

**INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE GABRA AND DASSENETCH  
COMMUNITIES OF MARSABIT COUNTY, 1960 - 2011**

**YATTANI ISACKO DIBA**

**C50/CE/11974/2007**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE  
MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN POLITICAL STUDIES OF KENYATTA  
UNIVERSITY**

**JUNE 2015**

## DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other University or any other award.

Signature:..... Date:.....

**Yattani Isacko Diba** (C50/ CE/ 11974/ 2007)

Department of History, Archaeology and Political Studies

## SUPERVISORS

We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision and has been submitted with our approval as the University supervisors:

Signature:..... Date:.....

**Dr. Felistus Kinyanjui**

Department of History, Archaeology and Political Studies

Signature:..... Date:.....

**Dr. Lazarus Ngari**

Department of History, Archaeology and Political Studies

## DEDICATION



This thesis is dedicated to the survivors of recurrent inter-ethnic conflicts between Gabra and Dassanetch of Marsabit County.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was carried out in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences of Kenyatta University. However, it would never have been completed without the support and assistance of many dedicated individuals both inside and outside the School. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to my primary supervisor, Dr. Felistus Kinyanjui, who has supervised this thesis with invaluable enthusiasm. Her valuable advice and insightful critique of the whole thesis have been of the utmost significance. Without her encouragement, it would have been very difficult to move forward. I also want to thank her for countless readings of the manuscript over and over again, during the nights and over the weekends for the past two years. I am also incredibly appreciative to my second supervisor, Dr. Lazarus Ngari, for inspiration and professional guidance during field work and in the process of compiling the thesis. I have learnt a lot from him. Special thanks go to Dr. Felix Kiruthu without whom I would never have begun this process. It was his encouragement that originally inspired me to undertake this research.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my family especially my wife Hawa, and children, Ali and Madina whose love, unfailing encouragement, understanding, continued support and prayers always propelled me through every difficult moment of my study. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to my parents Mzee Diba Yattani and My Mum Sori Diba for their kindness, love, support, encouragements, help, and care throughout my life. It was they who cultivated in me the commitment and patience that have enabled me to bring this work to completion. I would also like to thank my brother Buke Diba for his moral and practical support.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
DEDICATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES, MAPS AND FIGURES .....	ix
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS .....	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xiii
ABSTRACT .....	xv
CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.3 Objectives of the study .....	5
1.4 Research Questions .....	5
1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study .....	6
1.7 Scope of the study .....	6
1.8 Limitation of the study .....	7
1.9 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework.....	8
1.9.1 An Overview of Ethnic Conflicts Worldwide.....	8
1.9.2 Causes of conflicts .....	11
1.9.3 Dynamics of Conflicts .....	15
1.9.4 Consequences of Conflicts.....	17
1.9.5 Intervention mechanisms .....	23
1.10 Theoretical Framework .....	24

1.10.1 Explanation of the Theoretical Concept.....	26
1.11 Methodology.....	27
1.11 Introduction.....	27
1.11.1 Research Design.....	27
1.11.2 The Location of the Study.....	28
1.11.3 Target Population.....	29
1.11.4 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size.....	30
1.11.5 Research Instruments .....	32
1.11.6 Methods of Data Collection .....	33
1.11.7 Methods of Data Analysis.....	34
1.11.8 Ethical Considerations .....	35
CHAPTER TWO	
SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS OF GABRA AND	
DASSANETCH DURING PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD.....	37
2.0 Introduction.....	37
2.1 The Gabra.....	37
2.2 Geographical Setting .....	38
2.3 History and Origin of Gabra.....	39
2.4 The Gabra Economy.....	39
2.5 Socio - political structure of the Gabra.....	40
2.5.1 The Gabra Age-set Systems .....	41
2.5.2 Religion of the Gabra .....	44
2.5.3 Marriage .....	45
2.6 Introduction to the Dassanetch .....	47
2.6.1 The Origin of Dassanetch .....	48
2.6.2 Social Organization of the Dassanetch .....	49
2.6.3 The Dassanetch Age-set Systems .....	50

2.6.4 The Economy of Dassanetch.....	52
CHAPTER THREE	

PROTRACTED CONFLICTS BETWEEN GABRA AND DASSANETCH (1960-1982).....	54
3.0 Introduction .....	54
3.1 The Legacy of Colonialism and its Contributions to Conflicts in Post - Colonial African States (1964 -1990).....	54
3.2 The Role of International Border in Conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch .....	64
3.3 Colonial Tribal Resource Use Patterns in Marsabit County and their role in the Conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch.....	67
3.4 Environmental Factors and their contribution to Conflicts among the Gabra and Dassanetch .....	69
3.5 Role of Politics and Leadership in Conflicts among the Gabra and the Dassanetch	71
3.6 Proliferation of Small Arms in Marsabit County and its role in Conflicts between the Gabra and the Dassanetch .....	75
3.7 Summary.....	77

#### CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONCERTED ETHNIC CONFLICTS BETWEEN GABRA AND DASSANETCH (1983-2011).....	78
4.0 Introduction .....	78
4.1 Historical analysis of the Conflict in Marsabit County .....	78
4.2 Conflict in Marsabit County between 1960 and 2011 and their Impact on Gabra-Dassanetch Conflict. ....	80
4.2.1 The Shifta War of 1963-1968 and its Relationship with the Gabra-Dassanetch Conflict.....	80
4.2.2 The Turbi Massacre .....	82

4.2.3 The Bubisa Massacre .....	85
4.3 Historical Analysis of the Gabra and Dassanetch Conflict .....	86
4.3.1 Conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch Over Lake - Shore Grazing (1990-2000).....	86
4.3.2 Kokai Massacre - 1997 .....	89
4.3.2.1 State machinery neglect to curb Gabra-Dassanetch conflict during Kokai massacre. ....	89
4.4 Consequences of Gabra - Dassanetch Conflicts and its impact on Socio-economic Development. ....	93
4.5 Conclusion.....	95
CHAPTER FIVE	
5.0 Introduction .....	97
5.1 Conflict Resolution Strategies - A Global Perspective .....	97
5.2 Conflict Resolution Mechanisms in Kenya.....	98
5.2.1 Steps in Peace Building Process between Gabra and Dassanetch .....	102
5.2.2 Government initiative in Peace Building Process between Gabra and Dassanetch .....	105
5.2.3 The Contribution of NGOs in Peace Building Process between the Gabra and Dassanetch.....	106
5.2.4 Challenges facing the Peace Building Process between the Gabra and Dassanetch.....	109
5.2.5 The Dukana and Dillo Peace Conference of 2009 .....	111
5.2.6 The Maikona and Walda Peace Declaration of 28 July, 2009 .....	112
5.3 Conclusion.....	114
CHAPTER SIX	
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	115
6.0 Introduction.....	115



6.1 Summary of findings .....	115
6.2 Conclusions.....	117
6.3 Recommendations .....	118
6.4 Suggestions for Further Research.....	119
REFERENCES .....	120
(A) PRIMARY SOURCES .....	120
(i) ORAL SOURCES: LIST OF INFORMANTS.....	120
(II) ARCHIVAL SOURCES .....	121
(B) SECONDARY SOURCES .....	122
APPENDICES.....	137
Appendix I: Questionnaire for Religious Organizations and NGOs .....	137
Appendix II: Interview Schedule for Chiefs and Women representatives .....	142
Appendix III: Focused Group Discussion Guide for Elders .....	143
Appendix IV: Working Schedule .....	145
Appendix V: Proposed Budget.....	146

### **LIST OF TABLES, MAPS AND FIGURES**

Table 1: Target population.....	29
Table 2: Sample size.....	31
Table 3: Chronology of conflicts between Gabra and Dassanetch.....	61

### **LIST OF MAPS**

Map 1: Marsabit North Sub-County, the Study Location map.....	28
---	----

### **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: A diagrammatical representation of the variables that guide the study .....	26
Figure 2: Interview schedule with the chief.....	34
Figure 3: Dukana Peace gathering June, 2009.....	113
Figure 4: The Maikona and Walda Peace Declaration 28 <sup>th</sup> July, 2009.....	114

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

<b><i>Baraza</i></b>	Public meeting convened to explain or disseminate government policies. In the case of this study the word (of Swahili origin) will be used to mean public meetings held between the administrators of the British colonial regime and the elders from the local pastoral peoples of Gabra and Dassanetch.
<b>Conflict</b>	Can be defined as a state of disharmony between incompatible or antithetical persons, ideas, or interests that leads to a clash.
<b>Development</b>	The act of bringing out what is latent or potential or to bring out a more advanced or highly organized state which causes growth, advancement or evolution. In the context of this study development will mean advancement of social, political and economic institutions.
<b>Dassanetch</b>	The name 'Gelubba' was often used when the intention was probably 'Dasenetch'. The names 'Gelubba' or 'Shankilla,' 'Geleba', 'Galeb', 'Galop', 'Reshiat', 'Rissiat', 'Marille', 'Marle', 'Dasanetsch', 'Dathainac' are derogatory names used by the neighbours of these groups and are presently not much in use anymore.
<b>Ethnicity</b>	A highly natural self-perpetuate group sharing a motherland and associated with a particular geological area, a common language and customs which include food preferences and a common religious faith.
<b>Ethnic groupings</b>	Are people who identify themselves with one another through heritage which often consists of a common language, shared

culture (which religion might be part of), and /or a beliefs that stresses lineage and endogamy. On the hand, Barth (1996:75), defined

<b>Marginalization</b>	Is social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society or individual by denying their rights to economic, religious and political power.
<b>Resources</b>	Refers to rangeland, resources of land: pasture, water and livestock owned by the Gabra and Dassanetch communities.
<b>Protracted ethnic conflict</b>	In this study it refers to a conflict situation characterized by prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition, acceptance, fair access to political institutions, and economic participation.
<b>Violent conflict</b>	Is defined as the use or threat of physical act carried out by an Individual (s) or a group of people within a geographical enclave against another individual(s) or a group of people and or property, with the intent to cause injury or death to person(s) and/ or damage or destruction to property.
<b>War</b>	A mutually recognized, hostile exchange of actions among two or more parties (such as between or within nation-states) conducted by conventional military forces, paramilitary forces, or guerrillas to achieve respective policy objectives. Warfare assumes a degree of continuity until such objectives are accomplished or a party concedes or is defeated. Explanations and justifications for war have led to numerous categorizations and terms, for example

‘total war’, ‘civil war’, ‘ethnic war’, ‘proxy war’, and ‘wars of self-determination’.

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AU	African Union
AFPO	Africa Peace Forum
ALMP	Arid Land Management Programme
ALRMP	Arid Land Resource Management
CDC	Conservation Development Centre
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CP AP	Country Programme Action Plan
CRISE	Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAWSGABO	Dassanetch-Waata-Gabra-Borana
DDP	District Development Plan
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ETG	Ethiopian Transitional Government
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FFA	Food for Assets
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSU	General Service Unit
HoA	Horn of Africa
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IRG	Integrated Resource Group
ISS	Institute for Security Studies

ISSD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
ITDG	Intermediate Technological Development Group
KNA	Kenya National Archives
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Service
NCST	National Council of Science and Technology
NFD	Northern Frontier District
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
PCI	Pastoralist Communication Initiative
PACODEO	Pastoralist Community Development Organization
PAEA	Practical Action Eastern Africa
PSC	Protracted Social Conflict
REGABU	Rendille Gabra and Burji
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SARDEP	Semi and Arid Development Programme
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
TPLF	Tigrean Peoples Liberation Front
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugee
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## ABSTRACT

African societies and the developing nations have been undergoing difficult times in terms of ethnic conflicts and antagonisms. The Northern part of Kenya is infamous for the frequent conflicts and counter conflicts as communities are pitted against each other since the pre-colonial times. Against this bedrock this study explored inter-ethnic conflicts between the Gabra and Dassenetch communities of Marsabit County between 1960 and 2011. The study was guided by three objectives which were: the causes of the frequent conflicts between the Gabra and Dassenetch communities; the socio-economic effects of conflicts between the two communities; and conflict resolution mechanisms. The study was justified on the basis that many studies done on inter-ethnic conflicts have tended to neglect the Gabra and Dassenetch communities of Marsabit County. Many researches done on conflict in Kenya have tended to emphasize the role of political leaders, neglect of the national government of the situation on the periphery and the proliferation of small arms, but little covered on the conflict between the Gabra and the Dassenetch. The study was guided by Edward E. Azar Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) theory which emphasizes reasons why Protracted Social Conflicts occur in developing countries by singling out the deprivation of basic needs, communal identity. A cross-sectional design was used to target community conflicts in Marsabit North Sub-County. Purposive sampling technique was employed in this study to get the location or district in which the units of observation had required characteristics, along with convenient sampling, which is useful where the researcher collects data from the population who are available and willing to volunteer information. Secondary information is obtained from books, journals and newspapers. The study revealed that competition for scarce resources was a major cause of violent conflict between the Gabra and the Dassenetch. The finding also revealed that the patterns of conflict in this region are complex. It was also evident that the conflict has led to marginalization, poverty and loss of lives in the two communities. Government intervention strategies have involved Joint Community Peace Resolution Committees coordinated and facilitated by security officials and community leaders. Unique pastoralists conflict resolution mechanisms that involve use of council of elders to amicably resolve the conflict, dialogue, traditional rituals and common utilization of resources especially dry-season grazing land have been given due consideration. There have been peace-pacts between these communities that have largely been hinged on availability of pasture and water. The study recommended that the various groups involved in the peace building process need to invest in training of the indigenous on peace-building processes. The groups also need to sensitization on the dangers of conflict and presence of illicit arms



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

African societies like other developing nations societies have been undergoing a crisis due to inter-ethnic conflicts since pre-colonial times a trend that even colonization did not break. Thus from the inception of colonization, the range and magnitude of these conflicts have escalated to different shapes and dimensions thus posing a serious conflict challenges in the world today (Emeka, 1999).

The diversity of African conflicts has drawn the attention of many scholars who wish to theorize the origin of these conflicts. Such conflicts were perceived, in many ways as originating from a colonial legacy, which created the artificial and poorly demarcated borders which many considered as a potent source of conflict and political instability in Africa (ISS, 2012). According to Guy (2002:185-188), conflicts over natural resources have contributed to the decline in socio-economic developments and resulted to untold human suffering in many countries around the world.

Ethnic conflict is not a preserve phenomenon of pastoral communities alone, rather is worldwide phenomenon experienced by even the most established political and industrial democracies (Christie, 1998; Caselli and Coleman, 2002). They further contend that, ethnic conflicts, for one, have ceaselessly troubled the world in the Balkans, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Indonesia, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Northern

Ireland, and countless other locations becoming possibly the most important source of conflict in the new and old wars of today. The conflict has led to deep divisions, manifesting themselves in varying forms; the ethnic hostilities, interstate conflicts, intra-state and extra-state conflicts. Previous research has opined that a combination of poverty, weak states and weak institutions are the main cause of African conflicts (Monty and Gurr, 2005).

Borders in Africa have also played a significant role in conflict escalation. Generally they have been perceived as a barrier (Aswaju and Nugent, 1996). Many local people as well as external observers perceive the arbitrary colonial borders as one of the causes of ethnic conflicts. The Horn of Africa (HoA) is associated with natural and man-made catastrophes, which often have cross-border dimensions and with violent border conflicts (Abel, 2003).

With regard to Nyukuri (1997) Kenya has had numerous ethnic conflicts like any other African states. Most Kenyan regions are haunted by either political or ethnic conflicts. This is partly because different communities continue to knowingly rely on their ethnicity to perpetuate their dominance. Idleness among the youths has also led to an atmosphere characterized by fear and prejudice.

In Northern Kenya conflicts are always associated with competition among ethnic groups over various issues that often led to both positive and negative effects, some associated with violence (Fisher, 1991). Violent conflicts are known to have bred more unhealthy conflicts whose effects may cause disruption of lives and means of the

inhabitants (Adan, 2008). Antagonistic pastoralist groups are frequently drawn into local political rivalries by politicians seeking to gain votes, and this worsens the violence in the Northern Counties of Kenya which include Marsabit.

Mulugeta (2014) on the other hand, asserts that although occasional conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch communities have been part of the history of inter-community conflicts, the conflicts increased in the 1990s and the Gabra have engaged in violent conflicts since then. Such conflicts, though manifesting at local levels end up in a complex web of social, legal, political and economic proportions, that extend from local to national and regional dimensions. Even where no direct clashes have occurred between communities, cases of intermittent killings across the communities have been reported. This has created insecurity that has forced a significant number of households to move with their livestock from conflict prone zones (Odhiambo 2012).

Ethnic conflicts have become a major economic challenge, which perhaps explains why there are reduced economic activities, environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity, inaccessible health services, low food production, poor communication and transportation infrastructure, lack of markets for products, displacement of people, stalled development projects and an amplified number of children dropping out of school which has resulted into widespread poverty in the County (Conflict Assessment Report, 2005). The challenge in question has made inter-ethnic conflict to be seen as the reigning concept in African studies (Meier, Bond and Bond, 2007). This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the inter-ethnic conflicts between Gabra and Dassanetch of Marsabit County during the period between 1960-2011.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The Gabra and the Dassanetch have engaged in frequent conflicts that have affected the entire part of Marsabit North sub-county close to a century. The conflict between the two communities has claimed thousands of lives, as two communities continue to be hostile towards each other. The continued hostility has slowed socio-economic progress among the groups as no meaningful developments have been realized in a conflict prone environment. The impact of drought and livestock loss, occasioned by massive influx of automatic weapons from neighboring countries has led to an increase in the number of raids and increased the level of conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch, as well as other neighboring communities. Using the resource scarcity model described by Homer-Dixon, the study aims at identifying factors underlying the Gabra-Dassanetch conflicts. The research is interested in understanding how the colonial boundaries have created structural scarcity and how political administrative borders affected the use of the resources. Despite all these, attempts have been made to solve these conflicts, although it appears that the strategies employed have not been overly successful, and it is not clear why solutions to the sources of conflicts have never been found; and why the factors underlying the hostility between the two communities are not well established, more so the Gabra and Dassanetch conflict has been ignored, and goes unheard in the scholarly field, hence this study therefore, set out to understand and analyse the drivers of inter-ethnic conflicts between the Gabra and the Dassanetch of Marsabit County during the period between 1960 and 2011. Moreover, the study aims at providing a long lasting solution to the conflicts.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i) To examine the causes behind the frequent conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch communities **(1960-2011)**.
- ii) To determine the socio-economic effects of conflicts between the two communities.
- iii) To investigate methods employed in conflict resolution, and how the methods can be improved to create concrete conflict resolution mechanism between Gabra and Dassanetch communities.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- i) What are the causes of the frequent conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch communities **(1960-2011)**?
- ii) What have been the socio-economic effects of conflicts between two communities?
- iii) What methods of conflict resolution have been applied, and how can these methods be improved to create concrete conflict resolution mechanisms?

### **1.5 Research Assumptions**

The study was based on the following assumptions:

- i) There are different causes of the conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch communities.

- ii) Conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch has had serious socio-economic effects on the entire population of the region.
- iii) Attempts have been made to try and resolve the conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch.

### **1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study**

The study is significant because in all the literature reviewed, just a few have delved in to the cultural aspects of the Gabra and the Dassanetch communities. Many studies done on inter-ethnic conflicts have tended to neglect the Gabra and Dassanetch communities. This research will go a long way to broaden researchers' intellectual horizons as far as understanding of inter-ethnic conflicts among the communities of Northern Kenya. The research findings forms a database to resort in identifying alternative practices in finding long lasting solutions to conflicts globally and specifically in Kenya (as it expands the knowledge base on this topic). The research also provides a foundation for further research in establishing peace and countering conflict. Besides, the effects of the conflicts established in the study can also be used as a means of demonstrating to the conflicting communities the futility of conflicts and therefore accelerate the process of conflict resolution and peace building among the conflicting communities and others experiencing conflicts.

### **1.7 Scope of the study**

- i) Although there are several other ethnic groups living in Marsabit County, this study confines itself to the conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch between 1960 and 2011. The researcher chose 1960 because the conflict was at its climax

and 2011 when government, NGOs, churches interventions began to produce positive results.

- ii) The choice of PSC theory in this study was appropriate since this theory situated the study in the right context. This theory helped to explain the discontentment of communal groups due to deprivation of human needs, communal content as seen in the two groups trying to protect their identity, property and lives by revenging against the rival community and using arms they get through the porous borders, thereby authenticating the applicability of the international linkages pre-condition in PSC
- iii) The study was limited to three key variables that is; causes of the frequent conflicts, socio-economic effects of conflicts and conflict resolution mechanisms.

### **1.8 Limitation of the study**

- i) The study was limited by the nature of the terrain in the location of the study. The area is quite expansive with poor infrastructure. The expansive region meant that the researcher took more time to reach the intended destination, hence fatigue, a situation that also involved a lot of funds which are also limited. To overcome the challenge of expansiveness the researcher engaged two research assistants born and brought up in Marsabit and particularly from the two communities. More so, to overcome the language barrier for Dassanetch, a research assistant from Ileret was recruited to ease the process of data collection.
- iv) Unavailability of informants was overcome by conducting field work. Field work done in June - July when herders were available and again in December, where the key consultants / informants could be traced. The researcher followed them to *fora*.

## **1.9 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

The literature review for this research revolves around issues like causes of conflict, the socio-economic effects of conflict of which represent a vast area of research. Consequently, each is represented by an enormous amount of literature; both academic and non-academic. The literature review adopted in this research is therefore, limited to some of the texts and articles that link conflict in Africa in general and Kenya in particular with the resurgence of violent ethnic conflicts. An understanding of ethnic conflict is important for this study as it provides an in depth literature of the study topic. This implies the possibility of establishing a relationship between ethnic conflicts and their recurrence, an endeavour that this study establishes.

### **1.9.1 An Overview of Ethnic Conflicts Worldwide**

There have been many conflicts across the world between 1960 and 2011. In China for example, there was a conflict in the provinces of Gaungdong and Shandong in 2000, in Ethiopia, India, Kenya and Yemen, in 2006, 2004, 2005 and 1999 respectively (United State Institute of Peace, 2007). Conflicts, across the world, have been due to competition for natural resources, so access to natural resources cannot be taken for granted. Violent conflicts over water resources have broken out in many countries. According to the United Nations, many women in Darfur region of Sudan walk for several hours a day to look for water and more than two million people, mostly children, die from diseases associated with water each year. Due to this shortage of water, Darfur region has experience a lot of unrest (Eliot, 1994).



