, historical profiling, transect walks, and nonparticipant observational data collected in Turkana in August 2022. It is important to note that Turkana County is not necessarily impacted directly by violent extremist or terrorist groups. Still, bandits operating within the county have

9 ACLED Data, “Kenya: Al-Shabaab Attacks Surge Ahead of Somalia-Kenya Border Reopening,” July 7, 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/07/07/kenya-situation-update-july-2023-al-shabaab-attacks-surge-ahead-of-somalia-kenya-border-reopening/>; and Citizen Reporter, “President Ruto Orders Joint Military, Police Operation in Turkana as Bandits Terrorise the North,” *Citizen Digital*, February 13, 2023, <https://www.citizen.digital/news/president-ruto-orders-joint-military-police-operation-in-turkana-as-bandits-terrorise-the-north-n314324>.

10 See, for instance, the collection of research on pastoralism and conflict summarized by Boatemaa and Adzande, “Farmer-Pastoralist Interactions and Resource-Based Conflicts in Africa.”

recently been likened to terrorist groups by a Kenyan government official¹¹ and local leaders have advocated for banditry to be classified as terrorism.¹² What is more, the county faces many of the same underlying challenges—including historical marginalization, resource scarcity, and ethnic conflict—that, in other spaces, have led to real or perceived connections between pastoralism and violent extremism.¹³ Focusing on pastoralism in a nonviolent extremist-impacted context, but within a state grappling with the threat elsewhere, this study enables further assessment of interpastoralist sources of cooperation and peace that should be taken into account when assessing susceptibility or resilience to violence and violent extremist groups across the broader Saharan region and beyond.

The report begins with an in-depth explanation of pastoralism broadly and common assumptions or misunderstandings of the practice before providing further detail on pastoralism, contextual dynamics, and conflict in Turkana County, Kenya. Following this, the report discusses the methodology, rationale, and limitations of this study, including an important reflection on researcher positionality. The report builds on two key frameworks. The first is RESOLVE's 2021 report, "Locating the 'Local' in Peacebuilding," which emphasizes the challenges of defining local peacebuilding and where it occurs.¹⁴ The second is Roger Mac Ginty's "everyday peace" framework, which emphasizes the power of ordinary people to "disrupt violent conflict and forge pro-social relationships in conflict-affected societies" through small, everyday actions and connections that might otherwise go unnoticed by top-down peacebuilding programs.¹⁵ These frameworks and their relevance to the study at hand are both discussed prior to presentation of the main research findings. The

11 Njoki Kihui, "Kenya: They're Terrorists Not Bandits, Kindiki Says of Cattle Rustlers," *All Africa*, March 1, 2023, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202303010337.html>.

12 Fred Kibor, "Rift Valley Leaders Want Banditry Classified as Terrorism," *Nation Africa*, January 5, 2023, <https://nation.africa/kenya/news/rift-valley-leaders-want-banditry-classified-as-terrorism-4075778>.

13 UNDP, "The Climate Security Nexus and the Prevention of Violent Extremism: Working at the Intersection of Major Development Challenges," *United Nations Development Programme*, 2020, <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/UNDP-Climate-Security-Nexus-and-Prevention-of-violent-extremism.pdf>; Kaley Fulton and Benjamin P. Nickels, "Africa's Pastoralists: A New Battleground for Terrorism," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, January 11, 2017, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-pastoralists-battleground-terrorism/>; Anouar Boukhars, "Why Extremist Insurgencies Spread: Insights from the Sahel," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, January 2, 2023, <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2023/01/02/why-extremist-insurgencies-spread-insights-from-the-sahel/>.

14 Scholars, activists, and policymakers do not always share a common understanding of what is meant by "local," or about which local actors, institutions, and practices are most important in building lasting peace. When we attempt to paper over these disagreements by deploying "standardized conflict analyses and outcome measurements," they often end up serving as "auditing and compliance tools" rather than authentic assessments of peace practices. For more, see: Kendhammer and Chandler, "Locating the 'Local' in Peacebuilding."

15 Mac Ginty, *Everyday Peace*, 2.

discussion section of this report examines these findings through the lens of enablers of and challenges to everyday peace in Turkana and presents considerations for policymakers and practitioners. These considerations include potential avenues by which to pursue proactive, non-securitized conflict prevention approaches and considerations in Turkana, as well as means by which to learn from and apply the insights gleaned as an alternative means by which to consider pastoralist communities and interventions in areas impacted by terrorism and violent extremism across the broader continent.

CONTEXT

Pastoralism in Perspective

Nomadic pastoralism—a transitory practice of livestock production, management, and, in some cases, agriculture¹⁶ has been described as the world’s most widespread land use system.¹⁷ Pastoralists number in the hundreds of millions worldwide. While estimates vary, the African Union estimates that 268 million people engage in pastoralism on the continent of Africa alone reaching across 43 percent of its land,¹⁸ a significant portion of which is located in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel.¹⁹ Pastoralist communities vary in terms of how they practice pastoralism, where they live, their level of mobility, and the extent to which they engage in cross-border interactions.²⁰ Pastoralist communities also differ in terms of their ethnic, religious, and cultural identities; their language; and the nature of their relationships with other pastoralist communities, governance structures, and broader social systems.²¹

Despite increasing recognition of the critical ecological, economic, and political importance of pastoralism, pastoral practices and peoples are often misunderstood.²² Ecologically and

16 See Text Box 1 for further definitional parameters.

17 Pablo Manzano et al., “Toward a Holistic Understanding of Pastoralism” *One Earth* 4, no. 5 (2021): 651–65.

18 For additional information, see: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/30240-doc-policy_framework_for_pastoralism.pdf

19 See United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, “New Fringe Pastoralism: Conflict and Insecurity and Development in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel,” March 2017, <https://repository.uneca.org/handle/10855/23727>.

20 By way of example, see Du et al.’s comparison of pastoralist communities in Norway and China: Juan Du, Matthew Gwynfryn Thomas, Bård-Jørgen Bårdsen, Ruth Mace, and Marius Warg Næss, “Comparison of Social Complexity in Two Independent Pastoralist Societies,” *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology* 73, no. 1 (2019): 1–10, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48705424>.

21 Du et al., “Comparison of Social Complexity.”

22 From the early works including Rada Dyson-Hudson and Neville Dyson-Hudson, “Nomadic Pastoralism,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 9, no. 1 (1980): 15–61, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.an.09.100180.000311> and John. G. Galaty, Dan Aronson, Philip C. Salzman, and Amy Chouinard (eds.), *The Future of Pastoral Peoples: Proceedings of a Conference Held in Nairobi, Kenya, 4–8 August 1980* (International Development Research Centre, 1981), to more recent works including Clemens Greiner, “African Pastoralism: Plus Ça Change? From Constant Herders to Social Differentiation,” in *African Futures*, 36–46 (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2022), https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004471641_005; Saverio Krätli, *Pastoral Development Orientation Framework: Focus on Ethiopia* (Aachen, Germany: MISEREOR, 2019); Michael Bollig, Michael Schnegg, and Hans-Peter Wotzka (eds.), “Pastoralism in Africa: Past, Present and Future,” in *Introduction: Specialisation and Diversification among African Pastoral*

economically, an older brand of scholarship and policymaking portrayed pastoralism as an intrinsically vulnerable, possibly ecologically damaging, “helter-skelter”²³ form of livelihood that creates zero-sum conflicts in resource-scarce environments, an archaic, unproductive, and environmentally damaging practice out of line with “progressive and modern” livelihood development.²⁴ By contrast, more recent research tends to view pastoralism as a complex, holistic system of culture and economic life²⁵ that is well-adapted to difficult local ecologies. These actors emphasize pastoralism’s suitability in responding to climate variability in some of the harshest landscapes in the world²⁶ and its potential “in securing resource efficient, sustainable development outcomes” within broader transitions to green economies.²⁷

In the first continent-wide policy framework on pastoralism and pastoralist areas in Africa, for example, the African Union acknowledged and sought to “reinforce” the important contributions that pastoral systems make to “national, regional and continent-wide economies.”²⁸ This recognition, coupled with an acknowledgement of the challenges pastoralists face due to resource insecurity and drought, have led to the implementation of numerous efforts to “de-risk” pastoralist communities across the African continent, including in Kenya’s Turkana County. “De-risking” efforts, both past and ongoing, aim to protect pastoralist communities from potential issues and shocks impacting their livelihoods and livestock through market-based solutions such as accessible insurance options and greater access to banking and financial markets.²⁹

Societies (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 1–28; Manzano et al., “Toward a Holistic Understanding of Pastoralism”; and John G. Galaty, “Gufu Oba: Herder Warfare in East Africa: A Social and Spatial History,” *Nomadic Peoples* 22, no. 1 (2018).

23 See Boruru et al., “Climate Change and the Emergence of Helter-Skelter Livelihoods among the Pastoralists,” in *Experiences of Climate Change Adaptation in Africa* (New York: Springer, 2011), 97–110.

24 Ngala Chome, “Land, Livelihoods and Belonging: Negotiating Change and Anticipating LAPSSSET in Kenya’s Lamu County,” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 14, no. 2 (2020); Jeremy Lind, Doris Okenwa, and Ian Scoones, *Land, Investment & Politics: Reconfiguring Eastern Africa’s Pastoral Drylands, Vol. 46* (Martlesham, UK: Boydell & Brewer, 2020).

25 See Melville J. Herskovits, “The Cattle Complex in East Africa,” PhD diss., Columbia University, 1926.

26 Magda Nassef, Simon Anderson, and Ced Hesse, “Pastoralism and Climate Change: Enabling Adaptive Capacity,” *Humanitarian Policy Group Commissioned Report*, April 2009, <https://www.iied.org/g02497>.

27 As described in a study commissioned by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). See: D. McGahey, J. Davies, N. Hagelberg, and R. Ouedraogo, *Pastoralism and the Green Economy – A Natural Nexus? (Nairobi: IUCN and UNEP, 2014)*, <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2014-034.pdf>, 3.

28 African Union, “Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa: Securing, Protecting and Improving the Lives, Livelihoods and Rights of Pastoralist Communities,” *Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture*, October 2010, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/30240-doc-policy_framework_for_pastoralism.pdf, 6.

29 Collaborative de-risking initiatives include the Kenya Livestock Insurance Program (KLIP), Derisking Inclusion and Value Enhancement Project (DRIVE), and Index-Based Livestock Insurance (IBLI) program; Turkana Government, “Hundreds of Pastoralists Targeted in Livestock Insurance Registration,” January 1, 2023, <https://turkana.go.ke/2023/01/31/hundreds-of->

Text Box 1. Defining “pastoralism”

The term “pastoralism” encompasses a wide range of practices, including those that combine livestock production with agriculture (agropastoralists) and livestock management from urban settings (urban and absentee pastoralists).¹ They include many different forms of mobility, including transhumance (a seasonal cycle) and nomadism (regular movement without a fixed residence)² or mobile pastoralism.³ While acknowledging this terminological complexity, this study understands pastoralism not simply as a livestock-based livelihood strategy, but, in the tradition of other existing literature, as a lifestyle with distinctive socio-cultural norms, beliefs and values, and traditional knowledge revolving around livestock.⁴ In particular, this study pays attention to the following three of the five characteristics presented in Anatoly Khazanov’s definition of nomadic pastoralism:

- *“Its extensive character connected with the maintenance of herds all year round on a system of free-range grazing without stables.”*
- *“Periodic mobility in accordance with the demands of a pastoral economy within the boundaries of specific grazing territories, or between these territories (as opposed to migrations).”*
- *“The participation in pastoral mobility of all or the majority of the population (as opposed, for example, to the management of herds on distant pastures by specialist herdsmen, into which only a minority is involved in pastoral migrations).”⁵*

1 See Scoones (2021) who critically delves into the typologies of pastoralism: Ian Scoones, “Pastoralists and Peasants: Perspectives on Agrarian Change,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 48, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2020.1802249>.

2 Scoones, “Pastoralists and Peasants.”

3 See Sara Randall, “Where Have All the Nomads Gone? Fifty Years of Statistical and Demographic Invisibilities of African Mobile Pastoralists,” *Pastoralism* 5, no. 1 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13570-015-0042-9>; Andrew B. Smith, “Pastoralism in Africa,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*, ed. Thomas Spear (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

4 Jonathan Davies, Maryam Niamir-Fuller, Carol Kerven, and Kenneth Bauer, “Extensive Livestock Production in Transition” in *Livestock in a Changing Landscape: Volume One*, eds. Henning Steinfeld et al. (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2010).

5 Anatoly M. Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World*, 2nd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 16.

Politically, simplistic narratives about the relationship between climate resource scarcity and conflict have also colored policymakers' views of pastoralism. The so-called "neo-Malthusian" model of resource conflict popular in policy and some academic circles assumes that when conflicts around resource issues like land and water use occur, the key driver *must* be the scarcity of those resources. If climate change taxes those resources further, then increased conflict is inevitable, and can only be addressed by changing who uses those resources and how they are accessed.³⁰ Indeed, without those changes (including, typically, restrictions on or changes to pastoralist practices), further environmental degradation will occur, fueling even more conflict.

A political ecology approach, by contrast, emphasizes the social and political nature of resource conflicts. As Matthew Turner argues, the tendency to view conflicts involving pastoralists as "unreflective, in-the moment scrambles for available resources" masks the importance of culture, identity, and political power as forces that shape *how* and *on what terms* resource access is contested.³¹ Given that existing evidence on the relationship between climate change and land-use conflicts is decidedly mixed, this line of work has instead emphasized the *mechanisms* by which climate change might impact or enhance conflict drivers.³² Research in this tradition locates conflict with and among pastoralists in histories of rural development that marginalize them through policies that clearly treat other forms of land use as politically desirable and the failure of state authorities to secure rural borderlands, resulting in an overarching atmosphere of "political and economic vulnerability" in pastoral communities.³³ Under these conditions, local systems for conflict mitigation and dispute resolution—systems that may have in the past been reasonably successful preventing violence—are taxed beyond their capacity, and the quality of state-level governance and policymaking then becomes a key determinant of whether or not conflict ensues.