Access to natural resources become the reason for a conflict (ibid, 2007). It is estimated that close to 50 armed conflicts which occurred in 2001 had a strong link to natural resource exploitation which were either lawful or unlawful exploitation that helped to trigger, intensify or sustain the violence (ibid, 2007). In Pakistan and Bolivia, violent protests broke out over the distribution of water. In the Middle East, disputes over oil fields in Kuwait among other issues led to the Gulf war in early 90s. In Africa, rebel groups such as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (known by its Portuguese acronym UNITA) used revenues accumulated from diamond mining to fund their rebellions against their respective governments. Fearon (2004: 275:301) on the other hand, has also indicated that wars appear to be lasting longer. The expected duration of conflict is now more than double than conflicts that occurred before 1980s. Civil wars emerging from coups or revolutions tend to be short. Civil wars in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have also tended to be relatively brief, as have anti-colonial wars. By contrast, wars that typically involve land conflict between a peripheral ethnic minority and state-supported migrants tend to be long-lived. Does conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch fit into this context?

Collier and Hoeffler (2000) at the World Bank, suggests that countries whose wealth is largely dependent on the exportation of primary commodities like agricultural produce and other natural resources are highly susceptible to civil violence. They further assert that the causes of contemporary conflicts should forgo both political and cultural arguments and instead focus on the greed of rebels especially in their trade on natural

resources (ibid, 2003). Does Gabra and Dassanetch conflict politically or culturally instigated?

According to Marshall and Gurr (2003) countries like Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Libya and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), have been marred with volatile mix of instability, corrupt political institutions and poverty. On the other hand, Mc Onyango (1995) argued that, inter-ethnic conflicts in Africa are not only as a result of the continent and national boundaries enclosing multi-ethnic groups, but are as a result of ethnic grudges which have existed for a long time. He further contends that the past inter-ethnic conflict management strategies in Africa have tended to concentrate on symptoms of the effects rather than the root causes. This has led to numerous socio-economic and political grudges between and within the numerous ethnic communities in African states.

Pastureland is also a substantial but fragile and dangerously degraded resource. Its future is put into further jeopardy by continuing conflict as to rights of access. Conflicts exist at several levels and among different stakeholders. In recent years, unavailability of water coupled with limited rainfall has resulted to an increase of conflict among pastoral groups due limited fertile pasturelands. For example, in Puntland region some pastoral clans are making enclosures into grazing areas, which is in violation of customary pastoral law, and this is violently resisted by other pastoral clans, resulting in conflict (Conflict Analysis Regional Report - Puntland, 2004). This study investigates whether fencing of a vast pasture land could ease conflict or result to more conflicts.

Krätli and Swift (2001) on tension between the Turkana and other pastoralist groups over access to water and pasture. They lamented that conflict have increased as water pans / wells have dried up, with subsequent loss of pastures. This is because the water table is not being recharged. The wetland areas that the Turkana could traditionally fall back to in times of drought have dwindled. On the other hand, (Carr, 2012) pointed out that, Lake Turkana has also receded with the construction of mega dam (Gibbe 3) on River Omo, and with receding of the lake territorial disputes have become more common taking with it the landscape features that formed traditional boundaries between groups. The strategies employed by the government have not been successful since ethnic conflicts still emerge as more force is employed in attempts to neutralize them.

In this context, understanding the conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch is important because violence between communities have been fueled by porous border. Therefore, the creation of boundaries seems not to solve the problems of conflict, and this is why I investigated to find out the multiplicity causes of Gabra and Dassanetch conflict.

### **1.9.2 Causes of conflicts**

Several factors have been cited to lead to ethnic conflicts, which include, but not limited to; cross-border conflicts and illicit arms, social inequity, exclusion and victimization, vulnerability of households, socio-cultural factors and climatic changes (Emeka, 1999).

### **1.9.2.1 Cross-border Conflicts and Illicit Arms**

The Northern part of Kenya has porous and disputed borders. The “Illemi Triangle” is a classic example of a disputed land, under de facto control of Kenya, but is frequented by 5 ethno linguistic communities: the Turkana, Didinga, Toposa, Nyangatom, and Dassanetch, from Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Sudan. These groups traditionally migrated to graze in the triangle hence, conflict was inevitable. During pre-colonial conflicts, the raiders of Ilemi triangle used traditional weapons and guns which they obtained from Ethiopian gun-runners and outlying trade centres (such as Maji). Ammunition was so common and it was used as local currency. Thus boundaries that cut across traditional migratory routes makes access to pasture resources difficult and thus became a source of conflict (Mburu, 2003). This has not been fully documented in the conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch.

The conflict among the pastoralist communities seem not to be ending, because easy access of weapons that have evolved from traditional to modern weapons (guns).

### **1.9.2.2 Social inequity, exclusion and victimization**

Pastoral communities in Kenya and elsewhere in the world commonly lack vital infrastructure such as adequate roads, schools, markets, health facilities. They often do not have the capacity to access their rights and benefits. This means that Pastoralists are isolated due to poor economic integration with their national economies. Their difficult circumstances are worsened by conflict from within and outside of their communities. According to Ruto and Pkalya (2004), the pastoralist communities have been neglected and deprived off their rights.

Conflicts among the Dassanetch and Gabra seem to be influenced by the mind-set of marginalization. This is because the communities might be having minimal involvement in political domain and lack of voice in both the governance and electoral processes. Yet this aspect has not been fully investigated.

#### **1.9.2.3 Vulnerability of Households**

Asymmetric power relations within and between groups and exotic factors like drought have made certain groups more vulnerable than the others. This vulnerability has extended to the household level. The relative abundance of resources among one household and its scarcity among the other is observed to result to a greater risk of conflict. When more and more households become vulnerable due to environmental shocks or conflict itself, the likelihood of violent conflicts increases. In Kenya, for example, increasing levels of poverty and idleness tend to push some youth warriors to involve in to commercial raiding and target livestock traders which escalate to more conflicts (IADC, 2009)

#### **1.9.2.4 Socio-Cultural factors**

Some cultural values and beliefs lead to conflicts. Activities such as raiding, cattle rustling, or killing members of groups viewed as enemies, have a long history and have continued to be aspects of traditional culture of pastoralist in the Southern Ethiopia and Northern Kenya. These activities have been part of the traditional conflicts that have existed in these regions. Such traditional conflicts have become increasingly destructive to potential or ongoing peace building efforts. For example, although a comprehensive peace declaration has been enacted by Borana and Gabra

communities, raiding has continued because some members of the community find it prestigious to raid other communities. Some pastoralist groups for example, must kill contending group to get married or to get respected by the community. These factors have eroded social capital, undermined customary rules, increased mistrust and mutual suspicion as well as weakened cultural ties of the communities. This has contributed to persistent conflicts in these areas (IADC, 2009). Most of these factors seem have not been fully investigated.

#### **1.9.2.5 Climatic changes induced conflicts**

Climate change affects the weather either by increasing or decreasing the frequency of droughts. Climatic conditions have been blamed for particular civil wars, such as Darfur (Faris, 2009). Consequently, immediate climate variability can affect conflict both indirectly through the impact on resources and directly through mobility. Other possibilities are that communal violence may be correlated with climate variation. Wet periods are considered more suitable for raiding because the result of raiding may be more successful (Meier Bond and Bond, 2007). Several studies have reiterated that pastoralist raiders are likely to attack during wet seasons because of the high grass, strong animals, dense bush to hide and availability of surface water, which makes it easier to trek with the animals (Adano and Witsenburg, 2005). During drought seasons, cattle raiding attacks decrease as additional burdens to pastoralist groups are avoided.

However, occasionally there are some raids that take place during dry season, and this is an area the study intends to investigate, why is this case?

Rainfall is also a key climate variable in terms of its impact on society. Limited rainfalls which have led to shortage of water have contributed in the increase in clashes among pastoral groups over pastureland.

### **1.9.3 Dynamics of Conflicts**

Conflicts among ethnic groups are triggered by multiple ecological, economic, socio-cultural and political factors rather than single causes. The most frequent conflicts are linked to competition over common grazing areas and water resources. The proliferation of small arms is another aggravating cause of violent conflict in the area and it is important to establish the extent to which it is a factor between Gabra and Dassanetch.

Conflicts can also be triggered by individual killings, seen as acts of heroism by some pastoralists' communities, which can in turn stimulate ethnic conflicts. Individual ill acts can lead to a much larger ethnic conflict, often between traditional rival groups. Such conflicts cause loss of human lives, damage to property and disruption of livelihood activities. The long-standing culture of retaliation has a compounding effect in conflict and sustains the cycles of conflict. Pastoralists in these areas feel humiliated if an attack on a family is not revenged. The feeling of humiliation and the subsequent retaliatory measures are usually perceived as collective responsibilities of the entire ethnic group concerned (Yohannes et.al, 2005).

Are there retaliatory attacks among the Gabra and Dassanetch? If yes, why is it the case?

Proliferation of small arms is another major cause of conflict. Individuals, families and communities in the pastoralist areas live in these cyclical scenarios of conflict. They also feel they need to retaliate in case of an attack, as a matter of cultural pride. This has led to proliferation of small arms as sign of shielding one-self as individual and the community at large (ibid). All the ethnic groups in these areas attach great importance to the ownership of semi-automatic rifles because it is considered as a guarantee to gain power over the rival ethnic groups. Merchants from different ethnic groups are indirectly involved in the conflicts through trading commodities and smuggling arms and ammunition. These groups are often targeted when conflict breaks out as they are assumed to give information to the enemy, except for those merchants, who are considered to be peace-loving (Safer World, 2001).

To what extent do small arms contribute to ethnic conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch of Marsabit County?

One of the current causes of conflicts relates to access to grazing pasture and water points. This has been caused by the degradation and reduced carrying capacity of the rangelands (encroachment and little, erratic rain) combined with continued overgrazing by large cattle herds. This results in competition over resources, especially during droughts and dry seasons when the nutritional conditions of livestock are generally compromised. The limitations of the rangeland resources and the subsequent competition often lead to violent conflicts between different ethnic groups in the area. Fighting usually takes place around the common grazing and watering points. Since many natural resources such as rivers and forests or grazing areas serve as boundaries,



as well as valuable livelihood resources, minorities residing in such geographical locations are always vulnerable (Mkutu, 2000).

Cattle's rustling triggers or exacerbates violent conflicts between ethnic groups. Cattle rustling in the pastoralist communities are often considered as an acceptable means of acquiring assets, whether in times of retaliatory conflicts or under normal circumstances (Yohannes, 2005).

#### **1.9.4 Consequences of Conflicts**

In Northern Kenya, Southern Sudan, Somalia, Algeria and Sierra Leone, armed violent conflicts have had a massive impact on the rural asset base and agricultural production (Birch and Shuria, 2001). Access to arable land has been affected by the conflicts. Seeds have been lost, stolen or sold off, and irrigation system have been destroyed or neglected. According to Collier, 2003, the net loss to agricultural production attributed to armed violence in Africa from 1970 to 1997 was estimated at US\$25 billion equivalent to 75 percent of all aid in that period.

Investigations by Collier (1997) on the consequences of conflicts for GDP (Gross Domestic Product) further reveal that GDP per capita, during civil wars, declines at an annual rate of 2.2% relative to its counterpart. He further argues that the decline is partly because war directly reduces production, and also causes a gradual loss of capital stock. He further contends that the loss of capital stock is due to destruction, non-saving, and the substitution of portfolios abroad (Collier, 1994). From Collier's argument, inter-ethnic conflicts affect the economy and yet little is known about the

causes and effects of ethnic conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch at macro-level such as in Marsabit County.

In his exploration of the economic effects of conflict by comparing the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) during the Pre-conflict and Post-conflict, Staines (2004) reveals that GDP growth and economic growth were below normal during the conflict period as compared to the pre-conflict periods.

A study by Knight et al. (1996) on the other hand, indicates that warfare has strong negative effect on investment. Conflicts reduce growth mainly by depleting the domestic capital stock in its various forms. They further contend that conflict also leads to higher security spending and has a negative effect on trade policy. According to Goodhand (2001) poor countries have a greater disposition to conflict, and poverty is a probable outcome of conflict. Conflict may lead to underdevelopment and poverty, because it affects human capital by causing physical and mental impairment. It leads to decline in health and nutritional status, as well as in education and training opportunities which in turn drive individuals and households into poverty. Declines in health and well-being can hinder an individual's capacity to work, thus constraining the ability to earn an income in both the short-term and long-term.

In addition to other forms of investments, how does conflict impact on health, education among the Gabra and Dassanetch of Marsabit County?

In her thesis on Traditional Leadership and Ethnic Conflicts in Northern Ghana, Jonsson (2007) claims that there is a link between development and conflict in the

region, and this link exist on different practical levels: Jonsson (2007) concludes that conflicts have disrupted the development where they occurred by destroying its resources and development projects. In summary conflict affects Market prices, Alternative Economic Activities and Linkages, Social Expenditure and Education.

#### **1.9.4.1 Effect of Conflict on the Market**

According to Buchanan-Smith and Davies (1995) and Little (1996) changes in market prices in pastoral areas are often warning signs for food security, drought, famine or an impending cattle raid. Livestock market prices drop with food shortages because increased prices of food force people to sell animals (Nyukuri, 1997). The market supply of animals is also increased by a threat of rustling leading to the drop in prices of livestock. This is because herders prefer to sell their animals at throw away prices rather than risk losing all their animals in a raid (Little, 1996).

On the other hand, Ocan (1994) noted that the herders' desire to sell as a response to raids is very convenient for livestock traders, who may take advantage of desperate sales in conflict prone areas. Hence, the price of livestock drops in the areas affected by clashes or heavy raiding, but not in distant large urban livestock markets where demand remains high. Rampant insecurity, robbery, thefts along market routes and long distances covered to reach available markets also discourage many pastoralists from travelling long distances to sell their animals leading to lower livestock prices in the pastoralist areas (Birch and Shuria 2001; Galaty and Bonte, 1991). Are scenarios the same in Gabra and Dassanetch conflict?

#### **1.9.4.2 Role of Conflict on Alternative Economic Activities and linkage**

Pastoralists, in conflict prone areas, adopt new or transformed economic activities and linkage in order to sustain themselves (Hendrickson, Armon and Mearns, 1998). Armed violence in Kenya has largely contributed to long-term deterioration of pastoralism especially in Northern Kenya. This has greatly contributed to a high rate of impoverishment among the pastoralist in this area. For instance, in Southern Turkana, many families have lost their livestock to bandits. This has led to a decrease in the livestock to a large extent, leading to poverty among the Turkana (Buchanan and Jeremy, 2000). In the worst case scenario, the affected families are displaced and forced into destitution (Bonfiglioll and Watson, 1992). The assets bases are depleted and the necessity for money to purchase food is also increased. This leads to increased poverty levels, especially when there are no alternative economic opportunities. Invaded homes have to participate in increasing number of non-livestock work activities to survive such as mat making, salt harvesting and bee keeping (Helland, 1994).

Donors and the government have been intervening to ease the impact of conflict by providing alternative economic livelihoods as part of broader strategies for promoting sustainable development in the border areas (Dietz, 1987). In regard to natural resources, improved water catchment and retention along with range management techniques have also been introduced to increase water and pasture resources. More expensive interventions like provision of boreholes have also been undertaken to assist in providing water. During times of excess stress, relief foods, containerized water and

animal fodder are also provided (Birch and Shuria, 2001). It is therefore necessary to establish whether such situation was also experienced among the Gabra and Dassanetch of Marsabit County.

#### **1.9.4.3 Social Expenditure**

Armed conflict negatively affects the provision of social and public services. Armed violence lead to destruction of medical facilities and schools. This is likely to have a long-term negative impact on the poor and vulnerable people who are dependent on state provisions (Birch and Shuria, 2001). Two decades of armed conflict in Southern Sudan have led several generations growing up with little or no access to formal education (Deng, 2003). Public health centres have been abandoned in the areas affected by inter-ethnic violence. During the conflict in Sierra Leone, it is estimated that fifty percent of health facilities were destroyed when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) deliberately destroyed health facilities and displaced staff as part of their strategy to create chaos and undermine the state (Ginifer, 2005).

The heavy financial cost of armed violence means that the governments' expenditures on security skyrocket at the expense of provision of social services. This leads to more social exclusion of the areas affected by violence leading to limited or lack of investments which in turn is likely to exacerbate into tensions (Umar, 1994), and it is in line with this study to investigates the role of government to negotiated ceasefire between the Gabra and Dassenetch.

#### **1.9.4.4 Education**

An armed conflict has an adverse effect on the lives of children. They cannot lead normal lives. Their chances of getting education and being employed afterwards are also affected negatively (Nyukuri, 1997). Insecurity affects formal education directly. Teachers may abandon conflict prone areas due to lack of security. Schools are also closed during the times of armed conflict. For example during the clashes in Wajir in 1992-1995, some 160 civil servants including teachers, either left the district or refused offers of employment in Wajir: Forty five primary schools, and five secondary schools were affected by violence with ten primary school serving 2,500 students closed down (Ibrahim and Jenner, 1996). Poverty and destitution further diminishes the possibility of parents to even afford the costs of primary education. On the other hand, children abandon school, as part of social-cultural or family obligations, to join others in “fighting the enemy”. In other cases school going children join their parents as they migrate to other areas in search of physical security. In the situations of armed violent conflict, schooling is frequently disrupted through the closures, curfews and displacement. Very often schools are destroyed during conflict (Pkalya et.al, 2003).

Disruption of school leads to low levels of education, confining more and more people to pastoralism as the only source of a livelihood (Ibrahim and Jenner 1996). The resulting lack of educated professionals will ultimately lead to underdevelopment. This is yet to be investigated and the findings demonstrate how this sector has been affected.

### **1.9.5 Intervention mechanisms**

According to Luling (2002), managing ethnic conflicts in Africa requires individuals, communities and nations to reconsider using the traditional African techniques of conflict management which may prove more useful in the current African situation than Western models of conflict management. Throughout the history of Africa, there have been conflicts between competing groups which necessitated the development of various techniques of conflict management. Pre-colonial methods of conflict management have often been disregarded in attempts to resolve contemporary ethnic conflicts in Africa (Ihonvbere, 1994:53). Yet the history of Africa tells us of many circumstances where people of different ethnic groups lived together in relative peace, and even when there were conflicts, there were ways to resolve the conflict and peace prevailed, meaning that there were successful ethnic conflict management processes in existence years ago. The conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch are inter-ethnic based, yet there is need to investigate the dynamics of this conflict, and why traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution didn't bear much fruit in solving this conflict.

Emeka (1999) the issue of proper ethnic conflict resolution is of huge interest to most African states. He further contends that, at present, many of these states have come up with a number of practices for settling these conflicts. The challenge is that the techniques employed to resolve the conflict do not resolve but instead only mitigate the situation for a short time. Long term measures should be devised so as to achieve better results. Hence, it is important to examine some of the conflict management strategies adopted in African states and establish how best they can resolve the

conflict. These strategies include inter-ethnic linkage, constitutional measures, economic deregulation, granting of local autonomy as well as welfare programs.

The African nation-states need to focus on the informal systems of ethnic conflict resolution. These should mainly involve deployment of local efforts. These informal systems are thought to be highly effective in the resolution of ethnic conflicts (Edevbie, 1999). In the African setup, joint community delegations and council of elders are some of the special consideration to get out of the predicament of ethnic conflicts. These means are not outlined in the Kenyan constitution though they are likely to provide better results when it comes to conflict resolution (Diof, 1990). In Marsabit County for instance, a number of strategies have been introduced so as to resolve ethnic conflicts since Kenya's independence.

### **1.10 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Edward E. Azar's Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) theory. According to Azar (1990), conflicts in most underdeveloped countries arise out of long-drawn-out social conflicts. This theoretical aspect is important in understanding the Marsabit conflicts because the various factors that Azar considered are present in the Marsabit conflicts. First, Azar suggests that the most significant of all factors that lead to Protracted Social Conflicts is communal composition. Societies experiencing Protracted Social Conflicts are characterised as having a multi-communal composition which is true of Marsabit County as it comprises of more than thirteen (13) different ethnic communities, whether formed as a result of divide-and-rule policies of former colonial powers or through historical rivalries often resulted in the dominance of one



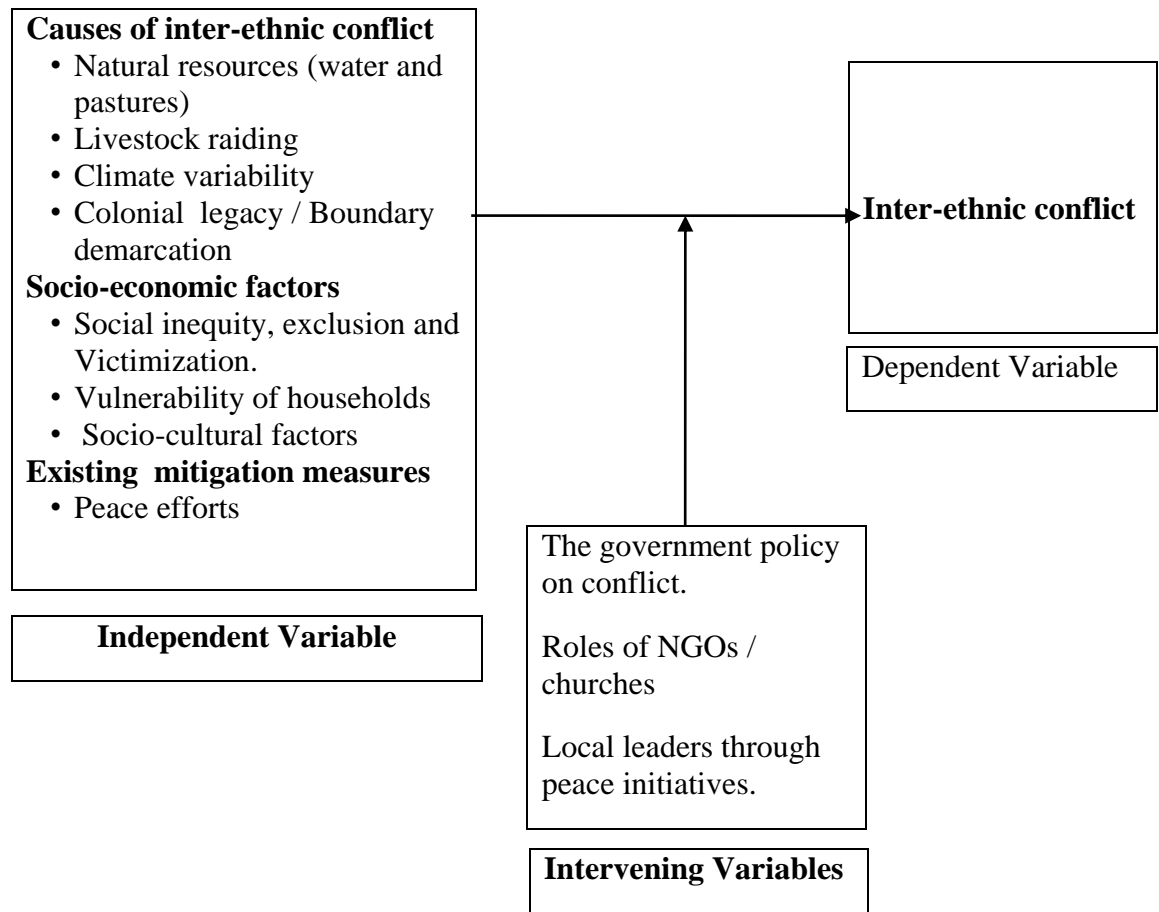
group over the other. In Marsabit County, the main actors in different conflicts claim to be dominated by the community they conflict with, for instance, the Dassanetch claim that the Gabra have dominated them for long and hope to change the status quo.

Secondly, Azar argues that Protracted Social Conflicts are characterised by disarticulation between the state and society as a whole. A factor that contributes to this is what Azar calls the most obvious need which is individual and communal physical survival along with well-being. Individual or communal survival is based upon the satisfaction of basic needs. In the world of physical scarcity, these basic needs are rarely met by some of the groups. Whilst one group of individuals may enjoy satisfaction of those needs in abundance, others do not. Grievances resulting from need deprivation are usually expressed collectively. Failure to redress these grievances by the authority cultivates a niche for a PSC, (ibid.).

Another key factor that makes Azar's theory relevant in this study is the international linkages. The communities that inhabit Marsabit County have an international link particularly with Ethiopia, a good example is the Gabra and Dassanetch communities who live on both sides of the Kenya - Ethiopia border, and hence cross border conflict is imminent, this greatly influenced the security in Marsabit County.

Azar points out the following four possible consequences of long drawn armed conflict: deterioration of physical security; institutional deformity; psychological disorientation, increased dependency and cliency.

**Figure 1: A diagrammatical representation of the variables that guide the study**



*Source: The Researcher, 2014*

### 1.10.1 Explanation of the Theoretical Concept

From this model we observe that the independent variables in this cause(s) of inter-ethnic conflicts which include; climate variability, scarcity of natural resources and pasture, livestock raiding and colonial legacy/ boundary demarcation, along with socio-economic factors such as socio-inequity, exclusion and victimization, vulnerability of households and socio-cultural factors and various mitigation measures have been considered

The intervening variables for the study are the local leaders who intervene through peace initiatives, the NGOs and the Governments of Kenya and Ethiopia through policy on conflict, provision of intelligence, armed policemen and the army. The dependent variable for the study is the inter-ethnic conflicts which lead to lack of access to market, loss of livelihood, social expenditure, disruption of education, alternative economic activities and linkages was the dependent variable.

## **1.11 Methodology**

### **1.11 Introduction**

This section discusses the methodological procedures employed in the study. It is structured as follows; design of the study, location of the study, the target population, sampling procedures and sample size, research instruments, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis and ethical considerations.

#### **1.11.1 Research Design**

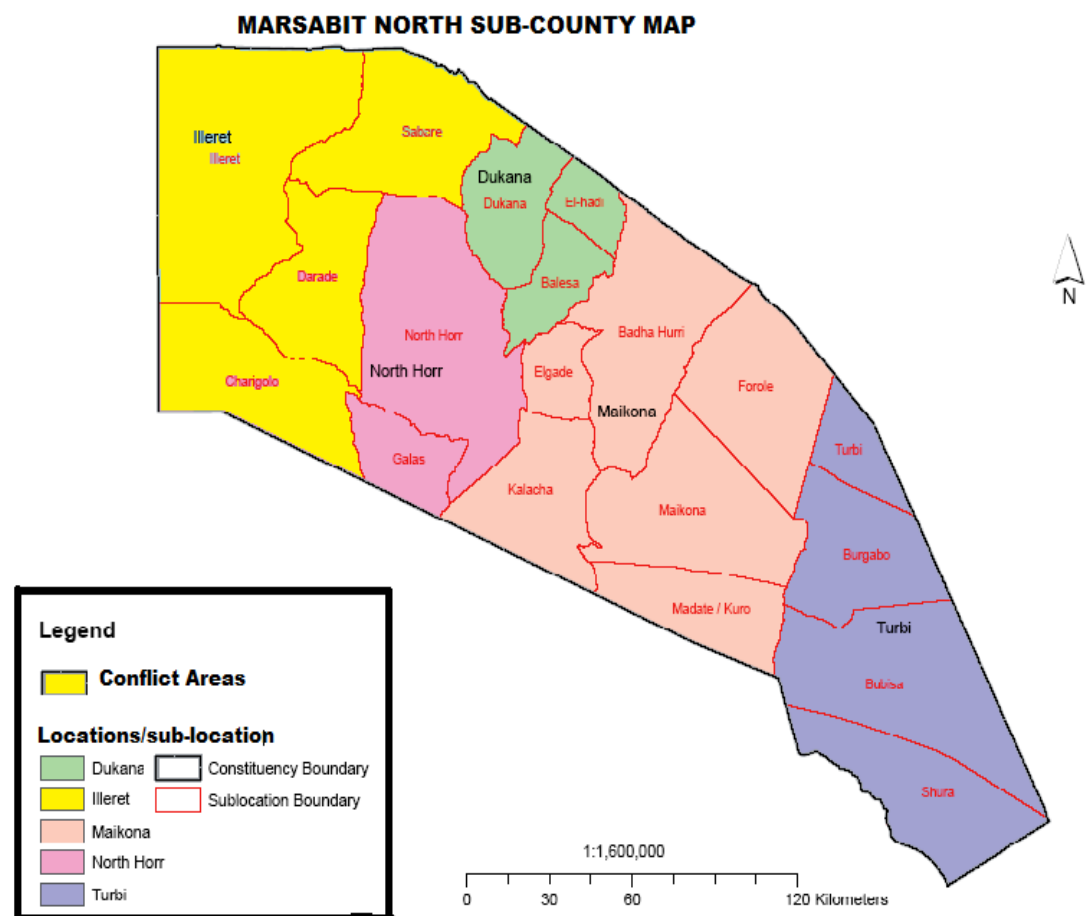
The study used a cross-sectional study design. The study design was suitable because it aimed at finding out the prevalence and changes of conflict between the Gabra and the Dassanetch. The researcher did this by taking a cross-sectional of both the study population and the time of investigation. The cross-section of the population was chosen from chiefs, elders, women leaders, religious leaders and NGOs and the time of investigation was between 1960 and 2011.

The secondary sources which included books, periodicals, journals, annual reports, newspapers were consulted from various libraries, as well the colonial records from the Kenya National Archives (KNA) and documentation service in Nairobi, so as to

give the references to the previous efforts and the status of the conflicts from the past. Kerlinger (1969), points out that descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact findings, but often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solution to significant problems. They are more than just a collection of data since they involve measurement, classification, analysis, comparison and interpretation of data.

### 1.11.2 The Location of the Study

**Map 1:** Marsabit North Sub-County, the Study Location map



*Source: Survey of Kenya (2013)*

This study was done in Marsabit North Sub-county of Marsabit County. This County is approximately 565 kilometers to the north of Nairobi and it is a home to a number of diverse ethnic communities that include the Borana, Burji, Gabra, Rendille, Samburu, Turkana, Dassanetch and El - Molo. There are 13 locations in Marsabit North Sub-County. The research was carried out in this region since the researcher has well established networks that effectively facilitate data collection during the research. Similarly, the area was deemed appropriate since it has a homogenous population.

#### **1.11.3 Target Population**

The population of the Gabra and Dassanetch in the area under study was 75,000 and 1,500 respectively, as per 2009 national census. However, the targeted populations were leaders who included the chiefs from the region, leaders representing various women groups, officials from Non-governmental organizations operating in the region, religious leaders and Members of the Council of Elders. This target group was chosen in order to get data that was representative. The targeted respondents were two hundred and eleven and they were identified with the help of two research assistants.

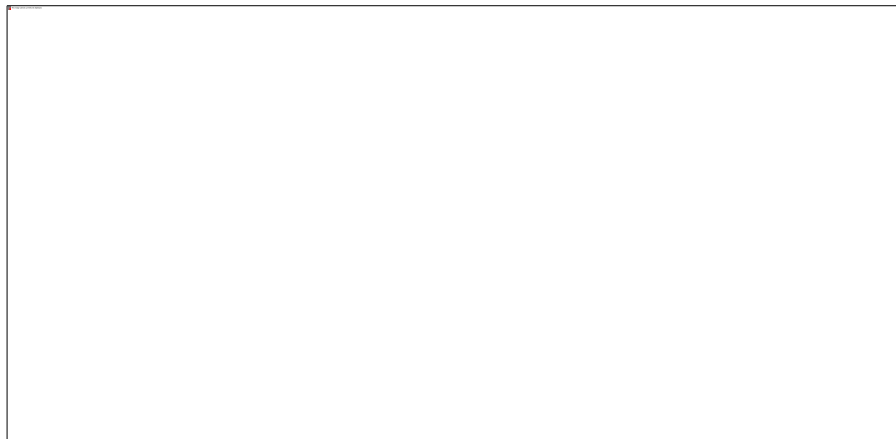
Table one below is a summary of the target population

**Table 1: Target Population**

Category	Total Population
Chiefs from the Gabra	7
Chiefs from Dassanetch	6
Elders from the Gabra	70
Elders from Dassanetch	60
Leaders of various women groups from the Gabra	10
Women Leaders of various women groups from Dassanetch	8
Religious leaders	10
NGOs officials	40
<b>Total Target Population</b>	<b>211</b>

#### 1.11.4 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Table for Determining Sample Size, the researcher arrived at a sample of 188 respondents (170 males and 18 females) for a given population using the formula below:



**Table 2: Sample size**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>GABRA</b>		<b>DASSANETCH</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>
	<b>TARGET POPN.</b>	<b>SAMPLE SIZE</b>	<b>TARGET POPN.</b>	<b>SAMPLE SIZE</b>	
<b>Chiefs</b>	7	7	6	6	<b>13</b>
Woman Rep	10	10	8	8	<b>18</b>
Elders	70	59	60	52	<b>111</b>
Religious leaders	6	6	4	4	<b>10</b>
NGOs Officials	22	20	18	16	<b>36</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>188</b>

After determining the sample size, the researcher used both convenient and purposive sampling to collect data from the elders and officials of NGOs. Convenient sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where the researcher collects data from people who are available and are willing to volunteer information. All the chiefs, the leaders of women groups and religious leaders who were used in the study provided the desired information voluntarily. Some respondents were purposively sampled. These were respondents who had certain characteristics desirable for the study for example, the elders and leaders of the NGOs, were used in the research here. This is because this population was purposively sampled. Simple random sampling was also employed because one cannot work with all officials from NGOs and all the elders of the Gabra and Dassanetch communities. The number will be too overwhelming and thus involved giving a number to every subject, placing the numbers in a container and then

picking any number at random. The names corresponding to the numbers picked were included in the sample (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999).

#### **1.11.5 Research Instruments**

The researcher used questionnaires, interview schedules, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to collect the required information (See Appendix I, II and III) and a tape recorder. The interview schedule was chosen since it allows for detailed, ‘insider’ information. It is also used to extract information even on sensitive topics like the one under study. The interview schedule was semi-structured. The questions contained therein in turn gave an insight into the feelings, background, hidden motivations, intuitions, interests and decisions of the respondents (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999).

The interview schedule was augmented by tape-recording. The tape-recorder captured data (the researcher’s questions and the respondents’ answers) during the interview session. This instrument was chosen because it reduces the tendency for the researcher to make unconscious selection of data in the course of recording and also because the taped interview can be played back and studied more thoroughly than would be the case if only the notes that were taken during the interview were available. It further speeds up the interview as it does not interfere with communication (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The researcher let the respondents familiarize themselves with the tape recorder.

The questionnaires were administered to religious organizations and NGOs. Walker (2010) observes that the use of questionnaires offers considerable advantages in



administration, and presents an even stimulus to large numbers of people simultaneously, providing the investigator with a relative ease in accumulation of data. Data from community elders drawn from Gabra and Dassanetch communities was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as participants were in positions to discuss freely and this enabled the researcher to elicit detailed information.

#### **1.11.6 Methods of Data Collection**

Data in this study was collected by use of questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. All these three methods were integrated to achieve the objectives of the study. The researcher made prior arrangements with each of the chiefs and women representatives so that information could be obtained on the agreed interview days. Through the assistance of the chiefs and their assistants, the researcher arranged various focus group discussions with elders and women groups from each location. Field notes were also made during the interview sessions as well as in the focus group discussions in order to supplement the recorded data especially in cases where reference to a particular experience, event or utterance was unclear.

Data was collected with the help of two research assistants who were male and female. Each assistant interviewed the respondents of the same sex as theirs to minimize embarrassment that sometimes occurs when participants are interviewed by the opposite sex. The research assistants used were mature in age to enable the respondents to interact with them freely. These assistants were selected on the basis of their ability to read and write. They performed roles such as taking notes and audio taping the sessions. As the assistants took notes during focus group discussions, the researcher himself moderated the discussion to avoid ambiguity.

Issues to be investigated during the research were clarified to them. They were also trained on how to carry out in depth interviews and how to use the recording instrument.

**Figure 2:** Interview schedule with a chief



#### **1.11.7 Methods of Data Analysis**

Qualitative data which was drawn from both semi-structured interview schedules and questionnaires was generated for the study and it was presented in a descriptive prose. It involved a critical assessment of each response and examining it using thematic interpretations in accordance with the objectives of the study in order to present the

findings in narrative excerpts within the report. The narrative and interpretive reports as well as citations were written down to depict the situation as it was on the ground. The data gathered in this study was then summarized so as to establish the fundamental results. All questionnaires were considered duly filled and interview guides and focus group discussion schedules were done as described in sample population above. All questionnaires, interview guides and focus group discussion documents were considered for analysis of data.

#### **1.11.8 Ethical Considerations**

Before collecting primary data, the researcher obtained a research authorization letter from the Graduate school, Kenyatta University and used it to obtain a research permit from the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST). Copies of the letter were forwarded to the County government of Marsabit, the Chiefs and Assistant chiefs in the location of the study to seek permission to carry out the study.

Prior to the actual field study, the researcher met the prospective respondents to explain the intentions of the study in order to cultivate a positive research relationship. Respondents were guaranteed confidentiality and assured that information collected from them was for the sole purpose of the current study and not any other purpose. The respondents were further told that they were free to decline to participate, not to answer certain questions or to quit altogether if they so wished. Their consent to be audio taped was also sought in order to avoid those recordings that breach the privacy of individuals and erode the trust between the researcher and the respondent.

The researcher carefully kept records of all research activities comprising all the correspondence with the University, data collection procedures as well as the research design. He endeavored to be honest in conducting the study. Consequently, the methods, procedures and results presented in this research are not fabricated but are a true picture of what was collected from the field.

## CHAPTER TWO

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS OF GABRA AND DASSANETCH DURING PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the socio-economic and political organization of Gabra and Dassanetch. under the following themes; geographical setting; territorial organization; clan system relations; socio-cultural dimensions; economic organization; internal and external exchange; interaction with international neighbours; age-sets system; role of women and traditional aspects of the Gabra and Dassanetch. This was important in order to understand the historical and socio-economic context of the conflict.

#### 2.1 The Gabra

The Gabra people are Oromo-speaking. They occupy the arid Chalbi lands found in Northern Kenya, extending to the highlands of the southern part of Ethiopia. Camels are their ideal animal. They occupy an area which is 350,000 square kilometers. Their geographical locations extend from the Marsabit County of Kenya to the province of Sidamo in Ethiopia. The Gabra are close allies of the Oromo and the Borana Communities (Robinson 1985; Tablino, 1999). The name "Gabra" has its roots from the word "gabaro" which basically means a "vassal". This group live in an area that is encircled from other ethnic communities among them being the Turkana (*Turkan*), the Rendille (*Rendil*), the Somali (*Safar*), the Samburu (*Kore*), the Boran (Borana) Gari, and Dassanetch (*Galaba / Shanqilla*). The Gabra refer to the Turkana, the Rendille, Gari and the Somali; as *wor dassee* meaning "people of the mat". This alludes to the

mat-covered on the roof which are also portable. The Gabra also carry them along as they move from place to place as part of their nomadic lifestyles. The Gabbra also refer to the Samburu and the Boran and Dassanetch as *wor buyyoo* meaning “the grass people”. This is in reference to their huts which are made of grass. The Gabra regard the Dassanetch as enemies (*nyapa*) due to long standing conflicts between duo. Sometimes there are intermarriages between members of Gabra and Rendille Communities as well as between members of the Gabra and the Boran Communities.

## **2.2 Geographical Setting**

In Kenya, the Gabra live areas that surround the Chalbi Desert. They are part of the inhabitants of Marsabit County, although some section of the Community live in Southern Ethiopia. Those who live in Marsabit and the region of the Chalbi Desert use Marsabit town and other towns within the desert as water points. The Northern part of Marsabit is dry, having a scattered terrain with volcanic rocks and sand. There are two rainy seasons separated by a dry season characterized by hot and long, while the cold period is wet and short lasting. The long rain appears in the months of March-April and short rains in November-December. The Gabra have a lot of food, both for their people and for their animals, so they live self sufficiently. It is during this time that a lot of ritual ceremonies (*sorio /almado*) takes place, the period of initiation rites, as well as the birthing patterns. Gabra migrations are mainly based on the cyclical weather patterns,

Linguistically the Gabra are classified as Eastern Cushites of the Oromo group who speak a language of the Boran /Oromo community (Whitely 1974; Gamta, 2000).

### 2.3 History and Origin of Gabra

Gabra's are believed to have a Somali origin. The name "Gabra" has its roots from the word "gabaro" which basically means a "vassal". However, at some point they interacted with a dominant force in Southern Ethiopia, the Borana. The Gabra abandoned their original language to adopt that of the Borana. In addition, they also adopted a number of cultural features from the Borana (Robinson, 1985; Tablino, 1999).

The Gabra community is largely divided into two subgroups. The first one is the lowland Gabra also natively known as the *Gabra Malbe*. They are situated on the Kenyan side of the border. The second group is highland Gabra which is locally known as the *Gabra Miigo*. This particular subgroup is situated in Ethiopia. A number of anthropological and missionary works has been directed at the *Gabra Malbe* unlike their counterparts. The entire Gabra society can be further subdivided into other smaller groups known as the "five drums". They are locally known as the *dibbee shanaan*. Every "drum" normally resides in a specific grazing area that was originally assigned to them by the British colonialists in Kenya. This took place in the early 1960s. For the Ethiopian Gabras, the subdivision comprise of "six drums".

### 2.4 The Gabra Economy

The Gabra are chiefly pastoralists. Their herds consist of goats, camels, sheep and cattle. The most highly valued animal among their herds is the camel, because it is indispensable to their culture. Camels offer security, milk and meat. They are used to transport goods and water, and also help in foraging surrounding areas. Gabras' place

much value on their camels, individuals' wealth can be measured by a number of camels in his possession. Camels can be loaned or given to assist a fellow Gabra in need. However, they cannot be sold to people from outside the community because that is a taboo among the Gabras.

## **2.5 Socio - political structure of the Gabra**

Gabra live in a house called *mandasse* which are dome-shaped and made up of acacia roots. They are also covered with hides, textiles and sisal mats. The *mandasse* is further subdivided into four quarters referred thus: a public quarter each for male visitors, another public quarter for female visitors, a private quarter for parents and a private quarter for children. Several *mandasse* make up small village (*Olla*). Each *Olla* is named after a particular headman. People living in a particular *Olla* move from place to place in search of fresh grazing fields for their livestock. In dry seasons only camels that are being milked and a limited number of other livestock are secured at each *Olla*. The rest of the animals are taken to satellite camps referred to as the *fora* (Tablino, 1999).

The Gabra community is a patriarchal and the clan is the basic unit (balbal). There are five phratries (*gos*) among the Gabra. These Phratries are: Galbo, Algana, Gar, Sharbana, and Odhola. These phratries are divided into 40 clans. All clans have a different origin, either from the Borana, Rendille, or Somali. Phratry is vital to the Gabra community. Every phratry is contained in a different territory (Torry, 1976). Most of the Gabra interact with members of their phratries. Nearly all marriages are controlled within a phratry.



By reciprocity a person experiencing a problem can expect help from their clan members (*milo*). Everyone has to help their *milo* when they are in need, because it is believed that the problems which affect a *milo* ultimately affect everyone. Thus, every Gabra member is closely attached to his or her clan. Every clan is divided into *moiety*; *Lossa* and *Jiblo*. Each half of the *moiety* picks a leader who is referred to as *Hayu*. There are two Hayus for all clans. Each clan has a unique ear-cut mark on their livestock. (ibid.)

*Korra* is a traditional institution known to the Gabra. *Korra* are meetings that are held at the various levels of social organizations. One of the important relationships in the (*Korras*) are meeting held as and when needed at various levels of social organization arises, from the individual nomadic camp, to the cluster of camps, to an entire arda. An *Arda* is an area where there is a permanent water source or some other lasting features such as a permanent settlement. Clans in Arda's can also be organized along ancestry lines. Sometimes, *korra* meetings can be held for individual *millos*. It is mainly through *korra* meetings that contact to pasture and water-place is organized and managed. Decisions about traditional restocking are also made in the *korra* meetings.

### **2.5.1 The Gabra Age-set Systems**

The Gabra have generational age set system which they call *Luba*, a simplified version of Boran gada system (Lagesse, 1973). Each male goes through six life stages, and he has life time duties or roles expected of him. The six grades are from of a childhood, circumcised but unmarried young man, married man, political elder, ritual elder and then retired elder. After marriage, the females of the same *Luba* grades of their

husbands influence a great deal of decision-making through their husbands, particularly in regard to when and where to move camps.