[pastoralists-targeted-in-livestock-insurance-registration/](https://www.swissre.com/our-business/public-sector-solutions/thought-leadership/successful-kenya-livestock-insurance-program-scheme.html); Swiss Re Group, "Successful Kenya Livestock Insurance Program Scheme Scales Up," <https://www.swissre.com/our-business/public-sector-solutions/thought-leadership/successful-kenya-livestock-insurance-program-scheme.html>; and World Bank Group, "Horn of Africa DRIVE Project," May 31, 2023, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2023/05/31/horn-of-africa-afe-drive-project>.

30 For instance, Tomas Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton University Press, 1999).

31 Matthew Turner, "Political Ecology and the Moral Dimensions of 'Resource Conflicts': The Case of Farmer-Herder Conflicts in the Sahel," *Political Geography* 23 (2004): 871.

32 Among others, Tor Benjaminsen, Koffi Alinon, Halvard Buhaug, and Jill Tove Buseth, "Does Climate Change Drive Land-Use Conflicts in the Sahel?" *Journal of Peace Research* 49, no. 1 (2012); and Eoin McGuirk and Nathan Nunn, "Transhumant Pastoralism, Climate Change, and Conflict in Africa," *Journal of Economic Studies*, forthcoming.

33 Leif Brottem and Andrew McDonnell, "Pastoralism and Conflict in the Sudano-Sahel: A Review of the Literature," *Search for Common Ground*, July 2020, 3.

Pastoralism and Violent Extremism

Violence and conflict between pastoralist communities and between pastoralist and non-pastoralist (e.g., agricultural) communities in competition for land and water has coincided with further concern in some African states about their possible connections to violent extremist groups. Many of these concerns have been further exacerbated by increases in banditry and violent cattle raiding (also referred to as “rustling”), conflict between pastoralist groups and agricultural or landowner populations, and the proliferation of small arms and organized criminal activity related to livestock production.³⁴

Often marginalized politically and socially, many pastoralist groups face rising competition for scarce resources (e.g. water, grazing groups, etc.) to maintain their livelihoods. Some observers have expressed concern that in Western African countries like Mali and Nigeria, violent extremist groups like Boko Haram and the Macina Liberation Front (FLM) will capitalize on Fulani pastoralist grievances and resource scarcity to further destabilize the region, aggravate existing community and religious divides, and increase recruitment into their own ranks.³⁵ Similar concerns related to lost incomes and livelihoods amongst pastoralist communities in Kenya resulting from environmental shifts—including in its Turkana County—have also been raised in analyses exploring possible connections between climate shifts and violent extremism.³⁶ Others have suggested that relative deprivation, occurring largely along ethnic lines, can serve as a motivating factor for pastoralist engagement in violent extremist activity.³⁷ Still others have expressed concern that the transnational movement and network of pastoralist communities and sale of livestock may be exploited by violent extremist groups in areas left largely ungoverned by the formal state.³⁸ Finally, others worry that security abuses, neglect, and a lack of security provision

34 Al Chukwuma Okoli, “Cows, Cash and Terror: How Cattle Rustling Proceeds Fuel Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria,” *Africa Development / Afrique et Développement* 44, no. 2 (2019): 53–76. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26873429>.

35 Fulton and Nickels, “Africa’s Pastoralists.”

36 Madeline Romm, “A Climate of Terror? Climate Change as an Indirect Contributor to Terrorism,” *National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism*, May 2022, https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/Climate_Change_Terrorism_Rapid_Review_1_FINAL.pdf.

37 Ejiofor, “We Don’t Have Anything.”

38 See, for example, discussion of pastoralism and terrorism in the Republic of Mali in UNOWAS, “Pastoralism and Security in West Africa and the Sahel” (45–46), https://unowas.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/rapport_pastoralisme_eng-april_2019_-_online.pdf.

can create grievances and needs for alternative sources of security easily exploited by violent extremist organizations.³⁹

While there is some documentation of members of pastoralist communities or militias cooperating with or joining violent extremist groups on the continent,⁴⁰ the connection between violent extremism and pastoralism is not necessarily clear cut—subject to much debate, generalization, and speculation.⁴¹ Many questions remain regarding the extent to which pastoralist communities voluntarily support or engage in violent extremist groups. And, while some datasets have categorized pastoralist conflict and violence as acts of “terrorism,” as others have noted, such claims without concrete evidence, and especially when generalized to broad pastoralist groupings and/or in the context of existing marginalization, can have adverse impacts on both pastoralist populations and counterterrorism goals.⁴²

Recognizing this and the importance of focusing on local context and conflict-sensitive assessment, this paper does not accept as fact an understanding of pastoralist communities as anymore “susceptible” or “vulnerable” to terrorism or violent extremism. Rather, given, as others have noted,⁴³ the “critical part of the security chain” and “strategic value” pastoralist communities can have to stabilization and security elsewhere on African continent,⁴⁴ this paper explores hyperlocal practices of peace within and between pastoralist communities in an environment (Turkana North, Kenya and surrounding areas) wherein assumed drivers of engagement in violent extremism often occur. In doing so, the paper advances an

39 Pauline Le Roux, “Responding to the Rise in Violent Extremism in the Sahel,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, December 2, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/publication/responding-rise-violent-extremism-sahel/>; and Modibo Ghaly Cissé, “Understanding Fulani Perspectives on the Sahel Crisis,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, April 22, 2020, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/understanding-fulani-perspectives-sahel-crisis/>.

40 United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, “Issue Update: Abuses against Fulani Muslim Civilians,” April 2023, <https://www.uscirtf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/2023%20Abuses%20against%20Fulani%20Muslims%20Issue%20Update.pdf>; Madeline Velturo, “Factsheet: Islamists in Central Sahel,” United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, May 2021, <https://www.uscirtf.gov/sites/default/files/2021%20Factsheet%20-%20Sahel.pdf>.

41 For broader conversation of pastoralism and VE in Nigeria and Mali, see: Andrew McGregor, “The Fulani Crisis: Communal Violence and Radicalization in the Sahel,” *Combatting Terrorism Center Sentinel* 10, no. 2 (February 2017), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-fulani-crisis-communal-violence-and-radicalization-in-the-sahel/>.

42 Cissé, “Understanding Fulani Perspectives; see also: United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, “Issue Update”; Boukhars, “Why Extremist Insurgencies Spread.”

43 “With their superior knowledge of the terrain, they can help government forces control illicit activities but can also help criminal groups navigate these challenging areas. Being the only food-producing group in these vast regions, they can sustain or constrain terrorists or other criminal groups.” Cees De Haan et al., “Pastoralism Development in the Sahel: A Road to Stability?” *World Bank Global Center on Conflict, Security and Development*, June 2014, http://www.plateforme-pastorale-tchad.org/classified/Pastoralism_and_stability_in_the_Sahel_master_-_Final_-_May_27_2014.pdf.

44 De Haan et al., “Pastoralism Development in the Sahel,” 7.

alternative means of approaching pastoralist communities when considering sources of violence and peace, local cooperation, and engagement for shared violence—and, where relevant, violent extremism and terrorism—prevention goals.

Turkana, Kenya: Geography, Livelihoods, and Conflict Drivers

As Kenya's northwesternmost county, and second largest by land area, Turkana shares often porous international borders with Uganda, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and the disputed lands known as the Ilemi Triangle.⁴⁵ Inside of Kenya, Turkana shares borders with neighboring Marsabit County, Samburu County, Baringo County, and West Pokot County. Turkana County is divided into six constituencies that include: Turkana Central, which houses the county's largest city and capital, Lodwar; Turkana North; Turkana West; Loima; Turkana East; and Turkana South. A key physical feature of the county is Lake Turkana, Africa's fourth largest lake and the world's largest permanent desert lake.⁴⁶ Despite this lake, and its expansion in recent years, excessive drought still plagues the community.⁴⁷

In 2019, Turkana County's population was estimated to be 926,976.⁴⁸ The county is primarily made up of people who ethnically identify as Ng'iturkana (Turkana).⁴⁹ The Turkana speak an Eastern Nilotic language of the Nilo-Saharan language family similar to their ethnic Karamojong, Dodos, and Jie neighbors in Uganda, as well as Toposa in South Sudan and Nyang'atom (also known as Gnangatom) in Ethiopia. Cumulatively called the Ateker or Karamoja cluster, these communities share long-standing cultural and political linkages and interconnected socioeconomic, political, and security dynamics.⁵⁰

45 Eliza Snel and Lotje de Vries, *The Ilemi Triangle: Understanding a Pastoralist Border Area* (PAX, 2022), <https://paxforpeace.nl/publications/the-ilemi-triangle/>.

46 Kevin Obiero et al., "Lake Turkana: Status, Challenges, and Opportunities for Collaborative Research," *Journal of Great Lakes Research* (November 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jglr.2022.10.007>.

47 Joe Inwood, "East Africa Hit by Drought, Yet Kenya's Lake Turkana Is Flooding," *BBC*, October 17, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-63278497>.

48 See: "Kenya Population and Housing Census Volume 1: Population by County and Sub-County," *Kenya National Bureau of Statistics*, 2019, <https://www.knbs.or.ke/download/2019-kenya-population-and-housing-census-volume-i-population-by-county-and-sub-county/>.

49 Gerrit Jan Dimmendaal, *The Turkana Language* (De Gruyter Mouton: 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110869149>.

50 Boniface Korobe, "The Southern Limits of the Turkana: Ethno-Cultural History, Origin, Migration, and Settlement of Three Pastoral Neighbors - the Turkana, Pokot, and Samburu 1700 – 2020," *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies* 5, no. 5 (2021): 35–63.

Map 1. Kenya, Turkana North, and Surrounding Areas



* **Note:** The “Ilemi Triangle” (depicted) is a disputed area claimed by Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Sudan.⁵¹

51 The Ilemi Triangle is also sometimes spelled as the “Elemi Triangle.” For further information, see: Snel and de Vries, *The Ilemi Triangle*.

Text Box 2. The “Cradle of Mankind”

Lake Turkana and its surrounding areas are often referred to as the “cradle” of mankind because of the 1995 discovery of the remains of the oldest known human ancestors (one even dating back 1.5 million years) along the banks of the lake.¹ Two years later, in 1997, the lake and area were added to the UNESCO World Heritage List.² Since then, the area has increasingly become a popular tourist destination and host to unique cultural experiences, including the Tobong’u Lore (often translated as “Welcome Home”), a multiple day cultural and tourism festival celebrating the Turkana culture.

1 National Geographic, “Discoveries at Lake Turkana,” <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/discoveries-lake-turkana/>.

2 Obiero et al., “Lake Turkana: Status, Challenges, and Opportunities.”

The basic unit of Turkana social organization is the *awi*, which consists of a man, his wives, children, widows, and unmarried women. Polygamy is common within the Turkana community and was legalized in Kenya (allowing men to have multiple wives) in 2014.⁵² In 2018, a survey by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) showed pastoralists as having the highest rate of polygamy in the country.⁵³ That same study ranked Turkana County as third in terms of polygamous marriages (20.3%), after West Pokot (25%) and Mandera (35%).⁵⁴ Beyond marriage alone, the community has a strong sense of kinship, where the highest source of authority is the council of elders.⁵⁵ Elders (*ekaskou* in Turkana) derive their authority not only from their age, but also their responsibility and capacity to organize the community and associated duties and responsibilities.

Importantly for the study at hand, Turkana also houses what is arguably among the most economically important and conflict-impacted pastoralist communities in Kenya.

52 “President Uhuru Kenyatta Signs Kenya Polygamy Law,” *BBC*, April 29, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27206590>.

53 “Kenya Polygamy Highest among Pastoralists,” *Business Daily*, April 8, 2018, <https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd-data-hub/kenya-polygamy-highest-among-pastoralists-2197138>.

54 *Ibid.*

55 Sana, “Between Borders and Internal Control.”

A majority of Turkana’s inhabitants maintain their livelihoods through pastoralism and livestock herding,⁵⁶ and the County alone contributes “70% of the livestock and 80% of the beef”⁵⁷ produced in the country’s arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs).⁵⁸ In this context, resource scarcity resulting from increased climate, economic, government, and conflict-related pressures has exacerbated everyday challenges facing nomadic pastoralists and, at times, led to violence (*ekibaket*).

The Turkana value livestock highly, referred to by them as *ngi-bar-en* (sing. *e-bar-asit*), which is also translated as “wealth.”⁵⁹ During periods of extreme scarcity, individuals who suffer catastrophic livestock losses sometimes seek temporary respite in non-livestock-oriented livelihoods, including fishing in Lake Turkana and small-scale agricultural cultivation.⁶⁰ After accumulating sufficient livestock, these same pastoralists re-enter pastoral production.⁶¹ Crop cultivation also occurs, but is concentrated along major rivers (e.g. Turkwell, Tarach, and Kerio).⁶² In recent years, however, climate shifts and environmental degradation impacting livestock production have also resulted in searches for alternative livelihoods—be it through educational opportunities or natural resource extraction.⁶³ Recent flash flooding and expansions in Lake Turkana have also further stressed and, at times, destroyed livelihoods.⁶⁴

The discovery of large aquifers in the Lodwar and Lotikipi basins in 2013, which hold about 250 billion cubic meters of water, raised prospects for addressing the water scarcity challenges that remain a root cause of conflict with neighboring communities.⁶⁵ Meanwhile,

56 Gregory Akall, “Effects of Development Interventions on Pastoral Livelihoods in Turkana County, Kenya,” *Pastoralism* 11, no. 23 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13570-021-00197-2>; Evan F. Griffith et al., “A One Health Framework for Integrated Service Delivery in Turkana County, Kenya,” *Pastoralism* 10, no. 7 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13570-020-00161-6>; Turkana County, “Turkana County Development Plan,” https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/2832/Turkana_CIDP_2018-2022.pdf.

57 Turkana County, “Turkana County Development Plan.”

58 ASALs make up approximately 89 percent of Kenya’s total landmass.

59 Itaru Ohta, “Rules and Negotiations: Livestock Ownership among the Turkana in Northwestern Kenya,” *African Study Monographs* 40, no. 2–3 (2019).

60 Samuel F. Derbyshire, Joseph Ekidor Nami, Gregory Akall, and Lucas Lowasa, “Divining the Future: Making Sense of Ecological Uncertainty in Turkana, Northern Kenya,” *Land* 10, no. 9 (2021).

61 David M. Anderson and Vigdis Broch-Due, *The Poor Are Not Us: Poverty and Pastoralism in Eastern Africa* (Melton, UK: James Currey Ltd, 2000).

62 William M. Admas and David M. Anderson, “Irrigation before Development: Indigenous and Induced Change in Agricultural Water Management in East Africa,” *African Affairs* 87, no. 349 (1988).

63 Turkana County, “Turkana County Development Plan,” 24.

64 Inwood, “East Africa Hit by Drought.”

65 Janpeter Schilling, Thomas Weinzierl, Augustine Ekitela Lokwang, and Francis Opiyo, “For Better or Worse: Major Developments Affecting Resource and Conflict Dynamics in Northwest Kenya,” *Zeitschrift Für Wirtschaftsgeographie* 60, no. 1–2 (2016),

the discovery of oil in Turkana County has ignited newfound interest in this county as a premier economic destination by non-local Kenyan and foreign actors.⁶⁶ Both these discoveries and the presence of gas reserves in the region⁶⁷ combine to form an additional potential stressor to the ecology and people in Turkana—and, as such, an additional potential source of conflict.

Mineral extraction and capital development,⁶⁸ urbanization and economic development infrastructure projects,⁶⁹ and energy generation through wind power⁷⁰ are likely to impact livelihoods and political incentives in the county, which is already considered to be marginalized from centers of power in government.⁷¹ While the government has taken steps to enhance the provision of government services—such as health, clean water, education—and providing new livelihood opportunities,⁷² researchers have questioned whether those efforts are undertaken in collaboration with (and informed by) local communities as well as whether the outcomes of those initiatives will be equally and positively felt by the communities.⁷³

<https://doi.org/10.1515/zfw-2016-0001>.

66 Eliza M. Johannes, Leo C. Zulu, and Ezekiel Kalipeni, “Oil Discovery in Turkana County, Kenya: A Source of Conflict or Development?” *African Geographical Review* 34, no. 2 (2015): 142–64.

67 It is feared that, in addition to pre-existing issues, the area is now also likely to face the dreaded “oil curse.” Johannes, Zulu, and Kalipeni, “Oil Discovery in Turkana County.” Already, community members have aired their grievances against both oil investors and the state through protests and vandalism, thus disrupting oil exploration activities. Kennedy Mkutu and Gerald Wandera, “Conflict, Security and the Extractive Industries in Turkana, Kenya: Emerging Issues 2012-2015,” *Open Society Initiative East Africa*, 2016.

68 This includes, for example, Tullow oil exploration (see: Charis Enns and Brock Bersaglio, “Pastoralism in the Time of Oil: Youth Perspectives on the Oil Industry and the Future of Pastoralism in Turkana, Kenya,” *The Extractive Industries and Society* 3, no. 1 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2015.11.003>).

69 This includes, for example, the ongoing construction of the Lamu Port and South Sudan Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) corridor project which aims to turn the region into a regional transport hub and into new investment frontiers.

70 Hannah Akuiyibo, “Public-Private Partnerships in Africa: Some Lessons from Kenya’s Lake Turkana Wind Power Project,” *Wilson Center*, September 23, 2019, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/public-private-partnerships-in-africa-some-lessons-from-kenyas-lake-turkana-wind-power-project>.

71 Janpeter Schilling and Luise Werland, “Facing Old and New Risks in Arid Environments: The Case of Pastoral Communities in Northern Kenya,” *PLOS Climate* 2, no. 7 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pclm.0000251>.

72 G. L. Akall, “Whose Knowledge Counts? Irrigation Development in Turkana, Kenya (1963-2019),” *International Grasslands & Rangelands Congress*, 2021; Edward G. J. Stevenson, 2018. “Plantation Development in the Turkana Basin: The Making of a New Desert?” *Land* 7, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.3390/land7010016>.

73 Akall, “Effects of Development Interventions”; and Schilling and Werland, “Facing Old and New Risks.”

Conflict Dynamics, Violence, and “Terrorism”

Over the years, the nature of conflict, displacement, and fragility across Turkana County has become increasingly complex and multi-layered.⁷⁴ The Turkana are regularly in conflict with neighboring communities such as the Pokot and Samburu from Kenya; Toposa and Didinga from South Sudan; the Jie, Karamojong, and Dodoth from Uganda; and both the Dassanech (Merille) and the Donyiro (Nyangatom) from Ethiopia.⁷⁵ The conflicts occur mainly along contested and shared border areas such as the Ilemi triangle (see Map 1), which includes the villages of Kibish, Naita, Karebur, Loruth Esekon, Lokitonyala, Loreng’ekippi, Lokitaung, Kokuro, Magila, Kaikor, and Lorau.⁷⁶ On the Pokot side, the Lokiriama, Alale, Nauyapong, Kainuk, and Turkwel border areas remain contested.⁷⁷ Conflict in these border areas primarily involves struggles over access to grazing land and water points for livestock, a situation worsened by the increasing intensity and frequency of drought and floods, among other climatic factors.⁷⁸

This struggle for resources often manifests as “redistributive raiding,” a cultural practice sanctioned and organized by elders and leaders to replenish decimated herds lost due to climatic conditions, and instances of counter raids after one group initially attacks another.⁷⁹ Raids range from small “stealth” raids involving a few individuals aiming to evade detection to large “battle” raids consisting of hundreds of warriors engaging in direct combat.⁸⁰ Cattle raiding also takes the form of “predatory raiding,” a violent, organized, multibillion-dollar criminal enterprise aimed at acquiring cattle for commercial gain.⁸¹ Criminal networks or

74 Jonathan L. Lodompui, “The Dynamics of Intermittent Escalation of Conflict Among Nilotic Pastoralists of Northern Kenya, 1990-2017,” Thesis, University of Nairobi, 2018; Sarah Mathew, “Turkana Warriors’ Call to Arms: How an Egalitarian Society Mobilizes for Cattle Raids,” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 377, no. 1851 (May 2022); Mburu Wayne Ngaru, “An Analysis Of The Protracted Nature Of Pastoral Conflicts In East Africa: A Case Study Of Northern Kenya,” Research Project, University of Nairobi, 2018.

75 Johannes, Zulu, and Kalipeni, “Oil Discovery in Turkana County.”

76 Paul Mulindwa, “Interstate Border Conflicts and Their Effects on Region-Building and Integration of the East African Community,” *African Journal of Governance and Development* 9, no. 2 (2020): 599–618.

77 Esther Njeri Kibe, “Briefing Paper No 4: An Analysis of Turkana-Pokot Conflict,” 2020.

78 Nancy A. Omolo, “Gender and Climate Change-Induced Conflict in Pastoral Communities: Case Study of Turkana in Northwestern Kenya,” *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 10 (2010).

79 Matthew, “Turkana Warriors’ Call to Arms.”

80 Matthew R. Zefferman and Sarah Mathew, “An Evolutionary Theory of Moral Injury with Insight from Turkana Warriors,” *Evolution & Human Behavior* 41 (2020).

81 Deo Gumba, Nelson Alusala and Andrew Kimani, “Vanishing herds: Cattle rustling in East Africa and the Horn,” *ENACT Research Paper 10* (December 2019), <https://enactafrica.org/research/research-papers/vanishing-herds-cattle-rustling-in-east-africa-and-the-horn>; Mwanasha H. Mazuri, Paul Mwaeke, and Eric Bor, “Factors Impeding Government Security Agencies Responses

“cattle warlords” whose territories span communal and international borders recruit and arm rural warriors to steal cattle for sale in the wider business of the cattle trade, where they sell the animals to meet the increasing demand for meat.⁸² As noted earlier, concerns about terrorist groups profiteering off of these activities have been raised elsewhere on the continent.⁸³

The severity of conflict in Turkana has also been aggravated by the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs)⁸⁴ across international borders, thought to be primarily from countries experiencing past or ongoing civil wars.⁸⁵ As noted by ACLED, small arms and “more sophisticated” weaponry including AK-47s and grenades are increasingly used by pastoralist raiders and militias today, as opposed to “traditional bows and arrows.”⁸⁶

In recent years, pastoralist militias and “bandits” have also carried out acts of political violence in Turkana and surrounding regions, including attacks on security services.⁸⁷ In 2023, Kenya’s then-Interior Cabinet Secretary (CS) Kithure Kindiki likened these acts, including cattle rustling, to “terrorism,” comparing bandit groups to “terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab and ISIS” and suggesting that “politicians are in the middle” of certain activities.⁸⁸

While important, focusing on these tensions and sources of conflict alone overlooks the everyday lived experience and potential mechanisms of peace that exist within pastoralist communities, with implications for broader conflict and violence management, peacebuilding, and related fields of practice. Thus, in seeking to broaden the field and inform policy and practice, this report focuses not on the sources of conflict, but the sources of peace and dynamics that either enable or threaten pastoralist communal relationships.

in Combating Cattle Rustling in Baringo County-Kenya,” *European Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 2 (Mar. 2022), <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejsocial.2022.2.2.198>.

82 PJ Blackwell, “East Africa’s Pastoralist Emergency: Is Climate Change the Straw That Breaks the Camel’s Back?” *Third World Quarterly* 31, no. 8 (2010): 1321–38.

83 See, for example, discussion of pastoralism and terrorism in the Republic of Mali (45–46) in UNOWAS, “Pastoralism and Security.”

84 Jonathan Ltipalei, Joshua M. Kivuva, and Fred O. Jonyo, “External Conflict Escalation Among the Nilotic Pastoral Communities of Northern Kenya,” *Journal of Social and Political Sciences* 2, no. 4 (2019).

85 Mkutu and Wandera aver that the civil war in South Sudan since December 2013 is an important exacerbating factor in the cross-border insecurity. Mkutu and Wandera, “Conflict, Security and the Extractive Industries.”

86 ACLED Data, “Kenya: Government Operation Against Pastoralist Militias in North Rift Region,” March 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/03/31/kenya-situation-update-march-2023-government-operation-against-pastoralist-militias-in-north-rift-region/>.

87 ACLED Data, “Kenya: Government Operation.”

88 David Njaaga, “Kithure Kindiki: Bandits Are Like Al-Shabaab or ISIS Militants,” *Standard*, 2023, <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/national/article/2001468101/kindiki-bandits-are-like-al-shabaab-or-isis-militants>; Njoki Kihui, “Kenya: They’re Terrorists Not Bandits, Kindiki Says of Cattle Rustlers,” *All Africa*, March 1, 2023, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202303010337.html>.

METHODOLOGY

Study Rationale and Framing

This study is inspired by the theoretical framework of “everyday peace,” which centers on how ordinary people forge “pro-social relationships” and engage in other routinized “small acts of peace” in order to “navigate through life in societies affected by violent conflict.”⁸⁹ Rather than regarding peace as something built by international accords or elite bargains, it emphasizes the daily strategies that people living in communities with ongoing conflicts rely on to disrupt contentious issues and other potential conflict triggers and to maintain convivial relationships. Everyday peace theorists have proposed a variety of frameworks for enumerating the most important types of peace practices and the kinds of social spaces and activities where they are most likely to occur.⁹⁰ Few, however, have focused specifically on pastoral communities or their relationships with others. More broadly, these theorists largely agree that it is only possible to evaluate the degree of everyday peace in a particular community through a localized, bottom-up, and iterative process that allows community members to articulate their own views of what practices and experiences indicate that the conditions for peace are improving or worsening.⁹¹ While such actions might be regarded by outsiders as little more than strategic conflict-avoidance, they also serve as the basic building blocks of coexistence and tolerance, and as resources upon which community leaders can draw to disrupt efforts to inflame inter-group violence and to build the basis for deeper, more systematic peace.⁹²

89 Mac Ginty, *Everyday Peace*.

90 See, for example, Anthony Ware and Vicki-Ann Ware, “Everyday Peace: Rethinking Typologies of Social Practice and Local Agency,” *Peacebuilding* 10, no. 3 (July 3, 2022): 222–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2021.1997387>.

91 Roger Mac Ginty, *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid Forms of Peace* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011).

92 Mac Ginty, *International Peacebuilding*, 8–16. In recent years, there’s been a proliferation of new work on local peacebuilding in the context of the “everyday peace” framework. Key works include Helen Berents and Siobhan McEvoy-Levy, “Theorising Youth and Everyday Peace(Building),” *Peacebuilding* 3, no. 2 (2015): 115–25, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2015.1052627>; Jonas Wolff, *The Local Turn and the Global South in Critical Peacebuilding Studies* (Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, 2022); Pamina Firchow, *Reclaiming Everyday Peace: Local Voices in Measurement and Evaluation After War* (Cambridge University Press, 2018); Sarah Njeri, “Everyday Peacebuilding and Practices in Kenya, South Sudan, Somaliland and Ghana: Introduction,”

Beyond considering “everyday” sources of peace, this study is also informed by and contributory to the RESOLVE Network’s ongoing efforts to investigate, reconceptualize, and inform the “local turn” in P/CVE and peacebuilding practice and research.⁹³ This approach considers “local” as more than just a geographic location, instead focusing on “local” in terms of lived experiences. In doing so, the approach underscores the importance of routine interactions with peace and conflict, with an eye towards considering how top-down peacebuilding initiatives (or those that are farther removed from day-to-day experiences) may disrupt them. Based on this framing, the “local turn,” as used in this report, challenges an understanding of nomadic pastoralism that is skewed toward castigating the practice as archaic, unproductive, and an environmentally damaging relic of the past, which must be brought into line with “progressive and modern,” livelihood development using top-down interventions. Instead, the report considers nomadic pastoralism as a practice with its own unique stressors and its own unique facets enabling peaceful relationships through everyday interaction.