The *Luba* system is central to Gabra society, in that it controls what is expected of individual in a society. It also defines the individual in the society. In theory, individuals change their *Luba* grades after every 7 years in a ceremony called the *Jilla*. There has been about 7 *Jilla*. During *Jilla* all able-bodied officers' young men and elders from Gabra tribe trek to their ancestral or phratry sacred *Jilla* grounds taking their livestock's and houses with them. All the clan except Odhola have their *Jilla* grounds in Southern Ethiopia.

Men are circumcised at the ages of 18-20 and girls are clitoridectomized at around the ages of 13-14 years. Once these rites of passage are not been performed, one is not guaranteed to marry or considered adult unless this happens. Men usually marry in their early 30s, whilst girls get married at around the ages of 14 -16, so there is a huge age disparity, but there is a cogent traditional and custom reason for it. The father or patriarch has absolute control over livestock until he dies. It is therefore important that his sons marry late so that there will be less friction over control of animals, and more cohesion among of nuclear family members and appropriation of cooperative labour in herding and watering the stock.

A man does not enter the *Luba* system until he is in conjugal union, when his ritual enters what is called *Kommicha* grade during *Jilla* ceremony. He gains junior elder status as his position makes it possible for him to have a say in discussion of disputes,

stock allocations, movements and other secular issues. He cannot hold office until he becomes political elder (*Yuba*), the next stage. The political elders handle the secular affairs and the ritual elders (*Dabela*) guides religious matters. These are the two most important grades in Gabra society.

The *Hayus* and *Jallabas* are installed at the *Jilla* ceremony by the High *Kallus* when the men enter Political Elder grade. *Hayus* retain their office when they move to Religious elder grade at the next *Jilla*, but now they only wield moral authority. The newly appointed *Hayus* take over political power at *Jilla* when *Kommicha* (junior elders) become political elders. A man will take up each position of leadership for 7 years, 14 or even 21 years depending on the intervals between the *Jilla* ceremonies, which must be cycles of 7 years. Gabbra measures time in 7 years cycles and each year receives the name of a day of the week. The *Jilla* is always held on a Friday year, except for the Gara sections that performed it before others in Thursday year. A ritual elder wears a kind of pill-box turban called *hitu*.

They lead prayers and make blessings if a *Kallu* is unavailable at a sacred ceremony. Ritual elders are also responsible for looking after *Ada* (traditional laws), which are meant to ensure peace, cohesion and prosperity in Gabra society. The custodians of sacred Drum (*Aba Dibbe*) and firestocks (*Aba Uchuma*) are always ritual elders, whilst the sacred horn is given to the care of the Political Elder (*Aba Magalata*). Each phratry has a special sacred settlement called *yaa* in which many senior officers and their families live. The *yaa* is the spiritual, political and jural headquarters for each phratry, though nomadic, like all Gabbra camps, each one is located within the traditional

territory of the phratry. The *Jiblo* moiety *Hayu* must live there, as must be the custodians of sacred paraphernalia. Many ritual elders also live in *yaa*. The houses are arranged in two arcs running north-south, making an open-ended oval. In the centre of a *yaa* is a ritual enclosure, *nabo*, made up of acacia thorn branches. The *nabo* is used for making prayers and other rituals such as lighting the sacred fire using fire sticks and beating the sacred drum when *yaa* is going to move, at new moon, and other occasions. Only men who have a *Luba* grade may enter the *nabo* that is those who are the *kommicha*, political elders or ritual elders. The retired elders (*Jarsa*) are very old men and they do not take active part in secular or religious affairs, except as participants in the same way women and children take part. These complicated systems make up the time-honored strategy that allows the Gabbra to continue to survive in their hostile environment.

### **2.5.2 Religion of the Gabra**

The Gabra worship one God (*Waaqa*). Their religion is based on the traditional Oromo religion, syncretized with Islamic elements. The religious chants of the Gabra contain non-Oromo words. Kassam (2006:174) is right on this and also on pointing to Sufi influences. In fact, the name of the chants, *dikira*, is derived from *dhikr*, the Arabic word for “commemoration,” which is the word Sufis use to refer to their chants.

The Gabra pray to *Waaqa* every day when they take camels to pasture. The prayers beseech *Waaqa* to bless the camels and Gabra with peace and prosperity especially with rains. Their lips are always drizzling with *nagaya* (peace) when praying. The communal prayers are often led by a special man called *qallu*, who are often born into

qallu clans. The *qallu* clans are made up of the descendants of first Gabra ancestors who were said to have appeared on earth from heaven. The qallu men have the power both to bless and curse, so they are treated with utter respect. The senior men from this clan are High *qallu* and they have very special ceremonial powers. The Gabra make sacred pilgrimages to sites in the mountains of the today Borana territory.

### **2.5.3 Marriage**

Marriage is an important part of life for the Gabra; it is probably considered the most important ritual in Gabra tradition (Wood, 1999). The Gabra expect all of their people to marry, those who do not marry are considered as being in “bad standing.” Those who have not married are not allowed to fully participate in rituals, they are not given traditional shelter, and they are in a way not seen as real people. A marriage is only valid if it was done so through Gabra ritual, any union occurring outside of Gabra tradition will not be recognized until bride wealth is paid and a traditional ceremony is performed (ibid).

Gabra women are considered eligible for marriage soon after they are circumcised. Women must be virgins at the time they are to be married. Sexual contact with an unmarried woman is a crime; it is at the same level as murder. The men and women who commit this crime are banished, but not in the same sense. For women, this usually means actually leaving the Gabra and getting married off in another tribe. While for men, the “banishment” is more symbolic and less severe. Men do not have to leave, but they will not be able to take part in rituals until they perform a cleansing

ceremony and pay a fine to the family of the banished woman. After this is done men can marry and live normal lives (ibid.).

Gabra women are not supposed to have sex before marriage, but after marriage, women are free to, even encouraged to have extramarital affairs. Marriage is somewhat of a transformation for the Gabra, as Wood puts it; marriage is “marked by sexual freedom for the bride and by new responsibilities for the groom.” Although women can have more than one lover, the Gabra are mainly monogamous. Polygamy is allowed, this is usually the case if the first wife fails to produce a son, producing a son is one of the most important justifications for marriage. In this case, the man usually chooses another wife as a new bride and is expected to take care of all wives equally. (Wood, 1999).

There are three months during the year that the Gabra consider holy; they are the "camel months," *Somd'era qara*, *Somd'era ege*, and *yaaqa*. It is during these months that most important traditions occur in Gabra society; amongst the traditions are weddings and engagements (ibid). In Gabra society, marriages are negotiated and arranged. It is not uncommon for marriage negotiations to start while the bride and groom to-be are still very young. Engagements in Gabra society can last several years. The process begins when one of the groom's parents presents the bride's family with *kuttu*. *Kuttu* is a gift consisting of coffee and tobacco. If the bride's family accepts this gift, it represents an agreement between the families. (Tablino, 1999).

The next step in the process involves a type of engagement payment called *marra*. eight *marra* are required to realize the engagement. A *marra* is a gift of two leather

bags filled with tobacco and coffee, in addition to these, other gifts such as small livestock can be given or requested with each *marra*. The first and last *marra* must be paid during one of the camel months (Wood, 1999). Marriage also has payment associated with it called *Qorata* (payment of three young camels, two male and one female on the material day of wedding (Wood, 199:132).

## **2.6 Introduction to the Dassanetch**

The Dassanetch live along the banks of the River Omo in Southern Ethiopia, and on the shores of Lake Turkana in Kenya. The Dassanetch are Cushites of the Omo-Tana bunch (Tosco, 2001). The first Europeans who came into contact with the Dassanetch were: Count Samuel Teleki and his companion Ludwig von Höhnel in 1888. Von Hohnel wrote that they had friendly relations with the Reshiat but they hardly got any information about the area (Von Hohnel, 1894). The strands of globalization in the Ilemi triangle began the same year 1888 with the arrival of the two on shores of Lake Turkana (which Teleki had named Lake Rudolf). The year also marked the beginning of intense exploration in the region by Italian, English, French, Russian and Ethiopian travellers most of whom had imperial designs in this area in the post-Berlin conference period (Tornay, 1993). There were also researches among the Dassanetch by scholars such Uri Almagor who published book titled: *Pastoral Partners* and several articles about social organization and bond partnerships of the Dassanetch. Another research with reference to Dassanetch was done by a geographer, Claudia Carr, who concentrated on society and environment. Neal Sobania wrote about the history of the Dassanetch while linguists Hans-Jürgen Sasse and Mauro Tosco studied Dassanetch

language. There is no researcher who has studied the conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch.

### **2.6.1 The Origin of Dassanetch**

The Dassanetch are one ethnic unit but have several distinct origins. It is believed that the Dassanetch is a combination of groups from various surrounding ethnic groups that forms a tribe (Carr 1977; Sobania 1980). The Dassanetch consists of eight tribal sections. Each tribal section lives in the same area. According to Almagor (1978), these eight tribal sections combine into two bigger sections: *Sheer and Yenmeto*. The Sheer comprise of three sections: *Inkabelo, Inkoria and Nyaaritch* - and are the majority of the Dassanetch. The *Yenmeto* comprise of the *Elelle, Orru, Rielle, Randal* and *Kuoru* (Almagor, 1978). Tosco (2001) alleges that the *Nyaaritch* have a separate origin and should not be regarded as belonging to the Sheer group but should be considered as an independent sub-section of the Dassanetch (ibid)

The Sheer are regarded as the original Dassanetch. They originally lived in a place called Nyupe in west of Lake Turkana. The reasons why Dassanetch left Nyupe and moved northwards were cited as war and harsh environmental factor (Sobania, 1980). Traditions suggest that the *Orru* migrated to the land of the Dassanetch at about the same time as the Sheer. Their interactions are believed to have started at south of the western lake shores (ibid). The *Nyaaritch* were an independent segment that was residing on the north end of Lake Turkana before the *Sheer* and the *Orru* migrated there. The *Nyaaritch* incorporated in the two groups as Dassanetch through peaceful processes (Sobania, 1980). The *Elelle* who lived on the Omo River were absorbed into



the Dassanetch ethnic community by force. As recorded by Sobania (1980), refers, “*We fought, but when we came together (we realized) they were Dassanetch*”.

Like the *Elelle* the *Rielle* inhabited the Lower Omo region prior to the arrival of the *Sheer-Orru* group and were regarded as “water people” whose economy was based on fishing. The *Randal* and the *Kuoru* were the latest immigrants among the Dassanetch. They migrated in the early 1900 when there were disasters around Lake Turkana basin and many people starved to death. They moved away in search of food and found sanctuary among the Dassanetch. Part of the Samburu and Rendille were absorbed, acculturated and ultimately assimilated into Dassanetch society and are today recognized as Kuro and Randal section respectively among the Dassanetch (Sobania, 1980: 202).

### **2.6.2 Social Organization of the Dassanetch**

Dassanetch society is grouped into eight tribal sections made of patriarchal clans (*tur*) related by marriage. Almagor (1978), describes clans among Dassanetch having no genealogical structure, common territory, shared rituals or political organization. Corporate groups and clan solidarity is weak (*ibid*). Clan affiliation, on the other hand, is stable (Tosco, 2001:3). There are sub-group (*bil*), literally meaning a house within a clan. Some clan or sub-clan names recur in different tribal sections. These names were derived either from the way which a group of immigrants spread over several sections or on how the segments of a group have changed their social affiliation (Almagor, 1978).

The Dassanetch clans are divided into endogamous moities referred to as *baadiyet* meaning 'outside and *geergi* meaning 'womb'. All Dassanetch belong to the *dolos* (*moietys*) alternate to that of their father and identical with that of their grandfather (Almagor, 1989).

Among the Dassanetch the moieties cut across territory, tribal sections, clan and the age-system groupings (Almagor, 1978). The Randal and Kuoru are an exception of this because all Randals belong to the *geergi moiety* while all Kuorus belong to the *baadiyet moiety* (ibid). The moieties regulate marriage and have ceremonial functions. For instance they form the primary organizing principle for *dimi* ceremony that is held separately for each *moiety* of an individual tribal section (Almagor 1978; Carr, 1977).

### **2.6.3 The Dassanetch Age-set Systems**

The central defining principle of Dassanetch social organization is age-sets. Every man belongs to a generation-set (*hari*) which is peer group defined by the age (Almagor, 1978). A man's social position is determined through membership in a peer clique and participation in its activities that power in the age-set system is vested on an elite group of about thirty elders (*ara*) literally referred to as bulls. This title, *ara*, is conferred on elders elected by and from the surviving elders of the senior generation-set (Almagor, 1978).

The Dassanetch have six generation sets one after the other grouped into two groups of three (triads). Each generation set in one triad has the following generation in a triad. The elements in the triads are: *Nyemur*, *Nyemolomoyen* and *Nilimeto* for one triad; and *Nikoria*, *Nigabite* and *Nilimkorio* for the other. These form the line that a man and his

male descendants pass (ibid). A man's generation set is determined at birth and all the time he joins every second set to that of his father. The age differences within one generation-set may be forty years or more, an entry into one set depends on when the members of an alternate begins to beget children (Almagor, 1979). Each alternation marries within the particular generation set and has its own meeting place. The stratification by age groups can be compared to a ladder with slanting rungs. "The older the age-group, the fewer the strata represented in it" (Almagor 1978). Age peers are, in theory, a group of equals and for that matter are expected to be treated equally with none being senior to the other (ibid, 1979). But women's age groups of Karo of the lower Omo valley, do not function as actively as the age-groups of men" (Gezahegn, 2000: 68).

Married Dassanetch females are affiliated to their husband's generation set. However, before marriage, these females are affiliated to their father's generation set. The women, just like men, belong to one of the six generation sets. This is in agreement with Almagor (1989) that the principle of affiliation with age-categories applies to women, who like men; enter a predetermined generation set at birth along patrilineal lines of descent. Women's affiliations are purely nominal and are not articulated in the actual assemblage of women into age group units within generation-sets. Unmarried teenage girls who live in the same settlement and belong to the same generation set are organized in groups in which the girls assist on another in the household and money-making chores. They also protect each other from the boys 'mischief' (Almagor 1983).

Women's generation sets are of much less importance than men's. According to Baxter (1979), this is because women are entangled in domestic responsibilities much earlier than men; and that the transition of women from girl to wife to mother and to an old woman occur on an individual basis therefore, group affiliations plays a minor role (ibid), since most bond partnerships are established between men only (Carr, 1977).

#### **2.6.4 The Economy of Dassanetch**

Dassanetch are an agro-pastoral society. They grow maize, beans and sorghum. The environmental conditions of Dassanetch land allow the Dassanetch to harvest a surplus grain. They also tend cattle and small stock of other livestock. According to Almagor (1978), the Dassanetch regard themselves as pastoralists although their economy moderately pastoralist. Cattle play the greatest role in the economy of Dassanetch. Cattle are a medium of exchange and are used as bride price. Most Dassanetch have a low opinion of fishing and only eat fish during the dry season as a supplement. According to Von Hohnel (1894), only the poorest of the people among the Dassanetch eat fish.

Grazing areas vary depending on rain pattern. Large numbers of cattle graze on the east and west bank of the river. Herding involves daily treks from the village to water the cattle and small stock to extended periods away from the village with temporary stock camps (Carr, 1977).

The Dassanetch trade with the Hamar, the Bashada, the Kara, the Arbore, the Turkana, the Samburu and the Rendille (Sobania, 1980). There are two trade network; and both

networks comprise of different ethnic groups some, who act as “ brokers” “The first network of traders involve the Konso, who produce clothes, spears, knives, irons, bracelets and grow coffee, and the Arbore are the brokers who bring these products to the Dassanetch. The other network includes the Bashada, Hamar, and Kara. The Kara and Hamar serve as brokers between the Dassenetch and the Bashada. They also produce articles like iron-ware, clay-pots, coffee, and honey. Grain grown by the Dassanetch is also exchanged with livestock from the neighboring communities (ibid).

Exchange of firearms, bullets and neighborhood liquor (arakit) assumes a major part in the economy of the Dassanetch. The Dassanetch purchase their guns from the system of Arbore, Hamar and Tsamai. Arakit is exchanged for materials, clothing and toilet soaps (Tadesse, 1999).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **PROTRACTED CONFLICTS BETWEEN GABRA AND DASSANETCH**

**(1960- 1982)**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter analyzes issues concerned with protracted conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch. The chapter explores various aspects including extraneous factors in conflict, colonial resource use patterns, rivalry between warring communities, dynamics of conflicts (armory, tactics and strategy), role of climate change, cross-cutting issues (droughts, floods, rustling, displacement, conflict resolution mechanism and elusive peace) cold war and series of conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch.

#### **3.1 The Legacy of Colonialism and its Contributions to Conflicts in Post -**

##### **Colonial African States (1964 -1990)**

Colonialism on the African continent played a big role in post-colonial conflicts among ethnic communities in Africa. Irobi (2005) affirms that most of these ethnic conflicts are as a result of colonialism because the divide-and-conquer method was used to pit ethnicities against each other. Belluci (2006) on the other hand points out that colonialism has affected the post-colonial African states in five main ways: Colonialism left them with fragile economies, with weak political institutions; it legitimized patterns of violent coercive and exploitation; it disrupted the African geopolitical scenario by introducing artificial borders; It distributed economic resources in a skewed manner to favor a particular ethnic group, pushing marginalized groups to use their ethnicity to mobilize for equity and equality (Irobi, 2005).

In order to understand post-colonial African conflicts, there is need to recognize some of the key features of pre-independent African states (Harsch, 2006). Pre-independence events such as colonialism, change in global trends, events which took place during and after World War II are the main causes of uneven economic distribution. Social and political strife contributes to a large number of the conflicts witnessed in Africa. Almost all boundaries in Africa were created by Europeans during the colonial times as they were negotiating on how to share their power in Africa. They used poor maps in these negotiations and did not seek the views of the African people as they created the borders. This has been the major cause of the unsatisfactory nature of inter-state and regional borders conflicts in Africa.

Davidson (1992) the arbitrariness of the colonial borders and the dissection of ethnic groups and tribes in the colonial era are the major causes of African conflicts. In other words, the ethnic conflicts that are caused by the arbitrary nature of African boundaries are the major causes for instability in the continent. According to Griggs (1995a, 1997) the mismatch between nations and states is responsible for the continent's instability, civil war, genocides. According to Loisel (2004:4), these borders are not only arbitrary but they were also the product of continental and global rivalries among European powers even today.

African governments did not take initiatives to correct the border problems created by their colonial masters amidst the immense optimism for a great future for their countries. This might be due to the fact that these nations did not attain independence at the same time (Oyeniyi, 2011). Additionally, the numerous structural glitches

inherited from the past made it impossible for the African governments to meet the mounting wishes of their people (Harsch, 2006).

In Kenya, the British colonial rule was established among the Gabra and the Borana around 1905, with the opening of a first post in Moyale, followed by another post later at Marsabit in 1919 by Zaphiro. The British government affected the Gabra-Malbe-Booran relationship because the Ethiopian-Kenyan border was split into two communities under the control of two separate governments. This split the Gabra and the Borana population; and the prevailing government regulations affected the demographic distribution of the communities and made these communities to oscillate between the two countries. The introduction of the colonial borders disrupted grazing movements and also changed the way communities related to each other in addition to how resource patterns were used. There were grazing movements between the Ethiopian escarpment and the Kenyan lowlands for many years before the invasion by the colonialists affected this division (Robinson, 1985). According to (Kassam, 2006), the indigenous mode of negotiating access to resources and traditional conflict resolution systems were thrown into disarray. The colonial powers competed against each other for the resources without concern for the local population (Markakis, 1994). The creation of the Kenya-Ethiopia border led to the emergence of separate groups of Gabra and Borana who identified with each of the countries depending on where they lived.

The British colonial rule in Kenya and invasion by Menelik's military from Ethiopia on the Northern Kenya were two major events that changed relationships among



communities in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Invasion by the two powers set in very significant and irreversible changes that distorted the territorial mode of production leading to collapse of the traditional systems (Kassam, 2006). Partitioning of land between the colonial states redefined ethnic relations and often led to conflicts (Obba, 2000). The colonial governments for instance affected the Gabbra-Borana relations through a number of ways. First, they replaced *aada seera borana*, the political and ritual orders established by the Booran to keep the “peace” (*nagaya borana*), with state administrative apparatus. Secondly, the struggle for the control of Abyssinia (Donham, 2002), by Italy later in 1930s affected the Gabra Miigo-Borana relations because they brought in the Somali factor where they introduced the Somali irregulars (the *banda*). Thirdly, the establishment of the colonial governments led to a population influx into the British territory. This is because, in 1914-15, when the Abyssinian empire sought to assign Oromo groups to various colonial soldiers for involuntary service, majority of the Gabra and Borana fled to the British side. The British accepted them as refugees and protected them from further attacks by the Abyssinian, moving them away from the frontier into the northern grazing zones which they still occupy (Sobania 1979). The Gabra were asked to keep away from the frontier and requested to move south to water-holes between Marsabit and North Horr, specifically at Maikona. This space was provided by the evacuation of Samburu and Rendille from the west and northwest of the district (ibid, 1979:78).

The border between the Abyssinian empire and British East Africa was the last to be demarcated in Eastern Africa. The creation of this border influenced the distribution of

groups within the borderlands of Marsabit District. There was undefined border on the south of the Abyssinian empire that allowed “trading and raiding” to take place. In 1903, the Commissioner of the British East African Protectorate urged that a frontier be marked since the Abyssinians were aggressively advancing southwards (Barber, 1968). An approximate border agreement was reached in 1907, and British posts were established in Moyale and Marsabit in 1909 and on the eastern shores of Lake Turkana, known as Lake Rudolph until independence. In 1911, Ethiopian posts were also established. The establishment of these posts led to uncertainty on which country pastoralists belonged, hitherto having grazed their animals who had long been used to grazing on both sides. It also stimulated trans-border fights, depending on the policies being pursued on either side of the border.

At the end of 1918, the Borana from Ethiopia began to cross the frontier border in large numbers to escape persecution by “Tigre brigands”. They entered Kenya in 1920 and they were moved southwards in order to keep the frontier clear for natives who are Tigreans. This is an action that preceded a joint “Anglo-Ethiopian” effort against the Tigre. At this point district records to distinguish between the “British Borana” and the “Abyssinian Boran” were created and made clear hence an ‘ethnic’ reality was created (Sobania, 1979). The immigrants were raided by the Abyssinian soldiers in the British territory in order to force them back to pay taxes but the British protected them and eventually gave them asylum (KNA/DC/MBT 7/1/2: 1907-1940). A large number of the Gabra Malbe and Borana migrated into the British territory between 1912 and 1913. Most of these immigrants entered the British territory around Sololo and the

Hurri Hills via the Magado escapement. The creation of borders led to change in the power relations that by early as the 1920's set in motion shifting alliances along the resource borders. In 1922, it was agreed that British would not "force" the Gabra to go back to Ethiopia (Sobania, 1979)".