Given the limited existing theorization of how everyday peace functions in pastoralist communities, the research conducted for this RESOLVE study is largely exploratory. Rather than producing a specific set of “everyday peace indicators,” it instead catalogues everyday interactions thought to enable peace within and around one specific pastoralist community. This study complements other studies that have explored community resilience to violent extremism,⁹⁴ sought to develop everyday peace indicators,⁹⁵ and examined peaceful interactions between pastoralist communities.⁹⁶ It adds to a rich body of literature—one that is informed by local contexts and lived experiences—with relevance to violence prevention and community violence reduction efforts.

Journal of the British Academy 10, no. s1 (2022): 1–9; Filip Ejdus, “Revisiting the Local Turn in Peacebuilding,” in *A Requiem for Peacebuilding?*, eds. Jorg Kustermans, Tom Sauer, and Barbara Segaeert (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 41–58; Wendy Kroeker, “The Peacebuilding Spaces of Local Actors,” in *Routledge Companion to Peace and Conflict Studies*, eds. Sean Byrne, Thomas Matyók, Imani Michelle Scott, and Jessica Senehi (Routledge, 2019), 57–67.

93 See Kendhammer and Chandler, *Locating the “Local” in Peacebuilding*.

94 Van Metre, *Community Resilience*.

95 Eliza Urwin and Belquis Ahmadi, “Measuring Peace and Violent Extremism Voices from the Afghan Village,” *United States Institute of Peace*, March 2018, <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/pb244-measuring-peace-and-violent-extremism-voices-from-the-afghan-village.pdf>

96 Toru Sagawa, “Local Potential for Peace. Trans-ethnic Cross-cutting Ties among the Daasanech and Their Neighbors,” in *To Live with Others: Essays on Cultural Neighborhood in Southern Ethiopia*, eds. Echi Gabbert and Sophia Thubauville (Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag), 99–127.

Methods and Respondents

This report draws from research conducted in the Turkana region in August 2022.⁹⁷ The study included a mixed-method approach to data collection involving qualitative semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and a participatory exercise called “transect walks.”⁹⁸ A survey was also fielded with research participants to validate findings and gain additional insight into the extent of interactions within and among communities. However, due to technical challenges with the Kobo collect toolkit used to capture survey data, only demographic data regarding the participants’ gender, age, employment, and residency status was registered. These multiple methods used to collect data were adopted as a means to ensure that the study, subsequent analysis, and considerations derived from it were sound and built on diverse perspectives.

Study participants were drawn from four selected communities (Lowarengak, Todonyang, Kokoro and Kibish) in the Turkana North subcounty, near the South Sudan and Ethiopia borders. Additional transect walks were also conducted in Kangaten, Ethiopia (see Map 2). These choices were made in an effort to capture a regional perspective, focusing on communities heavily impacted by intrapastoralist conflict with cross-border insights. Due to the mobile livelihoods of many individuals within the study areas, participant responses also reflected on transborder experiences in South Sudan⁹⁹ and Ethiopia and their impact on everyday peace.

97 Prior to conducting any research with human subjects, and under the supervision of his RESOLVE mentor and RESOLVE project lead, the researcher completed requisite ethics application and approvals. Approval for “Nomadic Pastoralism for Everyday Peace? Key Evidence from Kenya’s Drylands,” 2062 granted by HML IRB, an active U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Federal-Wide Federal Assurance Institutional Review Board, on June 14, 2022, following expedited review. The ethics approval package focused on safeguarding study participants and mitigating potential risks associated with the study. The researcher also applied for and received a research permit from the Kenya National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), License No. NACOSTI/P/22/18657.

98 During the transect walks, the researcher sought to look out for spaces where everyday interactions of peace occurred, including watering points such as rivers; grazing fields; fishing areas around Lake Turkana; shopping centers, etc. The researcher also visited important sites of peace and conflict, such as the Todonyang mass grave. Each transect walk was primarily led by a local peacebuilding officer who accompanied the researcher; two APAD representatives (director and driver); a research assistant; and, in some areas such as Todonyang, a local administrator.

99 Kibish, in particular, is a long-term site of border disputes between Kenya and South Sudan.

Map 2. Research Locations in Turkana North and Surrounding Areas



**Note: The "Ilemi Triangle" (depicted) is a disputed area claimed by Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Sudan.¹⁰⁰*

Transect walks occurred in Lowarengak, Todonyang, Kangaten (Ethiopia), and Kibish, including the following: two transect walks in Lowarengak (one in Lowarengak Market and one on the Lowarengak Lake Turkana beaches); two transect walks in Todonyang (one on the Todonyang Lake Turkana beaches and one at a mass grave site in Todonyang); three in and around Kibish (one at a Kibish market and one at the Kasarani grazing field, and one at the Nakuwa River); and three in and around Kangaten, Ethiopia (one at the town of Kangaten, one at the banks of River Ormo in Kangaten, one at the farms in Kangaten).

¹⁰⁰ The Ilemi Triangle is also sometimes spelled as the "Ellemi Triangle." For further information, see: Snel and Vries, *The Ilemi Triangle*.

Research participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure the richness of the data and analyses derived from it. As noted by Emmel in *Sampling and Choosing Cases in Qualitative Research: A Realist Approach*: “The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry.”¹⁰¹ To expand the interview pool, initial interviews were supplemented by snowball sampling, whereby the social networks of the respondents were used to expand the study’s pool of potential respondents.¹⁰² Primary research participants were selected based on the following criteria:

- Eighteen years of age and above;
- Gender and youth status, including men and *Kraal* elders, women, and youth; and
- Individuals practicing nomadic pastoralism as a source of subsistence or who had a lived experience of or interactions within pastoralist communities.

Additional research with non-community participants from the following backgrounds were also included in the interest of holistic data collection and enhanced insight:

- County and government peace and security officials directly engaged in enhancing the security and wellbeing of the pastoral communities in the area; and
- External subject matter experts consulted on the sidelines of the African Peacebuilding Network (APN) and Next Gen Research Methods Workshop organized by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in Casablanca, Morocco from September 26–29, 2022.

In total, out of 88 local community members consulted, the research team conducted forty-five semi-structured interviews with local community members. In addition to these semi-structured interviews, the research team conducted four FGDs, each with approximately ten participants; two variations rich story/historical timeline conversations, each with four

101 See Alison Jane Pickard, *Research Methods in Information* (London: Facet Publishing, 2013).

102 Nissim Cohen and Tamar Arieli, “Field Research in Conflict Environments: Methodological Challenges and Snowball Sampling,” *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 4 (2011), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343311405698>.

male community elders that focused specifically on historical community narratives;¹⁰³ two key informant interviews with non-community members in Kenya and four key informant interviews with external subject matter experts; and ten transect walks.¹⁰⁴ Tables 1–4 include an overview of aggregated participant demographic information. Additional participant information disaggregated by method, location, and demographic is included in Annex 1 of this report.

Tables 1-4. Aggregate Participant Demographic Information¹⁰⁵

Table 1.
Participants by Location/Area

Location / Area	
Kibish	43
Lowarengak	37
Todonyang	30
Kokuro	20
Nairobi	1
Lodwar	1
External to Kenya*	2
N/A	4

Table 2.
Participants by Age

Age Range	
20-29	29
30-39	47
40-49	41
50-59	4
60 and above	15
N/A	10

Table 3.
Participants by Education

Education Level	
Primary	15
Secondary	12
Tertiary	17
N/A	102

Table 4.
Participants by Gender

Gender	
Male	104
Female	42

* Indicative of location of consultation, includes two experts consulted in Casablanca.

103 These conversations elicited information on different timelines depicting the evolution of conflict and peace between local communities. Such conversations including discussion of significant events (including the occurrence of and lead up to specific raids), cultural practices and their roots in peace and conflict events (e.g., the use of circumcision was most relevant in discussion of how the mass graves came about).

104 Further walks took place that may or may not be categorized as “transect walks.”

105 This information is informed by demographic data captured in a survey fielded among the participants and is inclusive of all 88 local participants that were consulted for semi-structured interviews. Due to language barriers, divergences in interest in and/or knowledge of the study subject matter, and varied experiences, only 45 of the 88 participants included in these numbers were able to supply the type of “information rich” semi-structured interviews necessary for this research.

Given the multilingual nature of the study sites, an interpreter from APAD was hired to facilitate translation and interpretation and to supplement principal investigator Caleb Wafula's own fluency in Swahili and basic skills in ki-Turkana. Swahili and ki-Turkana are widely spoken in the area, but elderly individuals only speak and understand the latter.

Study Limitations

Despite best efforts, this research and conclusions drawn from it are limited in both their generalizability and reliability, in part due to the limited number of participants in the study and the sampling methods chosen (purposive and snowball), both of which potentially place limits on the study's generalizability and validity.¹⁰⁶ Specific challenges encountered in the field additionally impacted the study. These challenges are not uncommon to research in fragile and highly marginalized environments, but their impact on the findings should be considered, nonetheless. A few notable challenges and potential sources of bias are detailed below.

Issues with data collection during the implementation of the survey portion of the research posed a major challenge to the study overall. This was partly due to limited knowledge of the specific settings for utilizing the KoboToolbox to collect data offline, poor network coverage, and the remote terrain of the research area.

Some of the participants were nonresponsive, which posed a specific challenge during the research process, likely due to an initial lack of trust from the community related to the identity of the researcher, the researcher's intentions, and the concerns that the researcher was actually a government security agent working on cattle rustling or arms trafficking. The researcher's previous work in and ties to the community, as well as connections to APAD, helped to a degree in surmounting this lack of trust, but, as with similar studies, the possibility remains that respondent's contributions were impacted either consciously or subconsciously by trust-related concerns. See Text Box 3 for further discussion of this.

While the researcher's own positionality benefits in terms of gaining trust and in terms of pre-existing networks and connections, it must be stated that the researcher's own

¹⁰⁶ Cohen and Arieli, "Field Research in Conflict Environments."

positionality, as always, opens up the possibility of bias in terms of responses elicited and data gathered.¹⁰⁷ It is, as always, possible that the researcher's own real and perceived identities and experiences shaped both participant's perceptions and responses, as well

Text Box 3. The importance of cultural knowledge and understanding

The study benefited from principal investigator Caleb Wafula's contextual and cultural knowledge. Wafula's prior experience working in Turkana County as an information specialist with a leading relief and humanitarian agency proved critical to building trust and establishing rapport with community participants. During his previous experience in the county, Wafula also worked closely with the Agency for Pastoralist Development (APAD) as a local implementing partner. Because of this experience, Wafula was known by some community members and able to further leverage contacts from APAD and gain acceptance among study participants. Wafula's language capabilities and cultural knowledge proved beneficial to his engagement with participants. Upon meeting with study participants, for example, Wafula spoke the familiar "ejok," meaning "greetings," and in some cases tried to speak a few more phrases such as "torimakinai," meaning "excuse me." Doing so, according to Wafula, enhanced rapport and trust building with the research participants.

as the researcher's own interpretation of them and interactions with research subjects. In an effort to improve researcher transparency and enhance efforts to better understand and account for positionality in research, Text Box 4 includes a note on positionality and emotion from the researcher.

107 Andrew Gary Darwin Holmes, "Researcher Positionality – A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research - A New Researcher Guide," *International Journal of Education* 8, no. 4 (2020), <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1268044.pdf>

With these challenges and limitations in mind, the next section provides an overview of findings from the field research specific to considerations around and interactions that enable everyday peace among pastoralists and communities in Turkana North and surrounding areas.

Text Box 4. A Note from the Researcher: Positionality and Emotion

“ The situation in some locations would most likely elicit emotions from an interviewer, and I did not escape being touched by the suffering brought about by the conflicts, especially when I visited the mass grave of the Todonyang massacre, where over forty people were suspected killed and hundreds displaced by the Merille militia from neighboring Ethiopia in May 2011.¹ As such, I sought not to suppress my feelings, but instead transformed them into a research aid. I empathized with the respondents in relation to the situation to build rapport, while remaining objective. The feelings also enabled me to reflect on the respondents’ circumstances, which enabled me to generate meaning and insight into the concrete situation of everyday peace in the area. In the process I became part of the group and understood the small-scale ‘hyperlocal’ acts of everyday peace from the people’s standpoint.”

1 Lucas Ng’asike and Osinde Obare, “Murder at the Border: 42 Feared Dead,” *Standard*, May 3, 2011, <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/business/article/2000034405/murder-at-the-border-42-feared-dead>.

FINDINGS

This section presents findings from the research, focusing specifically on conceptualizations of and resources for everyday peace as expressed by the research participants and factors and interactions that shape everyday experiences of peace and conflict for local communities and pastoralists.

As noted previously, this study is not designed to present an exhaustive portrait of all the many small-scale “hyperlocal” acts of everyday peace, as such efforts would be quite superficial. Instead, the study pays attention to key variables of local and indigenous knowledge systems, culture, institutions, and practices, as expressed by research participants, and how they enable positive relationships. These key variables and exchanges are central to understanding the empirical details in the context of pastoralism and in assessing what factors may enable peace in pastoralist communities through those that may lead to conflict. This focus on peaceful relations, as opposed to acts of violence, is particularly important given the bias towards viewing pastoralist communities as primarily potential security threats, violence-prone, and potential vectors of other forms of conflict, including violent extremism.

Of course, this framing is not meant to overlook or downplay sources of conflict and violence that do impact or form within pastoralist communities. It is important to note that in addition to sources of peace, study respondents also frequently mentioned everyday stressors, including environmental changes, impacting their livelihoods; social relations; and, at times, distrust of certain communities and groups. More on these stressors is included in the Discussion and Further Considerations section of this report.

Conceptualizations of and Resources for Peace

To understand localized conceptions of peace, respondents were asked to reflect on their own understanding of peace. Unsurprisingly, conceptualizations of peace varied across respondents. Some conceptualized peace as being able to meet one's daily needs, while others conceptualized peace as simply being alive. Others described peace as when herders interact with one another in the grazing fields and, through the spirit of solidarity, draw water from the shallow wells for their livestock. The majority of respondents described peace as the ability to live in unity—being able to coexist and support one another.