The movement of the Gabra and the Borana into the British territory continued throughout the colonial period, the movements back into the Abyssinian territories occurred on several occasions as well. These movements led to demographic changes that affected the relationship between the two communities. There were reports of deteriorating relationships between the Garre and the Borana with occasional feuds. Further, the Ajuran with their *shegat*, the Degodia, posed a threat to the Booran control over resources in the Wajir area. The Borana accused the Ajuran for harbouring the Degodia who were slowly dislodging them from their resources (KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/1:1926). The resource conflict pitted the Borana against their former Somali allies. With the power of *gada* on the wane, the enforcement of *nagaya boorana* faded, leading to the Somali groups such as Garre, Degodia and the Ajuran, regrouping under the unifying factor of religious commonality (Dalleo, P.T 1975), motivated by the weakened Borana power, the Somali groups began to expand into the well watered Borana inhabited areas of the southern Ethiopia from the harsh lowlands they inhabited in the east. According to colonial records, by 1930 the Abyssinian border became practically the boundary between the 'pagan' cattle owners of the highland and the Muslim camel people in the lowlands (KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/2:1930). With the heightened tension, in 1931 a formal agreement that the murderers in the Borana-Garre

feud be handed over to the government was signed in presence of Britanic's majesty consul for southern Abyssinia, DC Moyale and Fitaurari Ayella (KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/2:1931). From the mid-1930s further deterioration of the former ethnic relations particularly that of the Gabra Miigo and the Borana occurred with the invasion of Abyssinia by the Italian forces and the development of Gabra Miigo-Garre alliance that were recruited as irregulars by the invading Italians.

The Gabra and Borana were distributed into Kenyan and Ethiopian, but Dassanetch were all considered as Ethiopians. As a result, much effort was put to prevent them from inhabiting Kenyan territory. The British policy of excluding the Dassanetch from the colony effectively destabilized the northwest corner of the district. The Dassanetch invaded into the Kenyan territory, to raid or to reside along the eastern shores of the lake so as to graze. This led to conflict between Dassanetch and Gabra over grazing areas in the northwest of Marsabit district (Salvadori, 2000).

In 1948 some Dassanetch known as "British Gelluba" were allowed to remain in British territory. However, the British policy towards them was that they were not to be considered British subjects, so they would not be taxed; and their presence in Kenya would only be "tolerated" (Sobania, 1979:12). This group was considered more trustworthy for theoretically refusing to raid with the Ethiopian Dassanetch. Violence arose in 1952 when Dassanetch raided the Rendille and left 75 people dead, mostly, women and children. Soon after, three other attacks occurred: a Kenyan police patrol was attacked by 200-300 armed Dassanetch, which led to a seven hour battle; on

another occasion 26 were killed; and in a third attack, the Dassanetch raided a Gabra village.

Since 1913, there have been a series of conflicts between Gabra and Dassanetch as shown in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: Chronology of conflicts between Gabra and Dassanetch**

Year	Month	Place	Type of Incident	Clashing Groups	No. of People Killed	No. of People Wounded	No. of Cattle/ Camel Stolen
1913	May	Kulutch	Raids	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	41	9	1200
1915-16	December	Qorango gu and Dukana	Armed attacks	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	1		
1924	June	Hurri Hills		Gelluba vs. Gabra			
1932	30 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	The raid on village of Algana Chief Dadu Koricha. Dadu was also killed.	Murder	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	93		7000
	October	Boni Luga	Murder	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	2		
	October	Gudas	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	26		
1933	October	Lag Basi	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	0	0	15

<b>1940</b>	August	Qarsa	10 raids	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	33		Exact number not established
<b>1942</b>	January	El Moriet.	Murder	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	8		
<b>1943</b>	May	Lag Balal	Murder	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	0		600
	May	Dukana	Raid	Dassanetch/Hamar/Arbore vs. Gabra			
	May	Dukana	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	2	3	
	June	Qarsa police post	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra			
	August	Qarsa police post	Armed attack	Dassanetch vs. Gabra			
<b>1944</b>	July	Banya, El Bor and Konye	Armed	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	24	8	
<b>1945</b>	December	Konye	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	5	3 captured	Unknown
<b>1947</b>	February	Urup Tirsa	Raid	Ethiopian Dassanetch vs. Gabra	17		
<b>1950</b>	May-September	El Had	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	13		
<b>1951</b>	June	Dukana	Raid	Amarkoke vs. Gabra	4		
<b>1952</b>	January	El-Tokich	Raid	Ethiopian Dassanetch vs. Rendille	77		

	November	Qarsa	Raid	Ethiopia Dassanetch vs. Gabra			
1953	April	El - Yibo	Raid	Ethiopian tribesmen vs. Gabra			50
	April	El - Yibo	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	4		150
1954	April	Hurri Hills	2 x Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	7	4	
1955	September	Banya	2 x Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	10		
1956	April	Banya	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra			
	August	Banya	Raid	Ethiopian Dassanetch vs. Gabra	15		
	September	Banya	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	5		
	November	Alia Bay	Armed attack	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	0		
1957	May	Banya	Raid	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	2		
1958	June	Diban Dib	Armed attack	Kenya Police vs. Gabra	0	1	Large herd
1959	March	El - Yibo	Armed attack	Dassanetch vs. Gabra	1	1	
1960	March	Ileret	Armed attack	Dassanetch vs. Gabra			

**Source:** *Kenya National Archive (Marsabit District Annual Report: 1913 -1960)*

‘British’ Dassanetch occupied the region near the Kenyan border post at Banya. The Ethiopians made a new attempt to govern the Dassanetch by creating a combined

province; the Dassanach continued to occupy the area of Ileret under Kenya control. In 1961, on the eve of Kenya's self-rule, British administrators were doubtful whether they could ever be able to get rid of the Dassanetch so they agreed that the Dassanetch strictly be confined to the area allotted to them, the north of Ileret, and be encouraged to return to Ethiopia" (Sobania, 1979).

Sections of Dassanetch had always occupied the North-Eastern shores of Lake Turkana. The creation of the border left most of the lake in British-Kenyan hands, but on geopolitical grounds allocated the headwaters of the Omo River to Ethiopia. This has been a basis for twentieth and twenty-first century post-colonial politics in the area where Kenyan Politicians have been demanding that the 'Ethiopian' Dassanach return to north of the border at Banya Lugga. The Dassanetch, in turn, are further consolidating their presence along the North-Eastern shores of the Lake where they fish and exploit wet season pastures. The Dassanach have established more permanent settlements and Rendille herders, who seek to only to use lakeside grazing in the late-dry season, before rains came to the Chalbi desert.

### **3.2 The Role of International Border in Conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch**

The findings from the field revealed that, in 1897, Menelik's forces marched into southern Ethiopia and subdued the Borana and the Gabra. This led to disruption of patterns of how resources were traditionally used across the borders. This was the first problem the colonial borders created. The border left more water points, especially the permanent water sources that were utilized during the dry season, on the Abyssinian side.



The British authority and the Abyssinian Empire signed the trans-frontier agreement on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September, 1907 which proposed unrestricted access to resource on either side of the frontier by the ethnic groups living across the border. The Abyssinian empire did not honor the agreement so the Booran and the Gabra in the British colony were occasionally denied access to the water and grazing resources on the Abyssinian side (Obba, 2000). The communities could only be allowed to access the resources if they paid tax to the colonial powers. This adversely affected their drought coping strategies since access to resources across the borders was crucial during the drought years (ibid, 2000). This marked the beginning of marginalization of these communities. The marginalization continued into the post-colonial era and created root for conflict between communities of Northern Kenya where Gabra and Dassanetch belong. There is little respect for international boundaries by pastoralist communities living along the border of Kenya and Ethiopia; so cross-border raids became a frequent phenomenon.

A respondent noted that:

*“Demarcation of boundaries is a factor that contributes to conflict in Marsabit. The earlier district boundaries created by the colonial government have been changed over the years without the involvement of the local people. The concept of boundaries is alien to the people of Northern Kenya, in general, territorial boundaries can hinder the*

*development of pastoralist communities. In fact, many of the local languages do not have a word for boundary”.*

During the pre-colonial period, the Dassanetch stretched from the Omo Delta in the far south of Ethiopia to the north-eastern shore of Lake Rudolph (now Lake Turkana) all the way to Kokai and Koobi Fora. The British administrators in the area constantly questioned whether Dassanetch were to be allowed to occupy regions in British territory that had once been theirs. If they were not, they were troubled with what was to be done with the area in the far northwest of Marsabit District, south of the Banya Lugga frontier through Ileret to Koobi Fora. They also wanted to make out how the Dassanach would be deterred from raiding communities under British administration.

It was reported that the ‘tribes’ were not allowed to graze at the Lake shore in 1929, and if they did so, it would have been at their own risk. Generally, the Gabra are in the area but also the Rendille at times. In 1936, there were no Dassanetch south of Banya Lugga, so Kenyan groups were allowed to graze in the prohibited areas (ibid, 1979: 122). Findings revealed that in 1937, the British decided that they would not disturb the Dassanetch if they did not come further south than Banya Lugga. After the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, the British allowed Gabra to occupy the area around Koobi Fora. They also allowed some Dassanetch, who asked to live in British territory, to occupy Kokai which is on the southern side. In 1944, after the British had occupied Ethiopia displacing the Italians in a short-lived campaign of World War II, the Dassanetch were allowed to extend their grazing zones as far as south of Kokai. This brought them close to the Gabra. The Dassanetch grazed peacefully near the Gabra for

several years before 1947 when they raided the Algana section of Gabra at Uruptirsa and killed 17 people (Sobania, 1979:123).

The seasonal conflicts between the Gabra and the Dassanetch at the south of Ileret became a national issue after the Dassanetch were declared legitimate residents of Kenya. The Dassanetch have constantly used the settlements at the northern tip of Lake Turkana in Ethiopia, as a haven by raiding Gabra and other pastoralists groups pushing them further to the south. On the same note, the Gabra have been opportunistic in raiding Dassanetch homesteads along the lake.

### **3.3 Colonial Tribal Resource Use Patterns in Marsabit County and their role in the Conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch**

The British colonial governments separated the grazing areas of the various pastoral groups because they thought the main problem that often led to bloodshed in the Northern Frontier Districts (NFD) was jealousy and bitterness between the diverse tribes over grazing and water resources (KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/2:1935). It was clearly stated under section 18 of the Special District Ordinance that no tribesman was to leave the area preserved for his tribe to go into an area reserved for another tribe without a pass” (KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/3:1947). Different grazing zones were designated to the main pastoral groups in the district, the Gabbra, the Booran and the Rendille. The Gabbra and Booran had high concentration of settlements at different places, like the Booran on the Marsabit mountains and Gabbra in the adjacent lowlands, but they were treated as one group under the provisions of the Special District Ordinance. So they were kept away from the Rendille and the Samburu who were close allies (Ibid.)

The grazing areas associated with the Gabbra included Maidahad, Maikona, Karawe, Kalacha, Malabot, Maddo, Segunti, Wano, Gus, and at Khomode and Loyangalani. The Booran cattle keepers mainly resided on the Mountain, while those who kept goats and with camels lived in the lowlands (KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/3:1945). The mountain Booran grazed mainly in Sagante, Karare and watered their animals at Sokorte Guda, Balessa Bonqole, Gof Bonqole and Sagante wells. The border between the Gabbra and the Booran was porous and the restriction barring camels and goats from Marsabit mountain had to be reinforced to avoid conflicts (KNA/PC/NFD/2/2:1941). The Rendille grazed around Loyangalani, Bor, Khomode, Kargi, Bichibor, Ret and Laisamis were allowed to graze on the lower southern slopes of Marsabit mountain. They occasionally used the permanent water holes in the region. The Rendille were prevented from encroaching onto the Gabbra areas due to persistent bloody feuds between the communities (KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/2:1938). The Rendille were considered to have more rights over grazing lands than the Gabbra and the Booran since the British considered them the original inhabitants of the region unlike the Gabra and Borana who were considered new immigrants from Ethiopia (KNA/PC/NFD 1/2/2:1935).

During droughts, adjustments to the grazing borders were occasionally made to allow one group to graze in another group's area. However, grazing in certain areas at times was not allowed due to security reasons. For instance border between the Dassanetch who are mainly found in southern Ethiopia, and the Gabra, who inhabit the north western corner of Marsabit County was closed for several years to avoid conflicts. The area was referred to as the "forbidden area" demarcated by the Stingad line (Stingad

was the British officer who drew this line). Any members of a tribe found in the forbidden area were fined, 5% to 20% of the amount of stock they were grazing, depending on the gravity of offence (KNA/PC/NFD 1/2/2: 1932). In 1935 the Gabbra and the Borana who were caught trespassing in the prohibited areas were fined 10% of the stock (KNA/PC/NFD 1/2/2:1935).

In spite of the stringent rules placed by the colonial government to prevent conflicts, still feuds are common among the pastoral communities of Marsabit County. Conflicts were mostly reported between the Geluba (Dassanetch) and the Gabbra Malbe in the Kenya's lowlands (Mburu, 2005). The Gabbra were the most affected by the Dassanetch raids with a record death of 93 people being killed in a single raid on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1932. The magnitude of this attack can only be compared to the Turbi Massacre on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2005.

### **3.4 Environmental Factors and their contribution to Conflicts among the Gabra and Dassanetch**

Marsabit County receives a rainfall of between 200mm and 1000mm a year. The region is mainly composed of poor soils, with vegetation cover that generally consist of thorny shrubs. The County has low agricultural potential so it predominantly supports livestock production and wildlife. The seasonal rainfall variations and the absence of permanent streams force people into a migratory lifestyle. This lifestyle is dependent on the availability of water and grass for a limited time, before the herds can be moved. The intense dry spells also led to intense competition for scarce resources (Bujra, 2002). On many occasions, many have lost their livestock to the

harsh climatic conditions, in order to replenish their loss, the affected group resort into raiding their neighboring pastoral groups, thus leading to violent conflicts, to loss of human lives and displacement of populations (Ocan 1994).

Markakis (1993), this aggressive confrontation is a component of the pastoralists' strategies to restore depleted herds. Raids were accepted practices among the pastoralists groups. Salih (1992), cattle raiding is both a response to disasters such as drought and a cultural practice, animal raiding between tribes was considered ordinary practices which was sanctioned and controlled by the elders.

The immediate effect of droughts in pastoralist settlements also leads to a decline in food production, a rise in food insecurity for many communities. The environmental impacts of climate change represent challenges to the societies and are anticipated to contribute to the destabilization of the human security, endangering ways of life of human-beings and inducing conflicts. Vulnerable societies are likely to see a surge in conflicts and violence happens (Nyong'o, 1993).

The study found out that the locations most affected by this conflict are found in North Horr Sub-County inhabited by Gabra and Dassanetch communities. In these locations (Ileret and Dukana) the conflict has denied the pastoralists access to strategic, rich and nutritious rangelands. They have been forced to settle in concentrated areas leading to ecological degradation that in turn undermines their livelihoods. Loss of access to some of the resources in the rangelands has affected the community's ability to cope with droughts and other climate related disasters in several ways. (AFPO/IRG Nairobi, 2000).

### **3.5 Role of Politics and Leadership in Conflicts among the Gabra and the Dassanetch**

Respondents indicated that politics is a key factor that leads to conflict in Marsabit County. Clan supremacy and chauvinism plays a big role in any political relations. People who want political positions rallied their clans against others. The politicians fuelled the conflicts for their own benefit by making members of their clans to distinguish themselves from others. This is because of the belief that political, social and economic benefits are best dispensed by own clansmen/women. The clan affiliation therefore became very instrumental in fermenting clan violence in Marsabit County during election years. The political clan affiliations explain the characteristics of violence in Marsabit. However, in the face of clan chauvinism, harmonious relationships are destroyed. Chauvinists ally themselves with politicians who are seeking votes, and in an atmosphere of divide and rule and complete impunity, violence produces strange relationships. In just concluded national election (2013), the Boran community failed to capture seats in County's election as in the past elections arrangements where they managed to control most of the parliamentary seats.

To counter the large Borana confederation, the alliance between Gabra, Rendille and Burji (REGABU) was formed back in 1997 during KNUT (Kenya National Union of Teachers) election where leaders by then also got interested to use same platform against the Borana community, and the same were applied as a strategy also to capture all County seats in 2013 locking the Boran outside the County leadership.

In light of the formation of the said alliance, the Rendille, Gabra and Burji are now seen as one new tribe known as REGABU in Marsabit County. As one respondent noted:

*“This alliance would act as a tool to be used by the minority communities to champion for their rights; and that such a political arrangement would make us to be heard and respected.”*

A report by the National Steering Committee on Peace building and Conflict Management (NSCPBCM, 2011), reveals the centrality of ethnicity and its politicization in conflict in Northern Kenya. The report position is that politics is the fulcrum around which all the other forms of conflicts are anchored, although there is great interplay among politics, legal, security, economic and environmental factors. Ethnicity has been politicized by elites who are accused of sowing divisions. Formation of ethnic alliances, politicizing the formation of electoral and administrative units, and electoral violence has been major aspects of ethnic dimensions of political conflicts. Majimbo rhetoric during elections has been known to feed conflict, while creation of Counties is bound to create new fronts for conflict. In this way, the state has been regarded as an instrument of balkanization - through the personalization of political power. Worse still, the weakness of the political party system, characterized by poor internal party democracy, defections and wrangles further foments conflict. Parties' alliance-seeking habits, often informed by ethnic calculations, cement a divisive and conflict-generating political dispensation.



The study findings evidenced that conflicts between Gabra and Dassanetch have at times been fueled by leaders which includes chief and local councillors who have used the divide-and-rule leadership style to divide the communities along ethnic lines. Informants indicated that in most cases, leaders have emphasized on the differences between communities rather than the similarities and this has been a main cause of conflict among the Gabra and the Dassanetch communities.

Similarly, modern militia leaders have turned conflict into a business, because there is, a lot of money being contributed both locally by members and those in the diaspora. The youth dominate the clan militias, largely because they are strong and are able to survive the rigors of the bush. Most of the youth in Marsabit County are unemployed and idle, as such, they readily avail themselves for the cause of their ethnic community. They receive income from the incentives by participating in the militia activities, as well getting recognition as defenders of their community. These militias groups consisted of boys who have been brainwashed by propaganda which is fed to them by businessmen and politicians about the rival communities, and got money to cause mayhem.

When President Kibaki's Government came into power in (2003), Kenya undertook to establish a truly democratic society committed to the protection of fundamental human rights. There was hope that the repression that had been a characteristic of the past regimes would become a thing of the past. However, in Northern Kenya the conflict situation became worse than before. Violent conflicts in Northern Kenya increased. As a result, the new government was accused of not doing enough to address the causes of

conflicts in Northern Kenya. The people accused the government of ineffective response mechanism to deal with the conflicts when they occurred. The events surrounding the Turbi and Bubisa massacres are a clear indication on the failure of the Kibaki government to provide security to its citizens in Marsabit County.

One chief, who participated in the study, admitted that the Provincial Administration was partly to blame for the killings that rocked Turbi and Bubisa on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2005. The chief acknowledged that the government did not respond as quickly as possible. He stated ‘the massacre would have been averted had the government acted on the information it had received.

Another interviewee revealed that:

*“After the Turbi Massacre, a local Member of Parliament held a press conference on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2005 at which he had accused some Marsabit politicians of using Oromo Liberation Front to kill people and destroy private property. He therefore pleaded with the Local Security Committee to send in the para-military General Service Unit to deal with the OLF issue. Nonetheless the Provincial Administration disregarded this plea”.*

This demonstrates that the politics of Marsabit County have played a role in escalating the conflict between the communities.

According to Kerrow (2005), the government has failed to adopt effective conflict prevention and resolution mechanism. The government is focusing on military intervention to solve problems that require a more comprehensive approach. This has led to disastrous consequences. In analyzing inter-ethnic conflicts, ethnic group as a political factor is a product of a situation, not of history. What mobilizes community members to take collective action is concern for future prospects not attachment to the past. In theory, modernization should disintegrate ethnicity because of new social organizations that center on the capitalist means of production. Horizontal ties should form under class cleavages which are more defining in real social terms than tribal or ethnic bonds. Yet, in reality, rapid modernization often creates a competition for limited resources that encourages ethnic competition rather than weakening it. Bates (2001), argues that the rationale for ethnic competition is that each ethnic group represents politically mobilized coalitions used to attain limited income and capital. The most fundamental resources that groups desire are land, water, markets, power and jobs.

### **3.6 Proliferation of Small Arms in Marsabit County and its role in Conflicts between the Gabra and the Dassanetch**

According to Mburu (2003), Hendrickson et.al (1996) the infiltration of guns in Northern Kenya is also a key factor that leads to conflict in the region i.e. small arms, automatic and semi-automatic rifles have become widely available owing to porous border between Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. These arms are increasingly used among the pastoralist and have led to the militarization of the communities. The increase in arms has also fuelled insecurity and criminalized the traditional practice of

raiding. A respondent in this study alluded that pastoralists claim to use these guns to protect themselves from their purported enemies. This is because they feel that the state security machinery is not present to protect them from external aggression from a neighbouring community. The ownership of guns and other weapons by one community has led to demand of the same weapons by other communities and this has resulted in further proliferation of small arms across the region. This is in similar to a report by UNHCR (2003), which reveals that there are over 100,000 illegal guns in districts of Turkana, Samburu, and West Pokot alone. In West Pokot district the guns are sourced from Pokot and Turkana gun merchants.

Informants reported that ownership of guns is greatly valued in Marsabit. They pointed out that both the Gabra and Dassanetch were beneficiaries of these illegal arms. The weapons come from a variety of sources, including conflict prone neighboring countries like Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and Northern Uganda. This is in agreement with the UNHCR (2003) report. The proliferation of small arms predisposes the area to deadly conflicts. One respondent in this study noted that illegal guns, including AK- 47 and G3 rifles, as well as an assortment of crude weapons are at the disposal of the rival communities and militia groups that have made it difficult for the police to deal with the current situation. The accumulation of light weapons in Marsabit County has caused a serious problem in social order. It has led to the decline of traditional authority as well as disrupted other cultural institutions that ensured peace and tranquility in the community. The presence of these small weapons has also undermined the rule of law.