For example, some described peace as **a lack of interpersonal or intercommunal issues and conflict**. As noted by two FGD participants:

“ *When we say peace, people live peacefully. They do not conflict with each other. They live without any issues.*¹⁰⁸

“ *We live together peacefully. Even the Merille, [our neighbors] do not have any problem. They are okay. So, living peacefully means they are helping each other.*¹⁰⁹

The idea of peace in terms of **acts of mutual aid** featured prominently across the study. Indeed, mutual aid was seen as one of the most visible elements and promoters of peace in Turkana. Some interviewees pointed to the fact that community members routinely support one another when acts of violence or violent raids occur through making financial contributions or helping to transport victims to the hospital. Respondents also frequently mentioned community fundraising for funeral expenses and to support children in need to attend school. As synthesized by one female focus group participant:

“ *We help each other in several ways. Even in times when the enemy kills people, people always contribute, so the affected person can be taken to the hospital and receive medical attention. In this community, whenever a child completes school and the family cannot help him, people come*

108 Focus Group Discussion (Women Only)₁, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

109 Focus Group (Women Only)₁, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

*together and discuss how to help the child, given that the family cannot afford. We can help in one way or the other. Additionally, when someone dies somewhere, we sit in groups and discuss how to support the family.*¹¹⁰

Another respondent pointed out that this mutual aid is not always limited to one village, suggesting that peace through mutual aid can extend beyond one's own family or social circle:

“ *Even if they are from Kataboi, it's still part of our ward. If we get a problem here, we call our fellows from there, and they help us out. Our support is not limited to this place alone. We extend our support to far off places like Lokitonyala, Nachukui, and Kotome.*¹¹¹

This is an important element—as explained by one community elder, experiences of peace are not necessarily uniform, **the extent of peace can vary** on individual and social (i.e., family, village, community, and even neighboring community) levels.¹¹²

Peace Resources

As one participant explained:

“ *The thing that brings peace is meetings. Sometimes, when people are affected by a lack of grass or rampant drought, they can go to other places. That is what eases the process of sharing. We normally do that, but cases of theft come in between. Something gets lost.*¹¹³

When discussing both past and contemporary manifestations of violence and conflict, participants also frequently identified incidents of theft, attacks, and desire for revenge as phenomena that undermine peace in their communities. In managing these threats to peace, participants noted the role as well as the existence (both past and present) of a number of private and government initiatives intended to prevent and address such issues. Of those, some focused on teaching pastoralists how to graze or share water and fishing

110 Focus Group Discussion (Women Only)₁, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

111 Focus Group Discussion (Women Only)₁, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

112 Rich Story/Historical Timeline Session, male community elder₂, Kokoro, August 2022.

113 Semi-structured Interview₂, male elder participant, Todonyang, August 2022.

areas with one another, others facilitated cross-border and intercommunal meetings and exchanges, and still others were said to have provided financial support through cash transfers. One participant noted that such organizations were largely no longer operating in his area and had not been for a few years at the time of research. Others complimented the role of external peace organizations in facilitating communication and information flows between communities and government officials across borders. As one male community leader expressed:

“ *They have been helping with the peace issues here. People were being taken up to Tsurumi, Omorate, to speak with the Merille and the companies on the other side. They would collaborate and talk. Kenyans would be taken to the other side to speak to the Merille. The Merille would also come and meet here at Todonyang. That’s how we got a little peace.* ¹¹⁴

Some, however, including a male participant in Todonyang, questioned the ability of external actors to engender lasting peace, explaining that after a few days of an external NGO’s facilitated intercommunal interactions, those interactions “did not help because the locals are the cause of all these problems.”¹¹⁵ The same participant went on to seemingly express discontent with the inclusivity of NGO-led efforts, noting:

“ *Those people cannot compare to the local people here. Those who come from here better understand this place.* ¹¹⁶

On the governmental level, there are indications that both the national and county governments in Turkana are keen to partner with the local community to forge collaborative approaches towards peaceful coexistence with neighboring communities. Some respondents expressed that they were either willing to or had, in the past, taken issues to the police, including issues related to livestock theft and other instances of conflict.¹¹⁷ Other participants noted that they were members of or participated in local peace committees tasked with meeting regularly to discuss emerging issues, including sharing of water

114 Key Informant Interview, local administrator, Todonyang, August 2022.

115 Semi-structured Interview₂, male participant, Todonyang, August 2022.

116 Ibid.

117 Key Informant Interview, local administrator, Todonyang, August 2022.

and pastures and addressing any arising tensions.¹¹⁸ Still, some participants expressed shortcomings in government responses or concerns about intergovernmental coordination. For example, speaking about the return of either stolen or wandering livestock across borders, one male participant in Kibish noted that:

“ *Even though terms of communication can be a barrier to this peace, it can block it. The reason being, our government, and the other government, if there is no proper communication in terms of, [for example] there’s a goat that has crossed to your side in terms of recoveries*¹¹⁹

Of course, cross-border collaboration is replete with challenges, including language barriers between state authorities and the local community, constant transfers of state authorities, and the prevention of easy coordination and monitoring by differences in the ranks and units of administration between countries. As pointed out in the example given by the aforementioned participant, these challenges can easily compromise everyday peace, leading to a relapse into conflict. While not brought up by the participants, it is important to bear in mind the causal element of the protracted conflicts—given the national political, economic, social, and cultural interests at play—in the sense that local resources including cross border committees and declarations cannot override national political imperatives.

Factors that Shape Everyday Peace and Conflict in Northern Turkana

In addition to gathering participant perspectives on what peace means and some of the resources available to support it, the study also sought to understand the factors that research participants viewed as shaping peace. In this vein, four everyday interactions featured prominently: local trade, resource sharing, intercommunal marriage, and traditional and cultural rituals and ceremonies.

¹¹⁸ Respondents included Semi-structured Interview₂, male elder participant, Todonyang, August 2022, and Key Informant Interview, local administrator, Todonyang, August 2022. Local Peace Committees (LPCs) have an established history throughout Kenya. Many of these LPCs have been supported through international governments and nongovernmental organizations over the years and, in addition to monitoring and ensuring peace, work to improve community–governmental coordination.

¹¹⁹ Semi-structured Interview, male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

Local Trade

Findings from this study suggested that local trade plays a key role in ensuring survival and keeping pastoralist communities economically connected with each other, which is both enabled by peace and can have the effect of defusing potential conflicts. As a female leader in Kibish stated:

“ *Peace has enabled us to undertake trade; without peace we will die. We usually take our wares to the market, across at Kangaten [Ethiopia] and in exchange, we buy their sifted maize flour, millet, beans and fresh vegetables.* ¹²⁰

Discussing cross-border dynamics and relationships, a female FGD respondent in Lowarengak shared that communication and trade shift during times with and without peace:

“ *Their communication is poor. Now, when there is no peace, people talk only to their friends. And trade stops, too.* ¹²¹

Local trade and trade across communities was, indeed, a recurring topic of discussion and noted as taking multiple forms. During a FGD with male participants in Kibish—where pastoralism is the main source of local livelihoods—participants almost uniformly brought up livestock trade, specifically exchanges of goats for cows as a means of growing wealth.¹²² Another female respondent in Lowarengak noted other goods that are traded:

“ *The Ethiopian maize is good for food. It’s not dirty like Kenyan maize and they do not use preservatives. It’s also sold in big sacks, those of close to 100kgs. And at a cost ranging from 2700 to 3000 [Kenyan Shillings]. We also get millet and wheat at a cheap price, in comparison to Kenya. We normally come together in groups of two or three, take a police car, and buy the merchandise.* ¹²³

120 Semi-structured Interview₄₀, female participant, Kibish, August 2022.

121 Focus Group Discussion (Women Only)₁, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

122 Participants spoke about growing wealth in terms of the exchange of other livestock for cows. Participants noted that one can exchange goats for cows, with three goats normally equal to one cow, depending on size. Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)₃, young male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

123 Semi-structured Interview₉, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

Participants viewed local agriculture outside of pastoralism as part of a mutually beneficial circular economy. During the FGD with a local peace committee in Kibish, one relatively young male respondent explained that instead of herding their livestock on farmer's lands near the river, they engage in mutually beneficial trade:

“ *On the Ethiopia side, there are so many range lands that we can graze on. We do not herd near the river because some people farm there. We normally exchange livestock manure with farm wastes such as maize stalks for feeding our livestock.*¹²⁴

Smallholder farmers, in turn, reported that after using that manure on their farms they were able to acquire a bumper harvest of maize, ensuring enough food for their families to last them all year and more animal feed. This, they noted, led to greater milk production and improved income for those selling milk.¹²⁵

Other participant stories highlighted the interpersonal aspects of local trade. One male interviewee in Kibish, for example, shared that:

“ *I work closely with my friend across, whom we serve as agents for each other. My friend gives me, Miraa (Khat), and I sell on her behalf locally here in Kibish. Similarly, I give her my jewelry and she sells on my behalf in Kangaten [Ethiopia]. Interestingly, I don't have to travel all the way, whenever I need something, I simply call and she can send a boda boda taxi operator to deliver to me, even vegetables such as cabbages.*¹²⁶

During the transect walk through freshly harvested maize and millet on the banks of the river Omo, conversations with participants suggested similar experiences.¹²⁷

Apart from exchange of goods with the neighboring communities, local trade has also developed a flourishing boda boda taxi¹²⁸ transport business. Findings from the study indicated that boda boda drivers may serve as key intercommunal interlocutors that enable

124 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)³, young male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

125 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)³, young male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

126 Semi-Structured Interview²³, male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

127 Transect Walk⁶, Ormo River, August 2022.

128 Boda boda taxi operators transport people and goods using motorbikes or bicycles.

trade and contribute to everyday peace. During meetings and interactions with select community members on a transect walk in Kangaten town, Ethiopia, the researcher observed boda boda drivers effortlessly conducting errands while also exchanging pleasantries and engaging in small talk with the shopkeepers.¹²⁹ While women bought fabrics, fresh vegetables, and grains and men carried their traditional “Ekicholong” stools around the market and to and from different eateries, youth shuttled between Kangaten and Kibish, transporting commodities to and from the market while riding their boda bodas.¹³⁰

Certain factors, however, were noted as inhibiting trade—important among them a lack of infrastructure investments required to sustain trade and ensure ongoing interactions and communication. During discussions with participants about the Lamu Port and Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSSET) Corridor Program—a government effort to develop transport and infrastructure for trade connecting Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Kenya and passing through Turkana—¹³¹ participants in Kibish suggested that roads on the Kenyan side were not well developed.¹³² During a transect walk on River Nakuwa, which connects Kenya and Ethiopia, participants explained that, during the rainy season, roads become impassable, hindering their interactions with communities on either side. Lack of communications also impeded interactions, as the communication network is spotty, with only a few hotspots.

Sharing of Pasture, Water, and Natural Resources

A second key enabler of peace is the sharing of water and pasture resources between communities. In near unanimity, male FGD participants in Kibish appreciated the fact that the kindness of their neighbors ensured the survival of their livestock during drought periods thanks to sharing pasture and water resources as they move freely within the region to graze their livestock in the neighboring Natapar -swam and Naita hills on the South Sudan side.¹³³ This is increasingly important as droughts grow in frequency due to climate change. A community elder in Kokoro further elaborated on this resource-sharing arrangement during

129 Transect Walks, Kangaten town, Ethiopia, August 2022.

130 Ibid.

131 For more on LAPSSSET, see: <https://lapsset.go.ke/>.

132 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)₃, young male participants, Kibish, August 2022.

133 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)₃, young male participants, Kibish, August 2022; follow up phone call with the local peace office.

drought in 2021, explaining that community members interact freely with the neighboring Nyangatom as they go about herding their animals:

“ *We have been moving across the Ethiopian border in the Tirga hills and back and there has been no conflict. The Nyangatoms are free, they come with their animals to live and stay among us. We are also free to graze in their fields.* ¹³⁴

It is important to note that, negotiations over sharing water and pasture resources can also involve interaction and cooperation between elders and between neighboring security services, including the police and the national police reservists, serving as another potential vector of peacebuilding and peaceful relations. One senior security officer in Kibish explained that he encourages community elders to handle any disputes around the use of water and pasture before escalating to him.¹³⁵ Another local peacebuilding officer also noted that national and county governments were keen to partner with the local community to facilitate frequent meetings and ensure peaceful coexistence among the neighboring communities.¹³⁶ Interaction and coordination with security officials spans beyond just coordination with local communities. For example, one security officer in Kibish also discussed efforts to help problem solve and coordinate resource sharing with officials from neighboring countries, noting that:

“ *We held a meeting with the Ethiopian authorities during the recent lengthy dry period and asked them to allow their herders to graze at the Kasarani.* ¹³⁷

Based on conversations during this transect walk, the Kasarani area of Turkana seemed to be otherwise treated as a “no-go” zone in years prior.¹³⁸ The area shares the same name as a sports complex in Kenya’s capital city, Nairobi, but one of the transect walk participants explained that the name “Kasarani” (in reference to the area in Turkana County) was coined from the Swahili word *Kisirani*, meaning “angry.” The participant explained that this moniker

134 Rich Story/Historical Timeline Session, male community elder₂, Kibish, August 2022.

135 Key Informant Interview₂, security officer, Kibish, August 2022.

136 Key Informant Interview₃, local peacebuilding officer, Kokuro, August 2022.

137 Key Informant Interview₂, security officer, Kibish, August 2022.

138 Transect Walk₈, Kasarani grazing field, August 2022.

was used in reference to the fact that, not long before, there was not any human activity in the area and much less grazing of livestock, even during the driest of the seasons.¹³⁹ A reason for this may have been that, as another transect walk participant added, “the area is a mass grave, full of human skulls.”¹⁴⁰ Further discussion with participants in the transect walk revealed that the area was formerly the site of violence between neighboring communities, and participants noted that the skulls of the victims remained there. Media reports seem to confirm the presence of fighting in the area.¹⁴¹ Once a site of violence, with coordination between local communities and cross-border security officials, Kasarani was now discussed as a source of cooperation and shared sustenance.