Reports from the field revealed that easy access of firearms accelerated the conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch. The presence of firearms coupled with high levels of poverty increased the scale of cattle rustling. It also led to greater numbers of fatalities in conflicts over pasture and water.

### **3.7 Summary**

The study has established that conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch have been part of the history of these two communities. The causes of armed conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch range from individual or group volition to structural inequality and injustices. The primary cause of conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch is competition over declining resources. The history of the region also indicate that there have been massive population movements where groups have been pushed out by other groups or have been pulled by the search for pasture and water.

The chapter also revealed that the conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch are characterized by raiding assaults and banditry incidents. Retaliations and counter-retaliations are the dominant features of this conflict. The chapter reveals that inter-ethnic conflicts have had negative effect on communities' social structures, economies and political institutions. Cattle raiding, proliferation of small arms and light weapons are some of the indicators of the conflict. The next Chapter discusses the concerted ethnic conflicts (1983-2011) focusing on Gabra and Dassanetch communities in Marsabit County.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE CONCERTED ETHNIC CONFLICTS BETWEEN GABRA AND DASSANETCH (1983-2011)**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter explores the contextual backdrop of ethnic conflicts by looking at how ethnic conflicts between Gabra and Dassanetch have emerged for years. First, the chapter discusses early colonial migration and their influence on ethnic identities. The chapter also looks at major events in conflicts between the two warring communities and sets to further explain how ethnic conflict has set to become a more prominent security challenge for the region.

#### **4.1 Historical analysis of the Conflict in Marsabit County**

Marsabit County is occupied by many ethnic communities that live through difficult climatic conditions, and has a history of conflicts. The study discovered that these violent conflicts have been aggravated by loss of traditional authority, failure by the government to understand traditional grazing boundaries and the influx of automatic weapons (Marsabit Conflict Assessment Report, 2005). Reports indicate that the cause of conflicts in the region has been dissatisfaction with boundaries that were created by the colonialists since they limited some groups' contact to water and pasture. The other reason are political factors, in particular misunderstanding between political leaders of the various communities; and external influence from neighboring countries, particularly Ethiopia (Daily Nation, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2005, Njeru, 2001). The feeling of

marginalization by some groups have also been a cause of conflict. One of the respondents when reporting on the why the Turbi Massacre said:

*“We felt that because our community is very small, that was why the Government was not helping us. We are a minority group. May be that is why the Government does not identify us as real citizens of this country, that is why at the time of the massacre many divisional administrative offices within Marsabit District did not even have vehicles.”*

The government reaction to the conflict has also been mentioned as another source of repeated conflicts (Njeru, 2005). The state in turn shifts the blame to political ethnocentrism. This has often led to the blame-game between the government officials and the politicians not taking concerted effort to end the conflict. One respondent reported;

*“Following the Turbi massacre, the government said that it was aware of the hostility among the communities, particularly among the politicians, and emphasized that the conflicts were fuelled by political leaders. However, the Member of Parliament for Saku constituency at the time, Hon. Abdi Sasura, accused the internal security minister late Hon. John Michuki of blaming the leaders unfairly. He said the minister had been misled by his officers on the ground. He said that the government should stop passing the buck if police have failed*

*to do their work. These sentiments were also expressed by the then member of parliament for North Horr, the late Hon. Dr. Bonaya Godana: “they are simply giving excuses for the massacre. The government is aware of the activities that have been taking place in the district and it knows who has been working with foreign militias.”*

## **4.2 Conflict in Marsabit County between 1960 and 2011 and their Impact on Gabra-Dassanetch Conflict.**

There have been four major violent attacks in Marsabit County. These include the Shifta war of 1963-1967, the Kokai Massacre of 1997; the Turbi and Bubisa of 2005. Of the attacks, the Kokai Massacre was the only one that was between the Gabra and the Dassanetch, but the other three have acted as eye-openers that the conflict between the Gabra and the Dassanetch should not be taken for granted and that immediate steps need to be taken to create long-lasting peace. Before looking at the Kokai Massacre, it is necessary to review the other attacks in the County as they helped give an insight of the conflict between the Dassanetch and the Gabra.

### **4.2.1 The Shifta War of 1963-1968 and its Relationship with the Gabra-Dassanetch Conflict**

The *shifta* conflict was a violent product of contending visions of the future of the Northern Frontier District (NFD) region. During the colonial period, British neglect of the region, which was administered as a separate entity within Kenya, resulted in economic and political marginalization. As a consequence, more meaningful relationships were made between people who were living in Northern Kenyan and



those living across the border in the Somali Republic than those living Kenya. The residents, of the NFD united behind a campaign for NFD secession in favor of unity with the Somali Republic when Kenya was set on the road to independence in 1960 (Branch, 2011). As a consequence, a number of radicalized NFD residents, who were labeled as *shifta* by the Kenyan government, defected to the Somali Republic from where they waged a guerrilla insurgency in 1963 which lasted until November 1967.

In 1964, Kenya was faced by a region that was threatening to secede; President Jomo Kenyatta declared a state of emergency in Northern Kenya. This led to ‘Shifta war’ that led to widespread and systematic violations of human rights by state security agencies. The Shifta war arose out of a long history of political unrest in Northern Kenya. Ethnic Somali and other Northern Kenya communities resisted centralized rule from the very earliest days of colonialism. From 1893 to about 1918, various Somali groups engaged in primary resistance to the colonial powers. Resistance at this stage lacked an explicitly positive political objective and instead centered on resistance to the British invasion of previously independent territories, Whittaker (2012).

It is in the Shifta war that the citizens and communities of the new Kenyan nation experienced state brutality and violence in a large scale level (TJRC, 2013). It was difficult to determine the nature of the organization of the Shifta forces, including to what extent they operated under a uniform command and hierarchy. The evidence that was available, however, including analysis of Shifta activity by the Kenyan government and by foreign diplomats reporting on the situation, suggests that the Shifta forces meet the organizational test for qualifying as a party to an armed conflict.

The conflict with the Shifta lasted four years, resulted in the deaths of between 2,000 to 7,000 combatants and civilians and engaged the Kenyan military in pitched battles throughout the Northern region. There is, however, some evidence that the Shifta war had an international dimension. The Somali government clearly provided assistance to the Shifta forces operating in Kenya - in fact it was out of the agreement reached between the governments of Kenya and Somalia in 1967 that effectively ended the Shifta War.

Villagization in Northern Kenya emerged as a response to conflict, and in particular, to the specific trajectory that the *shifta* insurgency took. Villagization was, therefore, informed by existing negative official opinions of the region and its inhabitants. This enables NFDs to appreciate the interplay between the use of villagization as a counter-insurgency strategy and as a developmental imperative, which resulted in the criminalization of pastoralism. The criminalization on pastoralism, affected all the pastoralist communities including the Gabra and the Dassanetch that has led to continued conflict.

#### **4.2.2 The Turbi Massacre**

Turbi is a small town located some 130 kilometres North East of Marsabit Town, and lies on the boundary between Marsabit and Moyale. The population is primarily nomadic. There is very little infrastructure, and the only visible structures are the *manyattas*.

The Turbi massacre occurred in Turbi Location of Marsabit County, where Gabras were massacred by armed raiders believed to be Boranas. The first incident in the long chain of incidents that eventually exploded in Turbi and Bubisa was the killing of a Gabra man at Turbi by members of the Borana community. In response, members of the Gabra community stole 728 goats from the Borana. A meeting to resolve the conflict was held in Turbi between Gabra and Borana elders on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2002. The elders resolved to maintain peace. Two days later, on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002, a follow-up meeting was held. The meeting was attended by Provincial Administrators, opinion leaders and members of peace committee from Moyale and Marsabit districts. In the meeting, the members of the peace committees recommended that the Borana community was asked to pay 100 cattle to the Gabra as compensation for the one person killed. The Gabbra community was to give to the Borana thrice the number of goats stolen. The compensation based on the Garissa (Modogashe declaration). Both parties opposed the peace committees' recommendation for compensation. Subsequent meeting to calm the situations were held on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of September 2002 in Yabello, Ethiopia and the two communities reinforced their commitment to peace.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2002, another meeting was held at Funnanqumbi to seek solutions of the conflict between the two communities. No agreement was reached because neither of the communities was ready to pay compensation as recommended by the Peace Committee. Thus, a resolution was passed restricting the sharing of resources between the two communities. Borana living in Funnanqumbi were asked not to enter Turbi while the Gabras were prohibited from accessing Rawan and Woldaa water

points, which are the Gabras nearest permanent water sources but controlled by the Boranas. Though calm continued after the passing of these resolutions, tension resumed in November 2002 and continued throughout 2003. A year later, on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2003, 6 prominent Borana leaders from Moyale started a cease-fire initiative among the Gabbra in Turbi, Bubisa and Marsabit. This peace campaign took one week. Afterwards, these leaders consulted with Marsabit leaders to plan a joint Marsabit -Moyale meeting which was scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2004 in Turbi. This meeting did not take place because the Turbi people scuttled it claiming they had not been sufficiently informed, even though the Moyale Boranas had turned up in big numbers. This meant that tension remained throughout 2004 and early 2005. There was no sharing of resources or exchange of animals throughout this period.

In early March 2005, the Gabbra and the Borana communities living in Turbi and Rawan met but no resolutions were made. On May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2005, the two communities met and reached an agreement. The Gabbra people agreed to return the 728 goats they had stolen from the Borana and the Borana would compensate the Gabra's dead person according to Borana law. The Gabra's handed over the goats on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2005. However, the peace lasted for only two weeks. On 5<sup>th</sup> June 2005, three out of five Ethiopian Boranas were killed near the Ethiopian border. In a revenge attack Ethiopian Boranas invaded the Gabras villages along the Kenya-Ethiopia border and stole animals. The government of Kenya and the Borana leaders denounced the actions and swiftly recovered the stolen livestock. Ethiopian Boranas had made peace with the Kenyan Gabras and made a pact that the Gabras would not attack the Kenyan Boranas

in revenge. Nonetheless, three herds of Borana cattle got stolen from Hurri hills. In addition, a Borana chief as well as a reservist were shot to death. In retaliation to the attack, some Boranas torched Gabra houses in Marsabit, killing a Gabra. In response, the Gabras killed six Boranas in their sleep around Forolle, near the Ethiopian border and this is what triggered the Turbi Massacre.

On the morning of 12<sup>th</sup> July 2005 raiders, armed with sophisticated weapons and machetes, descended on the small village of Turbi. They attacked Turbi Trading centre and the Turbi Primary School causing a trail of destruction. They also burned dwelling places (*manyattas*) to ashes. They killed 80 people and injured scores of other. Thousands of people were displaced and livestock worth millions of Kenya shillings were driven away.

#### **4.2.3 The Bubisa Massacre**

In revenge of the Turbi Massacre, the Gabra attacked 10 Boranas in a small trading centre called Bubisa, 80 Kilometers from Turbi in the afternoon of 12<sup>th</sup> July 2005. Those killed were four children and six adults. All members of Sololo Catholic Parish.

Ethnic, clan and community conflict like the one between the Gabra and the Dassanetch were also found to have led to the Turbi and Kokai Massacre. These two communities, the Gabra and Borana have also locked in frequent and deadly conflict over pasture, boundary, water and more recently on political and economic conflict. It is therefore, necessary to analyze the historical conflict between the Dassanetch and the Gabra so as to contain it before it gets to the level of Turbi and Bubisa Massacre.

### **4.3 Historical Analysis of the Gabra and Dassanetch Conflict**

According to informants, the conflict between these two ethnic groups dates back to late 1890s. A claim over the historical land and territorial boundaries is one of the reasons for the conflict. Land demarcation adds to the rivalry between the two groups. Additionally, the history of constant raids by the Dassanetch on the Gabras (KNA - PC/ NFD4/4) also worsens the situation. The constant raids were aggravated by the fact the Dassanetch were armed by the Italians in 1909; and this gave them an advantage over their neighboring communities who were not armed. They used the arms to terrorize the neighboring communities. At the outbreak of World War II the Italians issued Ethiopian Dassanetch with rifles and encouraged them to attack tribes within British territory. As a result many of the Gabras lost their lives. The Gabra's also lost livestock to the Dassanetch.

#### **4.3.1 Conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch Over Lake - Shore Grazing (1990-2000)**

The Gabra and Dassanetch conflict continued between 1990 and 2000. In 1992, the Gabras procured guns from remnants of the Ethiopian army that had fled after the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) assumed power after the fall of Mengistu Hailemariam. Gabras, armed with new weapons came to graze on the east of the shores of Lake Turkana. The respondents reported that during that time, the Gabras stole some sheep and goats from neighboring Dassanetch. The Dassanetch were deeply aggravated and warned the Gabra to return the animals within a week. Peoples living in the Turkana settlements that lay between the two warring communities were warned about an imminent attack and quietly moved away. Dassanetch insist that the

Kenyan police and provincial administration were also informed that an attack would occur if they did not convince the Gabras to return the stolen animals. The Gabra did not return the animals. On the seventh day, at daybreak, the Dassanetch attacked Gabra herding camps in the Kokai area, seizing a great number of cattle and killing twenty Gabras. When Kenyan police pursued them, the raiders hid the animals, laid an ambush and killed 19 of their pursuers majority believed to be security personell and forced others into lakes slaughtering them indiscriminately, stealing their uniforms and weapons. These made the local Dassanetch in Ileret flee their homes and enter Ethiopia due to fear of an imminent retaliation by the Gabras (Galaty, 2000). It took the Dassanetch five years to return to their homes. They came back after negotiations and the Gabras did not attack them (Ibid, 2000)

The conflict between the Gabra and the Dassanetch revolves around certain borders demarcation, national security forces, citizenship and even markets. The conflict has the long tradition of the two groups fighting over resources. The Gabra and the Dassanetch are said to primarily fight in the rainy season. During the rainy season the animals are strong and can be easily be raided. Also, during the rains, the demand for labour are less as men do not go to graze in far places; so the men have the time and luxury to raid.

However, some respondent gave a contrary opinion on the pattern of conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch. In their narration, these respondents said that during rainy season, Gabras normally move away from Dassanetch grazing areas, to areas around North Horr. It is only during dry spell that they get into conflict with Dassanetch in

areas of Kokai, Buluk, and Sabarei and Darade wells. These respondents reported that differences in the onset of rainfall in the Omo Delta, where Dassanetch live, and in the Chalbi and Koroli deserts, inhabited by Gabra and Rendille respectively, influence the timing of raiding. The researcher asked about the relationship between the two communities and the response confirmed the findings of Galaty (2000):

*“The Shanqilla and Gabra have always fought. They just can’t remain without fighting. They can stay for a year or so, but still they will fight”*

Reports indicated that much of the north-western Marsabit North district - which was regarded as “No man’s land”, did not belong to either the Dassanetch or the Gabras. The creation of Sibiloi National Park in the said area, where neither of the groups was allowed to graze confirmed this. Nevertheless, the Dassanetch claim the water holes of Darade, Ilgimirr and Kokai are traditionally theirs, and when the Gabra move to Sibiloi Park during droughts, clashes occur.

In 1993 Dassanetch raided Gabra who were in *fora* near Kubi Fora, close to the Museum. They managed to steal few animals, and those were mostly sick. No Dassanetch were killed, but two Gabra women were killed. The young Dassanetch warrior the researcher interviewed confessed that he took part in the raid and killed the women by mistake; owing to darkness and thought they were men. The following year 1994, Dassanetch again raided Gabra *fora* near the Sibiloi wells, and made off with



over 2000 animals as they claim. But they saw a military plane flying over, they ran away leaving the animals. In that raid one Dassanetch was killed, and 4 Gabras.

#### **4.3.2 Kokai Massacre - 1997**

KNHRC (2000) Kokai massacre was the most disastrous raid in Marsabit North District in recent years, in the northern part of Sibiloi National Park. This is an area claimed as traditional grazing land by both Gabra and Dassanetch. Due to serious drought, many Gabra had taken their cattle, sheep, goats and donkeys to the park. Some Dassanetch were already in *fora* nearby. The two groups have been raiding back and forth since time immemorial, and this precipitated yet another attack. It made newspaper headlines and editorials for many days, starting on 25<sup>th</sup> March in the Daily Nation with 36 massacred in border raid and continuing the following day with 18 died as police engage bandits.

##### **4.3.2.1 State machinery neglect to curb Gabra-Dassanetch conflict during Kokai massacre.**

KNHRC (2000) when the authorities do act, it is not always effective. When news of the March 1997 raid at Kokai reached the outside world:

*“Daily Nation (25/3/1997) when four army helicopters landed at the Marsabit airstrip, they were unable to take off for the scene of massacre owing to ‘logistical problems’. Sources within DC’s office said the party was waiting for the go-ahead from the office of the president. The*

*helicopters finally left for Illeret at 3pm (the day after the attack)”.*

The Marsabit District Security Committee chaired by the then DC, Mr. Muli Malombe spent most of the day in a meeting, which caused the Marsabit leaders to storm his office demanding the immediate action from the government. As reported in Daily Nation of 27<sup>th</sup> March, 1997;

*“The Marsabit District Commissioner’s office is tight-lipped over the raid since it started yesterday, 35 elders from Marsabit accused the DC, Mr. Muli Malombe, of showing no interest in the Sunday attack”.*

Since the Dassanetch are trans-border community, with the great majority living in Ethiopia, it was claimed that the attackers had come from Ethiopia. There were immediate calls by Kenyan government to lodge an official protest to Ethiopian government over the attack. However, the Minister of State by then Jackson Kalweo, who had promised to issue a government statement refused to speak to the press. And a week after the initial raid, a columnist could say;

*“As I write this, however, there has not been a single word from the Government about the insecurity in Marsabit”*  
*(Daily Nation 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1997).*

According to Eikalo (1998:46) military sources hold that in terms of timeliness, the “interventions was an absolute a flop”. Timeliness seems the least of the errors made.

The security forces made such a bad showing that the Director of Operations by then at the Police Headquarters, G.M. Mwathe had to say;

*“The raiders numbered more than 2000 and not 200 as reported earlier” (Nation 29/3/1997).*

As this was misinformation given from one of the helicopters on aerial patrol on Tuesday morning that led the ground troops believe the raided animals had been abandoned, and thus led to their own deaths. The lower figure is much closer to our Dassanetch informants’ estimate of 300 raiders.

Since the raid was so vicious, and has much repercussions, the interviewers, visited Ileret and Dukana town to listen to both warring groups sides of their stories and assess the role of government in this conflict.

First they talked to an elderly Gabra who on material day of conflict was at the site;

*“The attack took place at dawn, their opponent were well armed and took away their animals, because they were defenseless as they don’t have enough guns to pursue their attackers. They managed to have some of their animals back using the few guns they had. Many Gabra were killed in the fight. Close to 3000 cattle, 17,000 shoats and donkeys were taken”.*

The interviewers also visited Ileret town to hear their sides of the story regarding this conflict;

*“Gabra crossed into their territory to graze into their land, and they claimed that they were harassed by Gabra, that they will be driven back to Ethiopia where they belong, but they remain mum, as both communities have no entitlement to access pasture in Sibilo National Park. The Dassanetch consider Darade to be their grassland”.*

*“The young interviewed claimed they are on their own to organize an incursion against Gabra. The elders restrained us from this attack. The first day they were cited by one Gabra herder as they strike the day hours and opted to have a dawn attack when people are sleep. Theirs is not to steal from Gabra, but to cause a massacre in a bid to chase Gabra out of their grazing land”.*

Normally in all attack, they claimed that they’ve to divide themselves into two groups, where one attack and the other group to drive animals away. They claimed to have lost 3 warriors at the expense of over 50 Gabras. The number of animals they took they don’t have definite estimates and managed to crossed with them.

In retaliation to Kokai some local Dassanetch were killed by Gabra raiders, as reported by Gabra. This conflict had further consequences on the Dassanetch community, on the material day of the massacre, Dassanetch students at North Horr Primary school were attacked, along with some secondary students at North Horr boy’s secondary

school. They were attacked by Gabra women who threw stones at them; the students took a refuge at North Horr police, and later taken to Ileret under tight security.

KNHRC (2000:70) *In the Forgotten People*, the Kokai massacre also caused the Gabra in North Horr to turn on the local Turkana. There were some Turkana in *fora* at Kokai too, with several dozen of families located between the Gabra and the Dassanetch. The Gabra claimed the Turkana made friends with Dassanetch, slaughtered animals for them and even sold those guns. They believe the Dassanetch told the Turkana about the impending raid, and the Turkana not only kept the secret, but took part in the raid. It is said that they were responsible for killing most of the youngsters in the *fora*. Since Kokai there have been several unpleasant incidents concerning Turkana and Gabra in and around North Horr.

#### **4. 4 Consequences of Gabra - Dassanetch Conflicts and its impact on Socio-economic Development.**

There is poor infrastructure in the place occupied by these two communities. Respondents alleged that the Kenyan government is hardly present in any other form other than as a security force. The respondent reported that the Dassanetch community lacked most basic services like health and education. The few economic activities that have cropped up, such as meat production and fishing in Lake Turkana, are seriously impeded by inaccessibility of the area due to lack of transport facilities. Due to this inaccessibility, the Dassanetch have not been affected much by the spread of modern civilization. Even the religious organizations have only recently, gained access to Ileret with the Benedictine missionaries of the Catholic Church being the major actors.

The livelihood of most members of this ethnic group is determined by the needs of their animals, which they follow in search for water and pasture.

The neighbouring Gabra share the pastoralist lifestyle with the Dassanetch, but clearly distinguishing themselves in terms of language, culture, dressing code and religion (about 50% of the Gabra are Muslims). What is of special importance in the relationship between these two groups is the fact that compared to the Dassanetch, the Gabras are more integrated into the Kenyan state. They have benefited from education (through the Catholic mission in North Horr, which had been established more than forty years ago) and from other development partners (through the existence of local NGOs lobbying for their particular community), and they have been able to use the position of the elected Member of Parliament for their benefit. As a result, the Dassanetch feel that the Kenyan Government favours the Gabra. The Dassanetch and other communities in the area complain about the unfair distribution of resources.

According to a Dassanetch elder, the marginalization of the Dassanetch Community, by the national government, the local government and even by the few local NGOs established by the Gabra, had pushed the Dassanetch to resort to violent behavior in order to overcome the perceived injustices. This means that the history of violent confrontations had resumed by the time of this research. There were claims that the national government was distributing arms to the Gabra but the respondents from the Gabra community indicated that was not true and that the media had been exaggerating the degree of violence in the area by grossly inflating the number of livestock stolen.