Observations made and discussions during the transect walk on the banks of River Nakuwa suggested that recent efforts to improve the sharing of pasture and water resources, like those detailed above, have been a powerful tool for enhancing social cohesion and integration among the different communities. During the walks, different herder groups could be seen taking care of their animals together, a group of women cut grass for constructing houses,¹⁴² and others fetched water from the shallow wells for their animals.

Despite these peaceful scenes, subject matter experts consulted on the sidelines of the 2022 African Peacebuilding Network (APN) and Next Gen Research Methods Workshop in Casablanca, Morocco alluded to certain developments that may threaten everyday peace and alter local landscapes and communities. Among those, oil exploration following the relatively recent discovery of oil in the region was seen as a specific concern, with participants weary of oil firms interfering with pastureland and potential negative environmental impacts.¹⁴³ These developments, as noted in discussions with these key informants, risk exacerbating existing conflicts over scarce resources with neighboring communities.¹⁴⁴ Other areas of concern included government-driven efforts to expand agriculture (including through the Kaikor drip irrigation scheme and Kachoda irrigation scheme), the allocation

139 Transect Walk₈, Kasarani grazing field, August 2022.

140 Transect Walk₈, Kasarani grazing field, August 2022.

141 See, for example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QAzxG0w6DU>.

142 Dome-shaped structures with wooden walls and grass thatches.

143 Key Informant Interview₅, Casablanca, August 2022.

144 Ibid.

of land for non-livestock-oriented purposes,¹⁴⁵ and geothermal exploration.¹⁴⁶ All of these efforts require land, which may, in turn, result in reduced pastureland and water resources available for livestock. Infrastructure projects, including those focused on oil exploration in Turkana, have been the subject of community protest in the past, including in 2018 when community members demanded tenders, jobs, security, and revenue distributions related to oil.¹⁴⁷

Importantly, climate change may also have an impact on collaboration in sharing land for economic benefit. Respondents across research sites noted the deleterious impact of droughts on livestock herds and, subsequently, local livelihoods and peaceful relations. Some discussed other sources of income, including making and selling charcoal by burning firewood from either cut or felled trees, which can, in turn, spark other forms of conflict. While one female FGD respondent in Lowarengak, for example, noted that communities agreed not to collect or fell trees on other communities' lands,¹⁴⁸ responses from other participants suggested that tensions may exist around the practice. Elders in Lowarengak told a different story, explaining that they had encouraged pastoralists to alternatively use already fallen trees to prevent them from cutting down communal trees, which they deemed important for "climate change," but to no avail:

“ I try to convince them not to cut down trees, but after that, they do it all over again. I do not know what to do anymore. We had these forest reservists, but they are no longer there. If they are here, in case I arrest someone, I will hand them over to the forest reservists. But here, we hand them over to the chief. All they can do is warn them not to do that again.”¹⁴⁹

Communal Inter marriages, Polygamy, and Dowry

Information shared by select respondents suggested that communal inter marriage may also be an important indicator of and enhance the quality of social and peaceful relationships

145 Specific examples included land allocated for LAPSET corridor development, a military camp, and the Kalobeyei refugee settlement.

146 Sammy Lutta, "Turkana County Signs Deal for Geothermal Exploration," *Business Daily Africa*, April 12, 2018, <https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/news/counties/turkana-county-signs-deal-for-geothermal-exploration-2197794>.

147 See, for example: <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018-06-27-no-oil-will-leave-turkana-without-security-and-jobs-protesters-say/>.

148 Focus Group Discussion (Women Only)¹, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

149 Focus Group Discussion (Male Elders)⁴, male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

among pastoral groups. Based on information shared by various research participants, intermarriage between the Turkana and their neighboring communities occurred regularly. For example, one male National Police Reservists (NPR) officer in Kibish shared that two of his daughters were married in Nyangatom.¹⁵⁰ Male youth FGD participants in Kibish also shared information about recent intermarriages.¹⁵¹ Another male participant interviewed in Kibish, in speaking about women from Kibish marrying men from other communities, noted that:

“ *That has helped us in that when we go there [to the other community], and they welcome us.*¹⁵²

Participants in Lowarengak reported that three girls had recently married into the community from the Merille, with one female FGD participant noting that “when there is no peace, they no longer come here, and we do not go there. When there is peace, we freely move about,”¹⁵³ seemingly a reference to brides coming to Lowarengak and brides leaving to marry in Merille. Also emphasized by these accounts is that women can also share intelligence information with their communities to forestall or warn of an impending attack, phenomenon mirrored in other research on Kenya specific to resistance to violent extremism.¹⁵⁴

Discussing intermarriage as an important outcome of peace, a male respondent in Kibish explained:

“ *In the same way, we Turkanas have intermarried. We have taken Nyangatom women. I think some of us are living in Kangaten [Ethiopia]. You will not find people in this village right now. At the moment, people are at Kangaten [Ethiopia]. They’ve married and resided there. So, intermarriages are there, and even children have been born since the inception of peace.*¹⁵⁵

150 Semi-structured Interview₄₂, male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

151 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)₃, young male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

152 Semi-structured Interview, male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

153 Focus Group Discussion (Women Only)₁, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

154 Similar dynamics were found in Lauren Van Metre, *Community Resilience to Violent Extremism in Kenya* (United States Institute of Peace, 2016).

155 Semi-structured Interview₄₂, male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

A majority of older men respondents, however, expressed nostalgia about a past in which community members intermarried more freely, warning that that was no longer happening. Some participants also expressed doubt about whether intermarrying was still a sign of peace. As one male community elder in Lowarengak explained:

“ *Previously, we used to do that [intermarry]. The Merille and the Turkana used to intermarry. That used to be a symbol of peace. They took three girls from here. They marry the Turkana girls, but it’s not easy for us to marry their girls. They do not want their girls to come to this end, but Turkanas gracefully give away their girls. If you go to Ethiopia, you will find three-quarters of the Merille are Turkanas.* ¹⁵⁶

Other respondents noted instances, both past and present, involving the “taking” of girls and women, both forcibly and consensually, from one community to another for marriage. One of these respondents, a male elder from Lowarengak, explained that:

“ *Though we do that, we have rules about that. If there was no peace and you took a woman, they would gun you down.* ¹⁵⁷

The majority of Turkana male respondents for this RESOLVE study also reported being polygamous. Most respondents considered polygamy to be a part of their cultural tradition. Across multiple sources, some interviewees, primarily those that were male, seemed to express that marrying multiple wives was seen as an important source of peace, pointing to polygamy as a practice that enhances social cohesion. The size of the family, especially the number of wives and the size of the family’s herds, was thought to determine the wealth and prestige of the family. Some male respondents gladly spoke of their numerous households and the relations between them, including households on different sides of the border. As one male interviewee explained:

“ *I have homes in both Kibish and Kangaten [Ethiopia], where I run cereal and small livestock businesses. My two families normally visit each other.* ¹⁵⁸

156 Focus Group Discussion (Male Elders)₄, male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

157 Ibid.

158 Semi-structured Interview₄₆, male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

Another male interviewee in Kibish expressed excitement about the prospect of marrying another woman from a different community, explaining that:

“ *I am excited to take another wife. I am planning to wed a Toposa woman. She will be my second wife and I am ready to pay the bride price. I already have five children, so now I will have more.* ¹⁵⁹

Still, despite some respondents highlighting both intermarriage and polygamy as important aspects of social cohesion and peace, both practices can and do involve factors that may also undermine peace. The issue of wealth is inherently intertwined with discussions of marriage, both in terms of having enough wealth to pay dowry and in the wealth obtained from a dowry. As one female FGD respondent in Lowarengak noted:

“ *When you marry, you give wealth away. When your sisters get married, you are brought wealth.* ¹⁶⁰

Another male participant in Kibish explained that:

“ *When someone has cattle, they come and marry. That is what brings peace here.* ¹⁶¹

The importance of this exchange was noted by multiple study respondents, who explained that a man in their community is considered not fully developed if he has not been married in a traditional wedding and paid the requisite dowry for his bride in full. In one FGD with male elders in Lowarengak, a respondent even went so far as to explain lack of payment in full as “a loan; it’s a debt,”¹⁶² further explaining the importance of marriage and of daughters as a source of wealth:

159 Semi-structured Interview_{44'}, male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

160 Focus Group Discussion (Women Only)₁, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

161 Semi-structured Interview, male participant Kibish, August 2022.

162 Focus Group Discussion (Male Elders)₄, male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

“ *Even though I am the biological father of these kids, I cannot claim to own them. Their maternal family owns them. Marriage is very important in Turkana, and the elders oversee it. To them, girl children are wealthy.* ¹⁶³

Payment for dowry, of course, requires resources and wealth. As one female FGD respondent in Lowarengak noted, “Poor guys looking for suitors miss out because parents want to benefit from their children.”¹⁶⁴ Resources and wealth are often familial, and in Turkana, as elsewhere, dowry is often paid in livestock. As one man in Kokoro explained:

“ *I am married, with two wives. I have married them officially and paid the bride price. Bride price normally includes 40 cows, 300 goats, 20 camels and 10 donkeys. I enjoy herding my livestock and acquiring enough of them to be able to marry another wife and pay her bride price.* ¹⁶⁵

While some may be able to afford this price, outside experts consulted during this study noted that communal requirements for marriage, especially the payment of dowry, can compel men to resort to raiding.¹⁶⁶ One community elder acknowledged that raiding was and still is an ingrained part of their community’s cultural and survival—a practice in which young men, with the blessings of their elders, prove their strength and cleverness by raiding neighboring communities for livestock.¹⁶⁷ Such raids, he explained, not only aimed to replenish decimated herds after periods of drought, but were also undertaken to pay dowry. The same elder, however, explained that, over the years, the nature of raiding has significantly changed due to the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW).¹⁶⁸ Indeed, several respondents noted that raiding had become violent and destructive. During a focus group in Kibish with young men, however, participants explained that raiding was not used to pay dowry, explaining that an individual raids at great risk to themselves and with little potential benefit nowadays (the number of livestock one is able to acquire through raiding is minimal and has significantly diminished, partially due to drought). One participant in that focus group stated:

163 Focus Group Discussion (Male Elders)⁴, male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

164 Focus Group Discussion (Women Only)¹, female participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

165 Semi-Structured Interview³⁹, male participant, Kokoro, August 2022.

166 Key Informant Interview⁴, Casablanca, September 2022.

167 Focus Group Discussion (Male Elders)⁴, male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

168 Ibid.

“ *When we marry, we do not go there to get the cattle to pay for a dowry.*¹⁶⁹

The issue of drought and its impact on livestock, and therefore, marriage, was also brought up by a male elder in Lowarengak, who noted that:

“ *Marriages have been affected by the drought. The livestock given in exchange for the girls is no longer there.*¹⁷⁰

Rituals, Ceremonies, and Networks of Communication

Indigenous, local, or folk knowledge, ritual, and ceremony often came up during the research as an important indicator of or source of peace and peacebuilding. Two traditional events referenced during discussions—the cultural practice of Edong’a and the Akritet (also referred to as Alokita) ceremony—are of note.

When brought up in discussions, most of the respondents—especially youth—referred to the cultural dance of Edong’a as an activity of peace. The Edong’a is a traditional Turkana dance performed during cultural ceremonies and celebrations, including marriages. As described by an article in *The Standard*, the event typically involves elaborate traditional dress, song, and dance, bringing together men, women, elders, and children to participate in the festivities.¹⁷¹ Research participants in both Kibish and Todonyang further explained the importance of the Edong’a, noting that during the event, community members and guests from neighboring communities freely mingle and interact with each other.¹⁷² Some research participants further explained that the Nyangatom and Toposa communities freely engage with one another along the border areas in the Edong’a celebrations, sometimes as guests of and sometimes as hosts to Turkana communities, which can foster relationships that lead to marriage. Respondents also emphasized the interpersonal role of the Edong’a, explaining that it presents an avenue for choosing marriage partners, usually the best dancer or singer. As one young male FGD participant in Kibish explained:

169 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)³, young male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

170 Focus Group Discussion (Male Elders)⁴, male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

171 For more on the Edong’a and Akritet, see: Saada Hassan, “For the Turkana, Goat Intestines Predict Rains, Raids, Droughts, Diseases,” *Standard*, 2021, <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/national/article/2001414901>.

172 Focus Group Discussion², Todonyang, August 2022; Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)³, young male participants, Kibish, August 2022.

“ *Edong’a is fun, it involves people in all villages meeting in one central place, where they sing and dance to music from evening until dawn the following day with great enthusiasm and vigor. The occasion is normally accompanied by the sounds of trumpets, whistles, and giggles from the women participants to motivate the dancers.* ¹⁷³

Celebrations such as the Edong’a were noted as usually occurring during the rainy season, when the community does not have to venture far in search of pasture and water.¹⁷⁴ A young male FGD participant in Kibish noted that such ceremonies and celebrations usually take place during times when there is plenty of milk and meat available, allowing community members to eat to their satisfaction.¹⁷⁵

Another cultural practice noted by research participants was the Akritet ceremony, which is used to predict future events. During the ceremony, a goat is slaughtered, and a community “seer” interprets what the future may hold by examining the goat’s intestines in the presence of the community elders. In reading the intestines, the seer’s predictions include those about future rain patterns and drought onset; outbreaks of human and livestock diseases; and predictions specific to peace and security, including when and where raids and attacks will occur and who the attacking parties will be.¹⁷⁶ Illustrating what this ceremony looks like in practice, one community seers present during an FGD with male elders in Lowarengak conducted a vivid illustration in the sand during a FGD:

“ *You know, in those intestines, you will see drops of red on the intestine. Here, we expect them to have Daasanach because they are brown. You will expect to see streaks of brown. When they see something brown, they know they are the Daasanach. Then at some point, you look at the veins of the intestine. You will see some reddish streaks, which means there is one that shows rain and water flowing.* ¹⁷⁷

Importantly, if the reading forecasts an impending attack, the community elders reach out to fellow elders in the community predicted as carrying out the attack through their own

173 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)³, young male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

174 Semi-Structured Interview₁₆, Key Informant Interview, local administrator, Todonyang, August 2022.

175 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)³, young male participant, Kibish, August 2022.

176 Additional information on this can be found in Hassan, “For the Turkana.”

177 Focus Group Discussion (Male Elders)⁴, male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

established communication channels (including through sending messengers) to request that the latter stop their warriors from conducting a raid. Indeed, these ceremonies inform several decisions, including migration routes and timing and, since the predictions also forecast the direction or point of entrance of future raid, where to position men in the community to best ward off predicted attacks.

It is important to note that, in conversations about cultural events and rituals, participant stories seemed to suggest that changes to the climate may be impacting the prevalence and nature of these activities. With regards to the Edong'a, one participant in Kibish noted:

“ *It [Edong'a] cannot happen when there is drought.*¹⁷⁸

Similarly, with regards to the Akritet, an elder male in Lowarengak explained that people no longer have the livestock necessary for the ceremony:

“ *It's changed nowadays and deviated from the old norms. The livestock is no longer there, and they do not know what to do in Alokita. They have shifted because there are no goats or food.*¹⁷⁹

178 Focus Group Discussion (Peace Committee)₃, young male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

179 Focus Group Discussion (Male Elders)₁, male participant, Lowarengak, August 2022.

DISCUSSION & FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Mac Ginty's conception of "everyday peace" and the factors that give rise to it emphasize a type of peace often overlooked given its seeming unintentionality, embedded within the quotidian interactions, emotions, relationships, and individual decisions that individuals take as they go about living their lives, even in contexts of broader conflict and violence.¹⁸⁰ The previous section described some of these practices and resources as they currently exist in the Turkana region. This section goes one step further by situating those resources and practices in the actual context of conflict mitigation and resolution. It also explores some of the challenges and opportunities presented by efforts to build on these existing resources to enable sustainable peace, as well as how embracing an everyday peace approach might inform alternative approaches to addressing violent extremism in areas impacted by it or seeking to prevent it.

Enablers of Peace: Cooperative Connections, Communications, and Everyday Interactions

Research findings from this study point to the importance of intercommunal connections and communications, everyday interactions, and cooperative and codependent social- and resource-sharing practices in enabling and facilitating everyday peace in northern Turkana County. Local trade, sharing of resources, intercommunal relationships, and traditional cultural events and ceremonies, as suggested by the research, play a role in both facilitating these practices of peace and functioning as important peace indicators among pastoralists and surrounding communities.

Local trade, in addition to enabling the exchange of goods and services across different communities, also creates important cross-communal lines of communication,

¹⁸⁰ Mac Ginty, *Everyday Peace*.

transportation, and everyday interaction between the Turkana community and the neighboring Nyangatom and Toposa communities. Based on the research findings, in local centers of trade, such as Kibish and Kangaten, Ethiopia, these communities exchange a wide variety of goods and services and intercommunal, including cross-border, interaction is frequent. The mutually beneficial economic exchanges of pastoral goods and agricultural commodities function together to produce an integrated and intercommunal economy enabling stability and peace, although, as many participants mentioned, without peace there may be reduced trade. Evidence from related research suggests that this phenomenon is not unique to only pastoralist intercommunal cooperation in the Turkana region. Research in Ghana exploring the relationships between farmers and Fulani pastoralists in times of both conflict and peace, for example, suggested that everyday interactions, including those emanating from trade, functioned as a component of consistent cooperative cultural interactions.¹⁸¹ In Ghana, this was the case even despite narratives and local manifestations of conflict and violence.¹⁸² The integration of communication technology and modes of transport such as boda boda taxis in Turkana pastoralist local economic systems additionally highlights the interconnectivity such economic activity is able to foster, although communication network connectivity remains spotty.

Other important everyday interactions fostering intercommunal connections and relationships as illuminated in the research included marriages (including polygamy) as well as traditional ceremonies and events. Study findings attest to the fact that marriage was viewed by many respondents as valued and perceived as a mutually beneficial arrangement both between families and communities. Additional findings from the study also suggest that some view the prevalence of intermarriages as an indicator of peace (i.e. intermarriages occur during times of peace). Many respondents referenced intercommunal marriages positively, describing a hyperlocal act that can serve to unite in-laws and their larger social networks, kin, and friends across communities through the expansion of community and familial bonds, creating welcome spaces for outsiders in communities where their kin have married. Previous research in South Turkana illustrating similar dynamics, described such ties as “creat[ing] enabling spaces for coexistence, interdependence and conflict

181 Kaderi Noagah Bukari, Papa Sow, and Jürgen Scheffran, “Cooperation and Co-Existence Between Farmers and Herders in the Midst of Violent Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Ghana,” *African Studies Review* 61, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2017.124>.

182 Bukari, Sow, and Scheffran, “Cooperation and Co-Existence.”

management, especially where disputes over land are handled with due respect for inherent ties.”¹⁸³

It is important, of course, to recognize that while intermarriages may serve a key role in connecting individuals across communities,¹⁸⁴ and thus building relationships that can enable further peace, the practice of intermarriage and polygamy is not without potential tradeoffs. Other research on the topic and consultations carried out by the lead researcher with two experts during the 2022 African Peacebuilding Network (APN) and Next Gen Research Methods Workshop in Casablanca, Morocco consider the cultural practice of polygamy in a highly patriarchal society as tending to create a social imbalance. The practice can lead only a few, economically endowed men to marry wives at the expense of poor men, especially young men.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, scholarship elsewhere has documented the role of intermarriage and polygamy in engendering other forms of communal violence, including criminal and retributive violence.¹⁸⁶ What is more, research suggests that deeply rooted norms and traditions (including marriage and polygamy) can institutionalize domination of men over women, cement gender inequalities, and limit women’s ability to assert their own rights and agency over their own lives.¹⁸⁷ Understanding the complex interplay of these dynamics and their cultural significance, particularly in light of this study’s discussions of women and girls as sources of wealth in pastoralist communities in Turkana County, is important when considering how to enhance and support peace in pastoralist relations in Turkana and elsewhere.

183 Eric Kioko and Michael Bollig, “Cross-Cutting Ties and Coexistence: Intermarriage, Land Rentals and Changing Land Use Patterns among Maasai and Kikuyu of Maiella and Enoosupukia, Lake Naivasha Basin, Kenya,” *Rural Landscapes: Society, Environment, History* 2, no. 1 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.16993/rl.ad>.

184 Ibid.

185 Carlo Koos and Clara Neupert-Wentz, “Polygynous Neighbors, Excess Men, and Intergroup Conflict in Rural Africa,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 64, no. 2/3 (2020): 402–31; Martin Baru Richard Sebit, “Cattle Rustling and Its Effect on South Sudanese Communities,” PhD diss., Virginia Tech, 2017; Valerie M. Hudson and Hilary Matfess, “In Plain Sight: The Neglected Linkage between Brideprice and Violent Conflict,” *International Security* 42, no. 1 (July 1, 2017): 7–40, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00289; Marc Sommers and Stephanie Schwartz, *Dowry and Division: Youth and State Building in South Sudan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2011).

186 Research and opinions on the role of polygamy as it relates to violence are mixed. For further reading on the topic, see, for example: Konstantin Ash, “Does Polygyny Cause Intergroup Conflict? Re-Examining Koos and Neupert-Wentz (2020),” *Research & Politics* 9, no. 4 (October 1, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1177/20531680221134969>.

187 Naomi Kipury and Andrew Ridgewell, *A Double Bind: The Exclusion of Pastoralist Women in the East and Horn of Africa* (London: Minority Rights Group International London, 2008).

Common rituals and ceremonies, or social events more generally, also contributed to enhanced intercommunal communications and interactions among the pastoralist communities in northern Turkana. The Edong'a dance, as noted, specifically provides an important medium for inter- and intracommunal interaction, drawing participants both from within the community and from neighboring communities for song, dance, and conversation, at times leading to enduring interpersonal and intercommunal relationships, including marriage. These intercommunity and intracommunity celebratory convening opportunities, therefore, can contribute towards everyday peace through establishing mechanisms for continued social interaction and ties between existing and new generations. Similarly, elder-to-elder communications across communities spawned by rituals such as the Akritet as a mechanism to avoid or avert violence can play an important role in ensuring open and collaborative lines of communication between different pastoralist groups and communities in the area. As the county and state government moves to institute strategies to address the peace and security challenges in the area, there is benefit in considering how to incorporate and document traditional knowledge systems in broader peace, sustainability, development, and security policy efforts.

Necessary cooperation over the sharing of pasture and water resources for domestic and livestock use also enables peace through opening everyday lines of communication, neighborly tolerance, codependence, coexistence, and interactions. Evidence from the Somali region of Ethiopia, for example, shows that resource sharing offers asset-poor households opportunities to stabilize and enhance their asset-base in drought years, providing incentives for cooperative rather than conflicting relations with pastoralists.¹⁸⁸ Evidence from this RESOLVE study suggests that, in northern Turkana, the community has developed mechanisms to ensure careful use of the available pastures and water including through seasonal access and use rights and agreements. Such agreements, some of which seemed to be based on mutual respect as opposed to actual law, provide mechanisms for continued interaction, mutual benefit, and collaborative codependence that may incentivize peace over violence.

These mechanisms of collaboration through local power structures and processes are additionally important to understanding how local-level peace may connect to or even

188 Ayalneh Bogale and Benedikt Korf, "To Share or Not to Share? (Non-)Violence, Scarcity and Resource Access in Somali Region, Ethiopia," *Journal of Development Studies* 43, no. 4 (2007), <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220380701260093>.

remain separate from processes on the broader national, international, and transnational level. Indeed, cooperation through elder leadership, both with other elders and with elements of the state and security forces, seemed to play an important role in upholding rule of law and in both preparing for and preventing violent acts. The importance of established local intermediaries to fostering peace has been similarly found in previous research in other parts of Kenya, which showed that interlocking community-focused security groups served as an important connection between the police and the community.¹⁸⁹

Potential Challenges to Peace

While findings from this study suggest many existing and potential practices of everyday peace within and among pastoralist communities in northern Turkana County, conversations with research participants also pointed to the presence of certain possible challenges. Most notable among these were changes in the natural environment and climate.

The wellbeing of the Turkana pastoralist community is directly related to the surrounding environment, as the pastoral mode of production is highly dependent on the availability of water and pasture. However, recent historic droughts, rainfall and flooding, and locust plagues, to name a few shifts and anomalies in the climate and environment of northern Turkana County and surrounding areas, have significantly impacted the livelihoods and everyday lives of pastoralist communities residing there. This, in turn, creates stressors that pose potential challenges for peace—stressors that existing local and community mechanisms have sought to address. Resource sharing arrangements, as noted above, offer space for collaborative intercommunal solutions to help alleviate the challenges posed by changes in the environment. Still, as noted by research participants, these arrangements are not always respected. Elder mandates against cutting down trees in certain areas, as noted in the findings section, were not always heeded, and elders do not necessarily have the required capacity to enforce laws and decrees on their own. While by and large most research participants expressed mutual respect in terms of their activities (and lack thereof) on others' land, in the absence of long-term solutions, increasing resource scarcity may challenge and further stress these everyday practices of peace.

¹⁸⁹ Van Metre, *Community Resilience to Violent Extremism in Kenya*.

Considering Resources, Infrastructure, and Impacts

Recent pushes by state and non-state actors for large-scale infrastructure, agriculture interventions, and oil prospecting may further compromise the sharing of pasture and water resources for enhanced everyday peace. To support acts of everyday peace and address this, agencies working in these spaces should consider how their activities may impact already resource-scarce communities and their surrounding natural environments. Such agencies and actors should also consider how to obtain free prior informed consent of the local community, by striving to understand and attempting to address both individual and group concerns. This could happen in tandem with improved participatory, accountable, and transparent policy and decision-making processes to ensure credibility and sustainability of the infrastructure projects.

What is more, changes in the natural environment may also impact everyday trade or inhibit cultural traditions and rituals that may otherwise enable peace, such as the Edong'a and the Akritet, and, as such, its potential to further everyday practices of peace. In some cases, these changes may impact the very means by which individuals produce goods to trade. For example, climate-related developments impacting crops and livestock production have and may diminish the goods that communities in northern Turkana and the border region are able to produce, with a direct impact on trade and livelihoods. As noted in the study findings, climate-related stressors and their impact on livelihoods have already forced some to resort to alternative sources of income, including charcoal production or through job seeking outside of Turkana in towns and city centers. While both have, as explained by participants, played a key role in ensuring the ability of those remaining in Turkana pastoralist communities to sustain their livelihoods through alternative sources of income, potential impacts on local trade networks key in fostering intercommunal interactions and cooperation is of concern. Similarly, diminished livestock and goods due to drought that are otherwise key components of intercommunal convenings already have impacted the prevalence and nature of cultural and social traditions, including Edong'a gatherings and ceremonies that can be used to foretell and prevent violence, such as the Akritet.

Considering Safeguards and Support

Potential challenges to everyday peace through trade and production call for the development of appropriate safeguards to cushion both pastoralists and the communities with which they interact (including farmers) against shocks and stresses of environmental degradation and change, as these shocks can compromise everyday peace practices and cultural rituals. Even more importantly, these safeguards should be developed with an eye toward strengthening cross-border coordination, by working closely with other stakeholders from neighboring countries through joint efforts. Considerations for policy and practice around supporting and sustaining livelihoods and resources in areas of Turkana would benefit from consultation with local populations to better ascertain how certain programs may benefit or place further pressure on peaceful relations and livelihoods. Importantly, given the centrality of mobility, travel, and communications in enabling intercommunal trade and interactions, further consideration around infrastructure and communications system developments and improvements—in consultation with local communities and in light of potential environmental needs—may assist in further alleviating some of these challenges, and, therefore, bolstering everyday practices enabling peace.