In spite of the advance of modern civilization among the Gabra, animal husbandry is still the backbone of the local economy among the Gabra. There are rich cattle-owners among the Gabras who do not physically tend their livestock, but keep their animals in the custody of poor herdsmen. These herdsmen are equipped, by their 'cattle-lord', with weapons for defending the herds. This means that there are few opportunities for these herders to develop their own herds, which is so important for the social recognition within the community. In order, for them to receive respect from the community members, the herdsmen steal animals from the neighbouring communities and then hide these animals in remote areas so as not to mix them with the big herds they tend. A history of impunity on the Gabra side, partly due to government inactivity, has then led to revenge from the neighbouring tribes, and so the Dassanetch have become the arch-enemies of the Gabra.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter presents an in-depth assessment of the Gabra and Dassanetch conflict over time. From the discussion, it is clear that conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch have a long history. At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, more armed conflicts are on the increase (SIPRI, 2000). It is worthy to note that armed conflicts directly have a negative effect on human development. The aftermath of violence on the economy are poverty and other degrading situations such as hunger and malnutrition, unsafe water, lack of basic medical care, inadequate clothing and housing.

The chapter established that the state did not provide meaningful security and while there were early warnings of looming violence, the government machinery including the security forces failed to respond in good time.

The chapter concludes that ethnic conflicts in Marsabit County could have been minimized or even prevented if early actions had been taken by relevant authorities. It was therefore necessary to evaluate the conflict mitigation measures that needed to be put in place.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **TOWARDS CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN MARSABIT COUNTY 1963-2011**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter illustrates conflict resolution and mitigation mechanisms adopted globally and in the country. The chapter also seeks to look at the institutions that have participated in the peace building process among the Gabra and the Dassanetch. It provides a critical analysis of successes and shortcomings in conflict resolution among the Gabra and the Dassanetch. In addition, it evaluates the challenges that have been faced in resolving the conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch.

#### **5.1 Conflict Resolution Strategies - A Global Perspective**

International and regional organizations, states and non-state entities are engaged in a coordinated system of multilateral conflict prevention and diplomacy in conflicts-prone countries (Van Evera, 2006). In Africa, the AU has become more active and assertive, in the promotion of peace, security, democracy and good governance. The AU has also recommended for a common defense policy among the member countries. In the face of increasing incidences of conflicts in West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been developing diplomatic strategies for resource mobilization and inter-ethnic conflict resolution and management within the sub-region. Good examples of the conflict management efforts are in Liberia and Sierra Leone (Brown, 2007). The experiences of United Nations and the world at large, as from the mid-1990s, have tried to restore peace in countries such

as Somalia, Rwanda and Yugoslavia, this gave rise to the realization that there is a clear need to re-assess existing strategies in inter-ethnic conflict resolution and conflict management.

Several actors are involved in peace building, conflict prevention and mitigation among pastoralists in the Southern-Ethiopia and Northern Kenya. However, the development of effective actions to resolve the conflict seems difficult because the causes of conflict are either rooted in the people's cultures or are part of the socio-political framework. Measures aimed at preventing the conflict include: development of the mediation and conflict prevention capacities of the communities; involvement of the communities in raising of awareness, training of the members of the communities' in collection and dissemination of early warning information and reverting indigenous peace building process. The efforts to provide basic needs to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in a secure environment is encouraging but efforts have to be made to rehabilitate the IDPs and re-orient them into mainstream of society According to USAID (2009), the responsibility for developing, implementing the programmes and measures outlined above rest with the National Governments, the County governments and all relevant stakeholders.

## **5.2 Conflict Resolution Mechanisms in Kenya**

Kenya has experienced frequent internal and cross border conflicts. The Kenya government has regularly given priority to conflict management. The methods adopted in conflict management include: formation of peace committees at various levels, from district to sub-location. The peace committees are largely modeled on the respective

communities' traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and approaches. A larger proportion of the memberships of the peace committees are drawn from the council of elders of respective community. According to Adan and Pkalya (2006), the approach to conflict resolution and management in Kenya has been mostly reactive in the past and crisis driven, hence little has been achieved as compared to traditional mechanisms of resolutions today.

The traditional justice mechanisms such as the use of council of elders, inter-ethnic marriages, resource management agreements and ethnic group alliances; together with government-led initiatives which involve use of Chiefs, District Officers, District Commissioners and security forces have also played a fundamental role in resolving conflicts, especially those related to land and family matters. In Kenya as well as in the rest of Africa, the council of elders is the primary indigenous conflict resolution institution. The council of elders have always been respected and recognized both at the local level and at the national government level. They are regarded as trustworthy and knowledgeable in community affairs. The members of the community have always had faith with the elders who make binding decisions. They always invite to help in conflict resolution in the traditional African set up.

In a bid to fuse traditional mechanisms into modern conflict management strategies, the council of elders was given an upper hand under the Land Dispute Tribunals Acts of 1990 to take final decisions on matters of land (Adan & Pkalya, 2006). Inter-ethnic marriage was the common mechanism adopted by the people in Northern Kenya to resolve conflicts. It is not a very popular strategy nowadays but was effective in the

traditional society. Inter-ethnic marriages were encouraged with the understanding that it was a taboo to fight one's in-laws so they were expected to reduce fights between communities.

Efforts to formulate a national policy on conflict management and peace building started in 2006. A Draft on National Policy on Peace Building and Conflict Management (NPPBCM) was done. The draft policy was produced by the National Steering Committee (NSC) in consultation with peace building and conflict resolution stakeholders such as the Office of the President, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP, USAID, DFID, OXFAM and Africa Peace Forum (NPPBCM (2006). The objective of the NPPBCM was to promote sustainable peace and development in Kenya. In order to realize this goal, the NPPBCM incorporates all conflict management and peace building strategies across the sectors. These strategies range from pre- colonial conflict resolution mechanism to contemporary conflict resolution mechanisms. NPPBCM policy entail coordination at all levels of government, in cooperation with the civil society, donors, private and public sectors and regional partners in order to manage domestic as well as cross-border conflicts by establishing a comprehensive approach. The NPPBCM integrates existing awareness, early warning, prevention, preparedness and conflict management strategies and initiatives into one policy. The objectives of the NPPBCM are likely to resolve the conflict especially in the ASALs. This is because the extent of incorporating monitoring and evaluation in the formulation process determines the policy's effectiveness in achieving its expected outputs (Adan and Pkalya, 2003; 2005; 2006).

In Kenya, conflict is only a small element of these policy documents. A good example to cite here is the National Policy for the Sustainable Development of the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Kenya (ASALs) wherein its objective was to improve on the standards of living of the ASALs population by appropriately integrating these areas into the mainstream of the national economic and social development in an environmentally sustainable manner. This ASALs policy pinpoints conflicts as a factor that hampers the development of ASALs and it does not tackle conflict as a priority area. The ASAL draft policy document does not demonstrate the need to mainstream conflict resolution and peace-building for the sake of sustainable development (ibid, 2006). There are many other sectoral policies relevant to conflict management in Kenya. These include the draft disaster management policy, the national policy on small arms, draft policy on firearms, the draft national land policy and the draft policy on community policing. It is worth noting that only a small element in these policies touch conflict management. Therefore, there was need for a national policy on conflict management and peace building.

Pastoralists and other communities with scarce natural resources often come into agreement on how to effectively share those resources. For instance in Northern Kenya, during the period of droughts, there are constant movements of livestock along the corridor in Isiolo between Garbatulla, Kinna and Sericho Divisions. People move to and from the neighbouring Wajir and Garissa Counties. Before this movement begins, the Borana and Somali elders negotiate on how the movement should take

place and a general agreement on how to access water and pasture can be reached. These negotiations have helped in preventing clashes between the members of the various communities involved. Despite the presence of the above methods of conflict resolution in Northern Kenya, there is no comprehensive national policy on conflict management and peace building. What is available are fragmented and uncoordinated policy efforts embedded in various policy documents (ibid, 2006).

In Marsabit County, there have been conflicts between the Gabra with the Boran as well as between the Gabra and the Dassanetch. Major efforts have been put to resolve the conflicts between the Gabra and the Boran but little effort has been made to resolve the conflict between the Gabra and the Dassanetch. These initiatives to resolve the conflict between the Gabra and the Dassanetch include:

### **5.2.1 Steps in Peace Building Process between Gabra and Dassanetch**

There have been some peace initiatives to stop the animosity between the Gabra and the Dassanetch. A recent attempt by the “Pastoralist Communication Initiative” seems to have overcome the reluctance of both sides to end the hostilities, resulting in a number of local agreements. It remains to be seen how reliable this new initiative proves to be, nevertheless there still are hurt feelings on both sides and scores to settle. The Gabra held a very unusual pan-Gabra meeting in Balesa. Some 350 men, all traditional leaders and elders of the Gabra assembled and also spoke out strongly against inter-group fighting. Eighteen laws were promulgated. Law 18 stated that it was illegal for all Gabra to attack Rendille, Turkana, Burji and Degodia people. There was no mention of their prime arch enemies, the Dassanetch. This was corrected

during a 'Peace and Reconciliation' meeting between the Gabra and the Dassanetch held in mid-July 1999 at the KWS headquarters in Sibiloi National Park. The meeting was initiated and sponsored by the Catholic Mission of North Horr, with PACODEO. The organizers formally invited over 100 elders, religious leaders (Catholic, Protestant and Muslims), and administrators. They also allowed into the meeting anyone else who wanted to attend. The meeting was attended by 161 participants. Informants indicated that government officials such as chiefs and councilors, especially those from North Horr, were initially reluctant to attend the meeting though they finally attended. The guest of honor was the District Officer of North Horr, Stephen Mbasu. The MP of North Horr who was the then Kenya's Foreign Minister, Dr. Bonaya Godana, was conspicuously absent and did not send an apology. Informants informed that the Dassanetch took that as an insult from the Gabras. Ethiopian government officials from Omorati together with representatives of the Hamar Koke and Arbore communities across the border had also been invited, but didn't turn up.

The group spent four days evaluating the reasons for the age-old hostilities between the Gabra and the Dassanetch. They also evaluated the problems between the Sibiloi National Park authorities and the two groups, because the members of the communities had been constantly encroaching on the park for grazing. The participants came up with resolutions and established a ten-man 'Interim Peace and Reconciliation Committee' from each group to oversee the implementation of those recommendations. The meeting was considered successful. One of the respondents who participated at the meeting reported that:

*“At the end of the meeting, the ten men from each side stood in two lines and formally shook hands. The atmosphere of this first-ever meeting between Gabra and Dassanetch was universally described amicable by all the participants. We talked with extreme positivity”.*

Unfortunately, the peace was broken within a couple of months when one of a group of Gabra who had invaded the Sibiloi National Park was shot dead by KWS personnel. The KWS personnel claimed that group had been behaving in an arrogant manner, threatening the employees of KWS. Peace was broken again in 2 November 1999 when a Dassanetch boy called Hichaba Lokorimoe was wounded at Karari and on 17 November when Dassanetch man called Laban Naguno was killed at Ilgmir. Naturally, the Dassanetch blamed the Gabra and the Boran respectively for the killings. The Gabra committee, formed to deal with such incidents, did not take any action. The PACODEO did also not visit the scenes to calm the situation. It was only the priest from the North Horr Catholic Mission who accompanied by a few Gabras, took an initiative to assess the situation. A respondent to this study reported that:

*“The Dassanetch have refrained from taking revenge on these attacks. However, when we returned to Ileret in January 2000, they assured that if a third incident occurred and no effective action is taken by the police, GSU, the Gabra or Borana, they would revenge in the traditional way”.*



### **5.2.2 Government initiative in Peace Building Process between Gabra and Dassanetch**

For years, the Kenyan Government has initiated several projects to deal with the existing and emerging conflicts, especially in the Northern part of Kenya. The Government through the Arid Lands Resource Management Programme (ALRMP) initiated projects in some areas of North Eastern Kenya to help in disaster prevention. These programmes are expected to help communities develop mechanisms to cope with disasters such as identifying early warning signs so as to develop distinct contingency plans for future. Priority areas identified are: water supply, education, health, rural road network and capacity building for conflict resolution and peace building. These priorities were captured in the Country Program Action Plan (CPAP) signed between the Government of Kenya and UNDP, 2004 - 2008. However, scholars have argued that these projects do not pay attention to participatory process and they are more service-oriented than demand-oriented.

In response to conflicts, the government has for years appointed members from the warring clans into various government agencies to spearhead the process of conflict resolutions. Other Government intervention strategies in the conflict resolutions include formation of Joint Community Peace Resolution Committees which are co-ordinated and facilitated by security officials and community leaders. Some of the resolutions of these communities have been: formation a multi-ethnic committee to steer inter-ethnic peace rallies, collaboration with the national government to facilitate reconstruction of houses of people misplaced by skirmishes as well as enhance security to protect residents and property.

The government is using education as a tool to create peace and understanding between the two communities. The admission of children from Ileret into the secondary schools in North Horr has opened education opportunities for the Dassanetch community. This has created friendship contacts between children of these communities which could help calm the hostility between these two communities. The same inter-school activities such as sport tournaments, drama and music festival are expected to lead to pleasant encounters between members of these two communities. There has also been an introduction of a peace building programme for the teachers known as “peace ambassadors” to help in peace building. Recently, the government has introduced credit scheme for youth and women to venture into income generating activities. The women from the Dassanetch community have started a bead production as an economic activity.

Other institutions that have been involved in the peace building process between the Gabra and the Dassanach include the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission.

### **5.2.3 The Contribution of NGOs in Peace Building Process between the Gabra and Dassanetch**

Various United Nations agencies have initiated several projects among the Gabras and the Dassanetch with the aim of bringing peace between these two communities. Some of the projects initiated are on capacity building for the warring communities, constitution of committees on peace building and conflict resolution, training in small enterprise development, improving access to clean water, promoting environmental

conservation (UNDP). The United Nations also provided communication equipment and vehicles to the Provincial Administration and the Peace Committees. The equipment and vehicles were meant to help beef-up security and foster peace-building. The World Food Programme (WFP) has been involved in the Food for Assets (FFA) projects.

Many Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) projects in the region have also focused on relief operations and emergency aid (food relief). Other CSOs have started water projects and agriculture projects such as technological innovation and animal health. Others have been involved in conflict resolution. The conflict management project such as Practical Action Eastern Africa (PAEA) is an NGO that has been implementing peace programmes in Northern Kenya. The organization works in Turkana, Marsabit, and Samburu, and works with partners and communities in West Pokot, Marakwet, Moyale, Mandera and Wajir counties. The themes of inter-ethnic cooperation and peace-making are now so popular with NGOs who include them in their agendas and funding programs. In 1998, a group of young men formed a Self-help fishing Group to set up a fishing project at Moite, on the Eastern shores of Lake Turkana. They called it DAWSGABO, an acronym standing for Dassanetch-WataS-Gabra-Borana. They stressed that people from all these groups would be members (although they were employing Turkana to do the actual fishing). This group had the support of the Missionaries of the Catholic Church of North Horr who not only serves as the advisors but also as the bankers for the group (KNHCR, 2000:172).

The Catholic Church has also engaged in peace building activities between the Gabra and the Dassanetch. Some of the underlying causes for the differences between the two ethnic groups have been realized and solution to their conflict reached. The church has also put effort in changing the negative attitude of members of these communities by preaching “love” and “forgiveness”, and been instrumental in behavior change as well.

The (CPJC) have also tried to bridge the gaps between the Gabra and Dassanetch in order to bring peace. The commission involves elders, men, women, youth, religious and traditional leaders as well as representatives from local administration and security plus judicial officials as in conflict resolution. For instance, The Ethiopian cross-border joint peace committee has been established. It draws six persons (a representative of each groups mentioned) from the Borana, Gabra and Dassanetch groups making a total of 18 people to work closely with their Kenyan counterpart. Similarly, in Kenya there are peace buildings teams at each sub-location level. The teams are composed of elders, women, youth, religious leaders and government officials (USAID, 2009). The peace building activities between the Dassanetch and the Gabra are facilitated by the peace committees of the two communities. The committees organize peace meetings and exchange visits between conflicting groups. They also hand over culprits to authorities and assist in recovering of stolen animals. Respondents testified that the customary arrangements have been effective in peace building and border harmonization.

#### **5.2.4 Challenges facing the Peace Building Process between the Gabra and Dassanetch**

There are many challenges affecting the restoration of peace among the Gabra and Dassanetch. The findings revealed that poor mediation efforts and weak government presence are the main obstacles to obtaining long-lasting peace.

##### **5.2.4.1 Poor Mediation Efforts**

The mediation efforts that have been undertaken between the Gabra and Dassanetch have not been very successful. This is likely due to the complexity of the conflict. The Gabra and Dassanetch conflict have been a long standing conflict, even in the pre-colonial period. Over the years the conflict has broadened to involve the clans from Ethiopia which cross over to support their groups, this impede the mediation efforts as noted during the interview. It was also reported that the mediators seemed not to have good will or were not properly trained in mediation. One of the respondents reported that:

*“Mediations, failed because there was no  
good will among the mediators”.*

In most cases, it appears that mediators have to impose ideas on the people. It was alleged that the government-supported mediators broke the accepted rules of mediation. The failure to adhere to mediation rules contributed to protracted conflict that led to deaths, destruction of property, collapse of the infrastructure, decline in economy and even the society itself. In addition, the conflict has disrupted education and health care and inflicted serious physical and psychological wounds on the

survivors of the inter-clan conflict. Even where mediation was successful peace were reached, communities failed to adhere to the peace agreements and this often resulted in frequent conflicts.

#### **5.2.4.2 Weak Government Presence**

Weak government presence is another cause of conflict in Marsabit County. The government of Kenya has been unable to fully penetrate and control all parts of Marsabit. Some areas of the regions in the County are so remote with barely any government institution hence leaving the people to govern themselves more often than not taking decisions that lead to violence. Findings of this study indicated that since independence, the presence of the government security machinery are minimal in the region. The government has only established garrisons manned by few military personnel who are reluctant to patrol towns after dark. This is because these members of the armed forces are poorly equipped that on certain incidents they are badly outgunned by local militias. As indicated by the respondent that:

*“Government has been slow in responding to conflicts; and when they have, state authorities have sometimes been the catalysts of insecurity rather than promoters of peace”.*

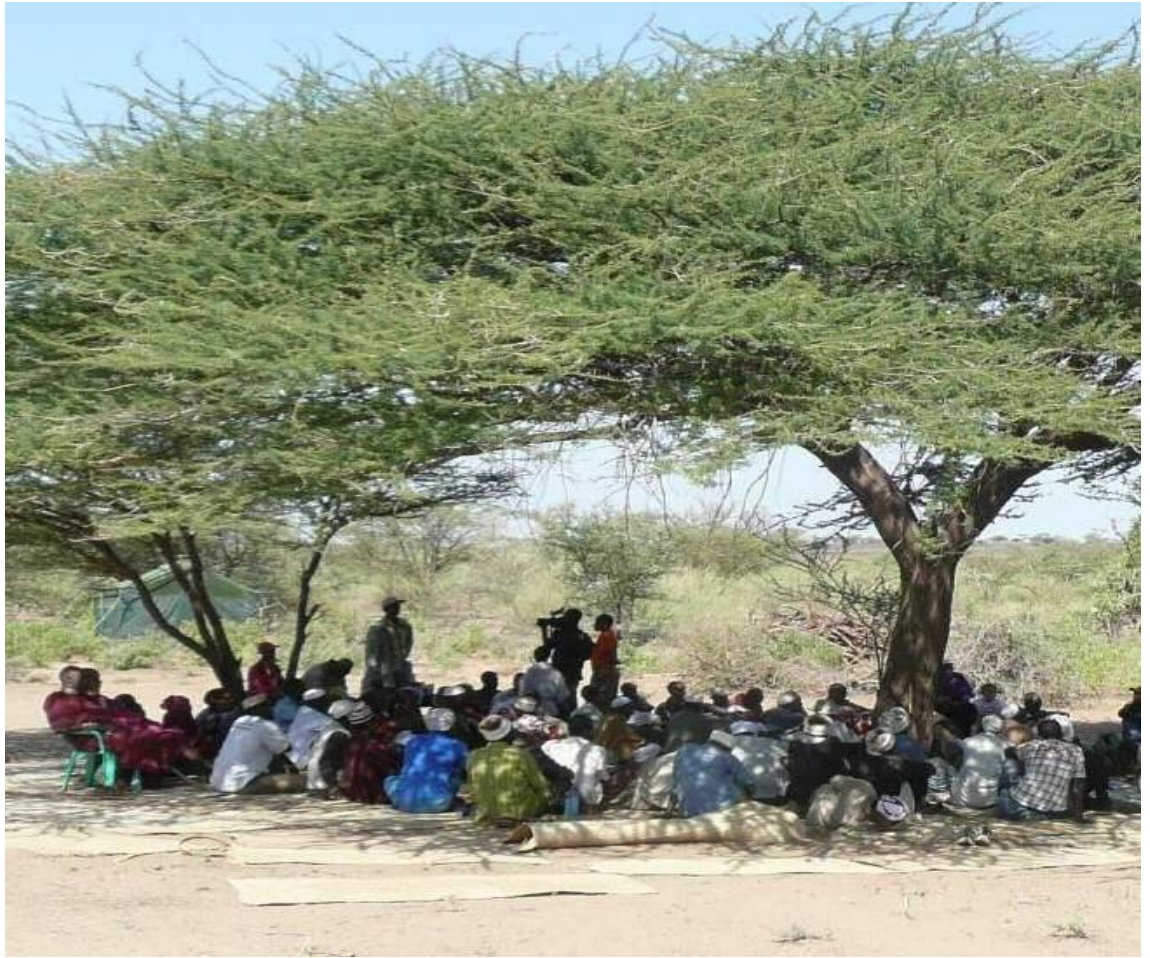
On the other hand, transport and communication are a major problem for the local security forces due to challenging terrain, bad roads and long distances between settlements. Distances from one village to another on average are more than fifty kilometres. The failure by the local security forces to prevent escalation of clan

conflicts points to lack of or inadequacy of security intelligence system on the ground. Conflicts build up over time, and a working intelligence system could not be able to detect them in good time.