Beyond climate alone, research participants frequently discussed concerns about small arms proliferation in Turkana County during conversations. Small arms proliferation has been a consistent concern in the region, even leading to the implementation of disarmament campaigns and efforts throughout the broader “Karamoja Cluster,” an area encompassing parts of Turkana and Pokot Counties in Kenya, as well as large swaths of area in Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. Such efforts include the “cooperate to disarm” (C2D) model, which has its origins in the 2002 Nairobi Declaration and subsequent 2004 Nairobi Protocol that sought to address arms production and proliferation. However, as noted in recent literature, this and similar disarmament models suffer from specific flaws that can lead to inequities in disarmament leaving some communities with SALW and others without, creating fear and potentially exacerbating tensions and militia recruitment

in the process.¹⁹⁰ As an alternative, some have emphasized the importance of considering existing intercommunal and transborder kinship and social structures as a key component of disarmament efforts.¹⁹¹

Considering Mechanisms to Support Everyday Peace

Based on the findings from this RESOLVE Network study, practitioners and policymakers may consider efforts to reinforce and foster sources of everyday peace within these pastoralist communities as a means by which to also bolster issues potentially undermining it, including SALW proliferation. This is particularly important, and related to, concerns about cattle raiding as a means to not only acquire wealth, but to pay dowry. While the findings from this study did not indicate broad or widespread concerns about raiding because of pressures to marry and pay the requisite dowry, practitioners and policymakers should further consider how these types of cultural and social pressures, when mixed with broader environmental degradation impacting livelihoods, may impact other pastoralist communities and both peaceful and violent activities among and between them.

Considerations for Peacebuilding, Counter Terrorism, and Addressing Violent Extremism

While there has not been documentation of violent extremist or terrorist group activities or attempted activities in Turkana County, there is concern about real¹⁹² and potential terrorist threats in neighboring western Kenyan counties spawned by unemployment

190 Francis Onditi, *Preventing Atrocities Among Pastoral Communities Through Disarmament: A Study of the Karamoja Cluster in the Horn of Africa* (Washington D.C.: Stimson Center, 2022), <https://www.stimson.org/2022/preventing-atrocities-among-pastoral-communities-through-disarmament/>.

191 Ibid.

192 Gerald Bwisa, "Police 'Had Been Tipped on Terror Raid but Did Not Act,'" *Nation*, July 16, 2016, <https://nation.africa/kenya/news/police-had-been-tipped-on-terror-raid-but-did-not-act--1218400>.

and social media.¹⁹³ As explained in the context section of this report, others have gone so far as to equate pastoralist militia violence to terrorism, a common theme elsewhere across the broader Sahel and Sahara. While there is no concrete evidence to suggest support for, engagement in, or alignment with violent extremism and terrorism in Turkana specifically, this research does suggest important lessons for its continued prevention and for addressing concerns related to pastoralism vis-à-vis violent extremism and terrorism elsewhere, including across the Sahel and greater Sahara region.

- **First, to understand pastoralist communities and the ecosystems of conflict and violence surrounding them, practitioners and policymakers** should be particularly attentive to everyday sources of peace within and among pastoralists and avoid focusing or framing issues solely from a securitized or conflict lens. Indeed, given the volume of evidence, including this study, documenting the importance of communal, kin, and social relationships between pastoralists and the communities with which they interact, understanding sources of everyday peace and elements that may support or undermine them could support more proactive and positive means of engagement with pastoralist communities for shared violence prevention goals.

- **Second, violence does not happen in a vacuum.** Practitioners and policymakers addressing violent extremism and terrorism in areas in which pastoralist communities live must also consider the unique environmental, cultural, and political pressures facing pastoralist communities in particular, and the importance of social ties and connections (including transboundary ties and connections) that enable them to support their livelihoods and maintain access to the resources necessary for livestock herding. This is particularly important given shifts in local climate that impact available pasture and water resources for livestock, which may necessitate increased mobility and transboundary relationships to maintain pastoralist livelihoods. Strategies to address violence and conflict should be careful to consider and to avoid inflicting even further challenges to everyday livelihoods and peace within pastoralist communities. In Turkana, for example, even non-securitized governmental and external initiatives to extract and take advantage of natural resources in the area carry

193 Fredrick Ogenga, "Strange Names in the Village: Online Radicalisation, Social Media Literacy and P/CVE in Western Kenya," Global Network on Extremism & Technology, May 15, 2024, <https://gnet-research.org/2024/05/15/strange-names-in-the-village-online-radicalisation-social-media-literacy-and-p-cve-in-western-kenya/>.

with them additional possible stressors that could undermine pastoralist livelihoods and everyday practices of peace. Considering the often-securitized nature of both P/ CVE and counterterrorism efforts, additional care to understand these structures of everyday peace and potential impacts on them is crucial.

→ **Finally, assumptions suggesting that pastoralists are any more predisposed or susceptible to violence or engagement in violent activity,** as pointed out by others,¹⁹⁴ are overly simplistic and fail to consider the peacebuilding practices that members of these communities undertake and engage in every day. Despite the plethora of challenges facing pastoralists in northern Turkana County and surrounding regions, research respondents consulted for this research project frequently emphasized the importance of peace and tolerance in their everyday lives and spoke positively about efforts to support further peaceful relationships. For more ethical, informed, and proactive efforts to prevent and address terrorism occurring in areas with pastoralist populations, policymakers and practitioners should avoid making oversimplistic and often stigmatizing assumptions about the nature of pastoralism and pastoralists. Rather than approaching pastoralist communities as a potential vulnerability or security issue, practitioners and policymakers should consider potential areas of collaboration with pastoralists communities to enhance resilience and peacebuilding throughout the broader communities in which they operate. In doing so, policymakers and practitioners may consider identifying and working through existing pastoralist local networks and relationships, including existing relationship with the state and law enforcement and security providers to meet shared violence prevention goals and needs.

194 See the “Pastoralism and Violent Extremism” section of this report for further resources and discussion.

CONCLUSION

Often, studies and assessments of pastoralism and pastoralist communities are treated as synonymous with assessments of conflict drivers and dynamics, and in many cases, even with assessments of terrorism or violent extremism. One of the most important contributions of this report, then, is to demonstrate that there are also drivers and dynamics within and across these communities that facilitate social cohesion and peace. In adapting the “everyday peace” theory to Kenya’s Turkana County, this report hopes to direct greater attention to the need to document, analyze, and assess potential and existing drivers of peace and conflict mitigation present and practiced in everyday life.

Importantly, these findings fit with and contribute to the RESOLVE Network’s ongoing research-based efforts to better understand what the “local” in “local peacebuilding” actually means, and to more clearly articulate the value of “local” engagement.¹⁹⁵ Rather than understanding local peacebuilding as a top-down, outsider-directed strategy that simply happens to be conducted in “local” communities, the everyday peace practices of Turkana communities described here suggest the value of centering local knowledge and experience in preventing and mitigating conflict in communities under stress, with important implications for efforts to understand mechanisms by which to engage pastoralist communities elsewhere in violence prevention and terrorism prevention efforts. This is not meant to romanticize these practices, nor to suggest that the existence of everyday practices of peace is enough to prevent conflict indefinitely in communities facing a complex web of economic, political, climate-driven, and social challenges. Not all everyday peace practices can scale, and some (those related to age-cohort and gender dynamics, for instance) may create other kinds of tensions and inequalities. But to ignore them is to ignore the fact that, even in communities where violence often occurs, most people have significant lived experience in recognizing when conflict is worsening and at adapting their interactions and relationships to try and prevent it from spiraling.

¹⁹⁵ See, Kendhammer and Chandler, “Locating the “Local” in Peacebuilding.”

Specifically, this report points to four key interactions that influence everyday peace and conflict in Turkana County, including:

- Local trade;
- Negotiating access to water and pasture resources;
- Inter-communal marriages; and
- Shared rituals and ceremonies

As documented through field research across northern Turkana, community members have extensive experience in negotiating everyday practices in these areas that lessen intercommunal tensions, provide a measure of resilience in the face of new stressors, and create durable cross-community bonds that can help community leaders to stop conflict in its tracks. Equally important, through engaging in collaborative, intercommunal, and codependent activities on a daily basis, local communities form social relationships that can help prevent worsening conflict and work hard at maintaining practices that can restore peace. Although the specific arenas and access points for constructing everyday peace will vary substantially even among pastoralist communities across the region and continent, these four have, at times, been illustrated elsewhere and, thus, can provide a useful starting place for peacebuilders and implementers to look for local resources to invest in and build upon.

Even “hyperlocal” practices of everyday peace in pastoralist communities are inevitably connected to and bound up in a larger political context. In Turkana, that means examining how county governmental and law enforcement agencies learn about and do (or don’t) adapt these resources to the wider goal of conflict reduction, and how doing so might change or alter how these resources operate. But as is often the case, whenever government touches the “traditional,” new kinds of power dynamics can also emerge that threaten to transform existing peace mechanisms. This is especially complicated in Turkana (and in pastoralist communities more broadly) because these mechanisms of everyday peace also extend across national borders and are heavily impacted by changes in resource availability and climate. That said, the proliferation of SALW in Turkana and similar contexts produces inequalities that government efforts alone may not address or, at times, may even exacerbate. “Local” governmental efforts do not remain local in this kind of context,

and even the strongest community-led peace practices are vulnerable to being trampled by internationalized conflicts.

It is clear that for the residents of Turkana County, everyday peace cannot be achieved independently from other development concerns. Sustaining and scaling up the peace benefits, in particular of local trade and sharing water and pasture resources, cannot happen without investments and involvement from both national and county government. But in as much as making new rules and investments in these areas may also create new winners and losers, it is necessary to recognize that even net-positive policy interventions may impact how everyday peace practices work (or don't). The best policies will likely need to include access to information, and decision making that expands the pastoral community's ability to go about their everyday acts of peace.

Finally, while this study was not undertaken in a context experiencing active terrorist groups or violent extremism, lessons from this study on local and everyday practices of peace in pastoralist communities have important implications for counterterrorism and P/CVE efforts outside of Turkana County—such as Nigeria, Mali, and elsewhere. In these contexts where concerns about terrorism and violent extremism coincide with concerns about pastoralist communities, policymakers and practitioners might benefit from adopting approaches focused on enhancing practices of local peace, rather than securitizing pastoralist spaces and approaching communities as a source of risk or threat. In doing so, attention to localized practices of everyday peace, and potential stressors and challenges to them, is crucial to avoiding policies and programs that can otherwise undermine local ecosystems of co-existence, collaboration, and mutual exchange and, in doing so, undermining violence prevention and reduction goals.

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ANNEX 1. STUDY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS, BY SESSION

	Focus Group Discussions					Semi-Structured Interviews*					Observations and Discussions			Grand Totals
	FGD 1 - Women in Lowarengak	FGD 2 - Fishing Community in Todonyang	FGD 3 - Peace Committee in Kibish	FGD 4 - Elders in Lowerangak	FGD Total	Local Community Members	Community Key Informants	External Expert Key Informants	Semi-Structured Interview Total	Transect Walk** Participants	Elder Rich Story Session Participants***	Observations and Discussion Total		
Total Participants	10	10	10	10	40	88	2	4	94	4	8	12	146	
Gender														
Male	-	10	8	9	27	60	2	4	66	3	8	11	104	
Female	10	-	2	1	13	28	-	-	28	1	-	1	42	
Education Level														
Primary	2	3	1	1	7	8	-	-	8	-	-	-	15	
Secondary	1	-	1	1	3	9	-	-	9	-	-	-	12	
Tertiary	-	-	2	2	4	3	2	4	9	4	-	4	17	
N/A	7	7	6	6	26	68	-	-	68	-	8	8	102	
Area/ Location														
Kokuro	-	-	-	-	-	19	1	-	20	-	-	-	20	
Todonyang	-	10	-	-	10	20	-	-	20	-	-	-	30	
Lowarengak	10	-	-	10	20	17	-	-	17	-	-	-	37	
Kibish	-	-	10	-	10	32	1	-	33	-	-	-	43	
Nairobi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	
Lodwar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	
External to Kenya****	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	2	
N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	4	
Age Range														
20-29	3	3	4	-	10	19	-	-	19	-	-	-	29	
30-39	5	5	2	-	12	35	-	-	35	-	-	-	47	
40-49	2	2	4	-	8	33	-	-	33	-	-	-	41	
50-59	-	-	-	3	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	4	
60 and above	-	-	-	7	7	-	-	-	-	-	8	8	15	
N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	6	4	-	4	10	

* 88 local participants were consulted for the semi-structured interviews, however, due to language barriers, divergences in interest in and/or knowledge of the study subject matter, and varied experiences, only 45 of the 88 participants were able to supply the type of "information rich" semi-structured interviews necessary for this research.

** Four individuals participated specific transect walks. Ten transect walks were conducted for this research. Transect walks occurred in Lowarengak, Todonyang, Kanganen (Ethiopia), and Kibish, including the following: two transect walks in Lowarengak (one in Lowarengak Market and one on the Lowarengak Lake Turkana beaches); two transect walks in Todonyang (one on the Todonyang Lake Turkana beaches and one at a mass grave site in Todonyang); three in and around Kibish (one at a Kibish market and one at the Kasarani grazing field, and one at the Nakuwa River); and three in and around Kanganen, Ethiopia (one at the town of Kanganen, one at the banks of River Ormo in Kanganen, one at the farms in Kanganen).

*** Participants from two rich story/historical profiling sessions, each of which included four elders.

**** Indicative of location of consultation, includes two experts consulted in Casablanca.

About the Author

Caleb Maikuma Wafula is an independent researcher and a doctoral student in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Nairobi. As a scholar, he is interested in exploring innovative ways of cultivating peace in conflict-affected societies. His doctoral research examines the intersectionality between climate change and conflict through the space of environmental peace building. His background is in environmental governance, peace and conflict management.

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RESOLVE would like to thank the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Africa Bureau for its generous support for this report and RESOLVE's Learning from Local Peacebuilding Approaches Research Initiative.





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