#### **5.2.5 The Dukana and Dillo Peace Conference of 2009**

This conference resolved that if a person was caught with a stolen animal, he had to return the stolen animal and pay a fine of four animals for every animal he had stolen. The culprit was also expected to pay the expenses incurred in tracking of the lost animals. The rule applied to stealing of sheep, goats, camels and cattle. This was to be implemented in both the Kenyan and Ethiopian side. The other recommendation is that if anyone injures another person with intent, the penalty is, 15 cows would be charged and if anyone kills a person, they would be fined 30 cows. The other resolution arrived at was that if someone was found spreading out lies and propaganda or inciting people to fight, they would be fined five cows. The final resolution was that if a person, conversant with of a crime, concealed information about a culprit, each of them (the concealer and the criminal) would pay a fine equal to the crime committed. For example, if a member of one community hide a culprit who killed a member from a warring side, each of them would be fined 30 cows. In all these cases the culprit would also be charged in the court of law (USAID, 2009)

**Figure 3:** Dukana Peace gathering June, 2009



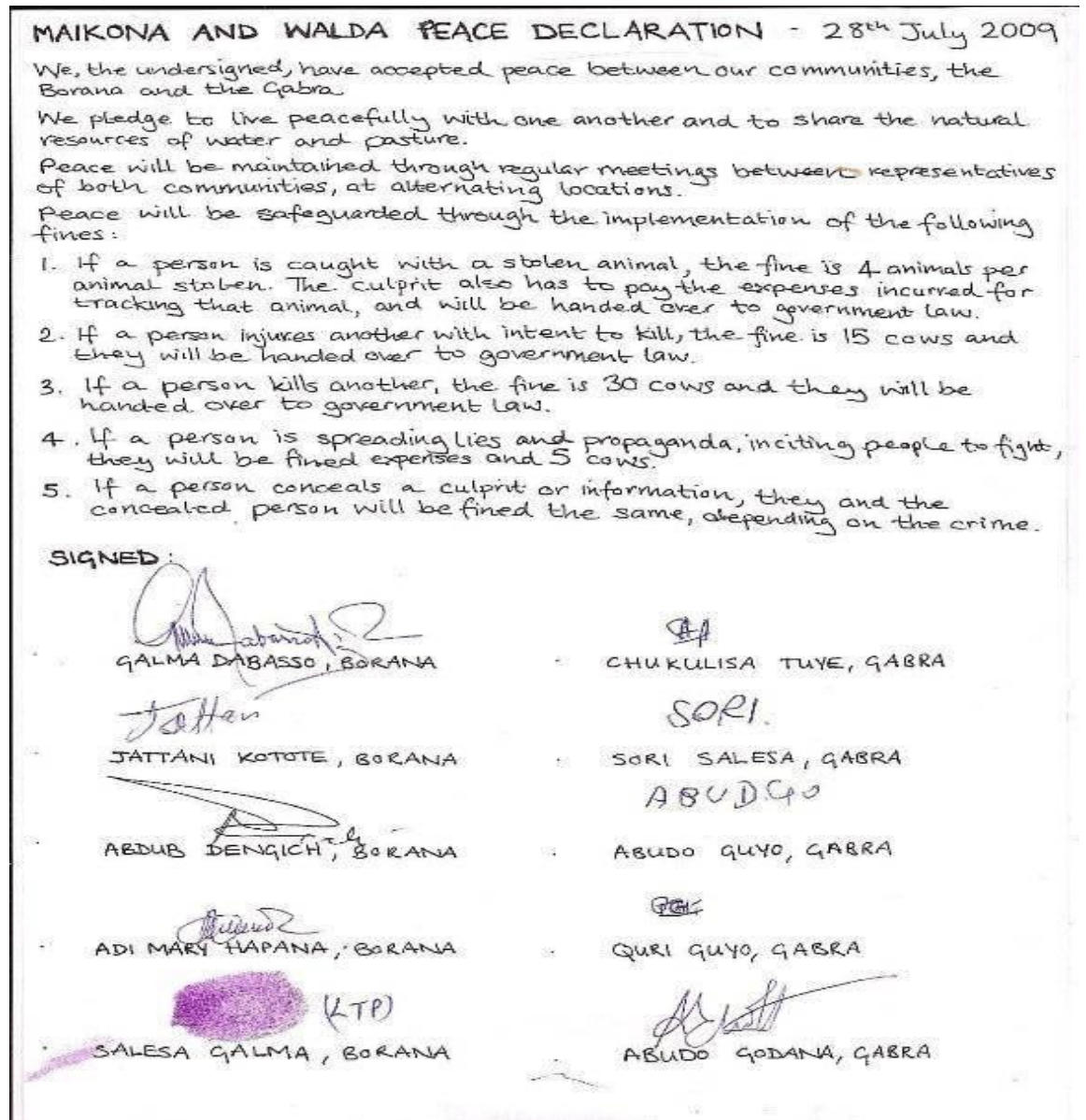
*Source:* Pastoralist Communication Initiative (PCI), 2009

#### **5.2.6 The Maikona and Walda Peace Declaration of 28 July, 2009**

The Maikona and Walda Peace Declaration 28th July, 2009 was another effort to resolve the conflict between the Gabra and the Boran. Figure 4 shows the agreement reached in the meeting.



**Figure 4:** The Maikona and Walda Peace Declaration of 28 July, 2009



**Source:** Pastoralist Communication Initiative (PCI), 2009

The peace situation between Borana and Gabra communities has calmed since 28<sup>th</sup> of July, 2009, although both communities have not started to use resources in common owing to fear and mistrust.

There have also been efforts to resolve the conflict between the Gabra and the Dassanetch. The process of resolving this conflict began in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is expected to continue until lasting peace is found between the two communities.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Marsabit County has exhibited very high propensity of conflict for quite a long time. The managers of the system have been trying to prevent the policy from crumbling, considering all the conflict management strategies put in place by various civil organizations and government prior to and after independence. There is the underlining conceptualization which informs them all. This conceptualization derives from the employment of Western bourgeois theory of social and elite stability. What successive regimes have been doing is to try to integrate the elite or the middle class in to the neglect of the grassroots and this has not achieved much. This is because they are the ready tools in the hands of the political class to torment communal instability. From the interview results, the study established that conflict resolution should ensure grassroots are mobilized by appropriate strategies to orientate the masses on the need for communal stability in the interest of development, peace and tranquility.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

#### **6.1 Summary of findings**

The findings were based on the general objective of this study which was to investigate the causes and effects of inter-ethnic conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch communities of Marsabit County.

The findings revealed that the causes of frequent conflicts between the Gabra and the Dassanetch are competition for scarce natural resources, mostly water and pasture. The conflict was escalated by creation of arbitrary boundaries by the colonial power which affected the traditional grazing arrangements enjoyed by the communities. Increased household vulnerability, bad governance, and weak socio-cultural capital have also come into play in escalating the violence. This has been aggravated by the ever persistent harsh environmental conditions and porous international border that has led to proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Also cultural practices such as raiding and social approval of killing members of enemy groups have not made the situation any better.

Attendant to the protracted social conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch has undermined economic growth. The government have contributed to marginalization, so the region lacks basic social services like health and education, for example, there is no secondary school and an average hospital in the area where the Dassanetch live. Other consequences of violent conflicts include the loss of human life and property as well as displacement of large segments of the communities which accelerates and sustains the vicious cycle of poverty, prevalent in the County. Gabra - Dassanetch conflict also disrupted the socio-economic situation because the increased animosity between the groups has led to the restriction of movement of humans and animals in areas where these groups live. This restriction of movement, especially of animals, has led to environmental degradation around the accessible water points. Degradation of the environment has led to further scarcity of natural resources contributing to loss of livestock deepening poverty. An escalation of violence breeds food insecurity resulting to heavy dependence on food leading to food aid among the displaced groups of population as well as those in their own homes. This has resulted in unprecedented dependency syndrome among the members of the two communities, commonly reported and observed amongst the residents of the county.

Several peace building initiatives have been undertaken to prevent conflicts, build peace and restore peace among the Gabra and Dassanetch as part of reconstruction processes. The major players in the peace-building processes vary including the government which over the years has been employing varying strategies in conflict resolution. Many Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and Civil Society

Organizations (CSOs) have intervened in the conflict by providing relief operation services and emergency aid (food relief), water and projects as well as putting an effort in conflict resolution. Traditional Conflict Management Strategies such as mediation of the warring communities by councils of elders have also been employed. However, the resolution of conflict has been difficult because these problems as we highlighted in the thesis are deep rooted in the people's cultures, are part of the socio-political framework, use inappropriate mediation procedures among others. There have been peace conferences between other warring communities living in the area but none have borne fruits to build long lasting peace between the Gabra and the Dassanetch.

## **6.2 Conclusions**

Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that:

- i) Conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch occur primarily as a result of a clash in the sharing of the scarce natural resources. The conflicts over boundaries, governance and economic development as well as negative ethnicity escalate the volatile situations in the county. .
- ii) The consequences of conflict between the Gabra and the Dassanetch include marginalization, loss of property leading to poverty, mass eviction of people from their homes leading to presence of IDPs and loss of lives.
- iii) There have been efforts to resolve the conflict but have been unsuccessful. This is because of the weak government presence in the area and use of inappropriate skills.

### 6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommended that:

- i) The various groups involved in the peace building ought to invest in training of on the indigenous peace-building processes. The groups also need to sensitize the people on the dangers of conflict and presence of illicit arms as is the case today.
- ii) The government agencies on the ground should strive to improve on equity in the management of natural resources so as to enable the community adapt to effects of climate change and build resilience.
- iii) The communities leaders need to assist people come up with alternative economic activities as stop over-reliance on pastoralism. Specifically, the leaders should consider constructing small scale industries such as meat and honey processing plants within the Gabra and Dassanetch to boost their social-economic status.
- iv) Since conflict is closely associated with drought and famine. The various organizations operating in the area need to train the members of their community in drought management.
- v) There government also needs to strengthen her institutions in the region so that her presence is felt. The government needs to improve the border controls, monitor the trade routes as well as establish international tracking and tracing schemes.
- vi) The police and the judiciary should ensure that any person who incites and/or promote ethnic is brought to book.

- vii) The government to take full responsibility to protect lives and property of its citizens and also assist in enhancing social cohesion between all warring communities.

#### **6.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

The researcher recommends studies on the following areas as follow-up to the current study.

- i) A study on the existing approaches and best practices in cross border-peace building and conflict mitigation across the Ethiopia-Kenya border is recommended.
- ii) A study to identify the impact of conflict on pastoral communities' resilience in other Counties in Kenya for comparative purposes.
- iii) A study to establish the contribution of indigenous community capacity in ethnic conflict resolution mechanisms.

## REFERENCES

### (A) PRIMARY SOURCES

#### (i) ORAL SOURCES: LIST OF INFORMANTS

Name	Division	Date
<b>Borana</b>		
1. Gollo Halake	Hurri Hills	05/03/2014
2. Wario Jillo	Sagante	11/03/2014
3. Golich Dabasa	Hurri Hill	05/03/2014
4. Adan Ali	Marsabit town	15/04/2014
<b>Gabra</b>		
1. Abudho Godana	Turbi	23/04/2014
2. Guyo Issacko	Maikona	16/04/2014
3. Tuye Katelo	Dukana	07/05/2014
4. Elema Adano	North-Horr	13/05/2014
5. Abdulahi Hacho	Dukana	08/05/2014
6. Sora Galgalo	Dukana	08/05/2014
7. Mollu Guyo	Dukana	09/05/2014
8. Denge Yattani	Dukana	09/05/2014
<b>Dassanetch</b>		
1. Hakurtulia Nyangaita	Ileret	06/06/2014
2. Philip Arkoe	Ileret	06/06/2014
3. Amos Ambasa	Telesgai Manyatta	07/06/2014
4. Lotika Sifela	Telesgai Manyatta	07/06/2014
5. Korie Ajiko	Alia Bay	09/06/2014
6. Lokademo Stephen	Alia Bay	09/06/2014
7. Halima Nasali	Ileret	11/06/2014



## **(II) ARCHIVAL SOURCES**

- KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/1 *Moyale District Annual Report 1931*
- KNA/DC/MBT 7/1/2 *Marsabit District Annual Report 1907-1940*
- KNA/PC/NFD 2/2/1 *Marsabit District handing over report 1918* by H.A Turner to J.L. Gamble
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/1 *Moyale District Annual Report 1914, 1918*
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/1 *Moyale District handing Annual Report 1914*
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/1 *Moyale District Annual Report 1918-1919* by F.T. Bamber
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/2/1 *Marsabit District Annual Report 1920-21)*
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/1 *Moyale District Annual Report 1920-1921* BY W. Slade Hawkins.
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/1 *Moyale District Annual Report 1926*
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/2 *Moyale District Annual Report 1930*
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/6/2 *Moyale District Annual Report 1931*
- KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/2 *Marsabit district handing over report 1935* by A.N Bailword to H.G. Oldfield)
- KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/3 *Marsabit District Handing Over Report. 1947* A.T. Watts to J.H. Bandler
- KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/3 *Marsabit District handing over report 1945* by G.C.M. Dowson to T.A. Watts
- KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/3 *Marsabit District handing over report 1941* by J.A.H Wolf to J.K.R. Thorp
- KNA/PC/NFD/2/2/2 *Marsabit District handing over report 1938* by J.H. Lewis to G. Reece
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/2/2 *Marsabit District Annual report 1935*
- KNA/PC/NFD 1/2/2 *Marsabit District Annual report 1932*

## **(III) NEWS PAPERS AND PERIODICALS**

- Daily Nation newspaper, 25 March 1997
- Daily Nation newspaper, 3 March 1997
- Daily Nation newspaper, 14 July 2005, p.5.

Daily Nation, 19 July 2005, 9

## **(B) SECONDARY SOURCES**

### **BOOKS AND JOURNALS**

Abdurahman, A. (2006). *Cross-border livestock Trade and Small Arms and Conflict in Pastoral Areas of the Horn of Africa: Case Study from Southern Ethiopia and Northern Kenya*; A paper to IASCP's Eleventh Biennial Conference.

Achebe, C (1975). *Morning yet on Creation Day*. London: Heinemann

Adan, M (et.al), 2008: *Concept of Peace Committees - A snapshot of Analysis of the Concept of Peace Committees in Relation to Peace Building Initiatives in Kenya*, Practical Action International.

Ahmad, Y. (2001). The socio-economics of pastoralism: a commentary on changing techniques and strategies for livestock management. In: Squires, V.R., Sidahmed, A.E. (eds). *Drylands. Sustainable use of rangelands into the twenty-first century*. IFAD Series: Technical Reports. Rome: IFAD.

Almagor, U (1978) (eds.), *Age, Generation and Time: Some Features of East African Age Organization*. London: H. Holt.

Almagor, U (1983). *Colours that match and clash. An explication of meaning in a pastoral society*. In *Res - Anthropology and Aesthetics* 5, pp. 49-73.

Aswaju, A.I., & Nugent, P. (1996). *Introduction: The Paradox of African Boundaries*; in A.I and P. Nugent (eds), *African Boundaries, Barriers, Conduits and Opportunities*. London: London Printers.

Azar, E (1990). *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict: Theory and cases*. Aldershot Dartmouth. P. 111-112.

- Barth, Fredrik. (1996). Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. In John Hutchinson & Anthony D. Smith. (Eds.), *Ethnicity* (pp. 75-82). Oxford University Press.
- Bates, R.H. (2001). *Prosperity and Violence: The Political Economy of Development*. New York: Norton.
- Bekele, A. (2005). *Peace for Development: Another Way of Addressing Discrimination, Inequality and Governance*. CARE International in Ethiopia.
- Bellucci, S. (2006). *Storia Delle Guerre Africane: Dalla Fine del Colonialismo al Neoliberalismo* Globale, p.57- 8 (Rome: Carrocci Editore, 2006).
- Birch, I., & Shuria, H. (2001). *Perspectives on Pastoral Development: A Casebook from Kenya*. Oxfam - London.
- Bonfiglioll, A., & Watson, (1992), *Pastoralists at a Crossroad: Survival and Development Issues in African Pastoralism*, UNESCO/ UNSO.
- Branch, D. (2011). *Kenya: Between Hope and Despair, 1963-2010*.UK.: Yale University Press.
- Brown, M. (2007). 'Ethnic and Internal Conflicts: Causes and Implications', in C. 11 Crocker, C, F. Hampson and P. Aall (eds), *Turbulent Peace, Washington, D.C: United States Institute of Peace Press*, pp. 209-226. 'Culture and Conflict Resolution', available at [http://www.bradford.ac.uk/acad/confres/dislearn/3\\_part3.html](http://www.bradford.ac.uk/acad/confres/dislearn/3_part3.html), retrieved on 28 April 2008.
- Buchanan-Smith, M., & Davies, S. (1995). *Famine Early Warning and Response: The missing*.

- Bujra, A. (2002). African Conflict: Their Causes and Their Political and Social Environment, Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF), Occasional Paper, No. 4
- Carr, C. (1977). *Pastoralism in Crisis. The Dassanetch and their Ethiopian lands*. University of Chicago.
- Carr, C. (2012). Humanitarian Catastrophe and Regional Armed Conflict Brewing in the Transborder Region of Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan. Department of Environmental Science and Policy Management. University of California Berkeley. African Resources Working Group (ARWG). South Omo/North Turkana Research Project (SONT).
- Caselli, F, and Wilbur J. C. (2006). *On the Theory of Ethnic Conflict*. No.w12125. National Bureau of Economic Research,
- Christie, K. (1998). Introduction: The problem with ethnicity and tribal politics. In Christie K. (ed.) *Ethnic conflict, tribal politics: A global perspective*. London: Curzon Press. Great Britain
- Cliffe, L., & Luckham, R. (1999). Complex Political Emergencies and the State: Failure and the Fate of the State. *Third World Quarterly* 20(1): 27-50.
- Cliffe, L. (1999) “Regional dimensions of conflict in the Horn of Africa”, *Third World Quarterly* 89-111
- Collier, P. et al. (2001). “On the Duration of Civil War” Policy Research Working Paper. (2681). The World Bank Development Research Group. September 2001
- Collier, P et al. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War & Development Policy*. Oxford University Press.

- Collier, P et al. (2005) "Armed Violence and Poverty in Northern Kenya", report for AVPI, Centre for International Cooperation and Security
- Collier, P. (2006). "Demobilization and Insecurity: A Study in the Economics of the Transition from War to Peace", *Journal of International Development*, 6, (3), 343 - 351
- Davidson, B. (1992). *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*. New York: Times Books.
- Dalleo, P.T. (1975). Trade and Pastoralism: Economic Factors in the History of the Somali of North Eastern Kenya, 1892-1948' (Ph.D. thesis, Syracuse University).
- DFID (Department of International Development) (2006). Preventing violent conflict. Abercrombie House Eaglesham Road East Kilbride *Glasgow G75 8EA*
- Deng, L. (2003) "Confronting Civil War: A Comparative Study of Household Livelihood Strategies in Southern Sudan", PhD thesis, IDS, University of Sussex.
- Dietz, T. (1987). *Pastoralists in dire strait; Survival strategies and external interventions in a semi-arid region at the Kenya/Uganda border*: Western Pokot, 1900 - 1986 University of Amsterdam.
- Dietz, T. (1993). The State, the Market, and the Decline of Pastoralism: Challenging some Myths, with Evidence from Western Pokot in Kenya/Uganda. In: Markakis J. (ed.) *Conflict and the Decline in Pastoralism in the Horn of Africa*, Macmillan - London.
- Diouf, M. (1990) "Overview of the Senegalese Situation" in ACARTSOD, *Ethnicity Citizenship. Stability and Socio-economic Development in Africa*

- Donham, D. L. and Wendy, J. (2002). *The Southern Matches of Imperial Ethiopia*. London: James Currey.
- Edevbie, O. (1999). Niger Delta Crisis, False Allegation by the Ifsekiri Survival Movement of Urhobo attack on Ishekiri. *The Guardian Newspaper, June 21, 1999*.
- Eikalo, I. (1998). Inter-ethnic conflicts in Marsabit Diocese, A Quest in Reconciliation (MA thesis, Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi).
- Emeka, E. (1999). *Climate Change, Population Drift and Violent Conflict over Land Resources in North Eastern Nigeria*. Social Development Department, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan, Nigeria,
- Emeka, O. (1999). The African Union and conflict resolution: Reflection on the civil war in Sudan: *Nigeria Journal of International Affairs*, 31, 89-107.
- Faris, S. (2009) Forecast: The Surprising and Immediate Consequences of Climate change. New York: Holt.
- Fearon, J.D (2004). Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others? *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 41, No. 3, Sage Publications, Ltd
- Fisher, S. et al. (2000). *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action*. London
- Galaty J.G and Bonte, P (1991). *Herders, Warriors, and Traders: Pastoralism in Africa*, West view. San Francisco: Boulder Co.
- Galaty, J. G. (2000). *Time, Terror, and Pastoral Inertia Sedentarization and Conflict in Northern Kenya*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

- Gamta, T. (2000). "The Politicization of My Oromo-English Dictionary: The Writer's Reflections". *Journal of Oromo Studies*, 7 (1&2), 1-2
- Gezahegn, P (2000). The Karo of the Lower Omo Valley. Subsistence, social organization, and relations with neighbouring groups. Addis Ababa.
- Ginifer, J. (2005) "Armed Violence and Poverty in Sierra Leone", report for AVPI, Centre for International Cooperation and Security.
- GoK (2005). Draft National Policy on Peace Building and Conflict management, National Steering Committee (NSC), Nairobi.
- Goodhand, J., and Hulme, D. (1999). From wars to complex political emergencies: understanding conflict and peace-building in the new world disorder. *Third World Quarterly*, 20 (10), 13-26.
- Griggs, R. A. (1995a): 'Boundaries and War in Africa in 1995,' IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin, 3, 1: 77-80.
- Griggs, R. A. (Summer 1997): The Boundaries of an African Renaissance. IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin, pp. 64-68
- Gurr, T. (2005). Transforming Ethno-Political Conflicts: Exit, Autonomy or Access in Kumar Rupesinghe (Ed.), Conflict Transformation, New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Guy, L. R. (1992). *Educational Research: Competencies for analysis and application* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed). New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Guy, M. (2002). *Africa in World Politics: A pan-African Perspective*. Asmara: Africa World Press, Inc.

- Harsch, E. (2006). *Combating Inequality in Africa, Africa Renewal*, Vol.20 #2 (July 2006),
- Hassen, M. (1990). *The Oromo of Ethiopia: A History 1570-1860*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Helland, J (1994). Development Interventions and Pastoral Dynamics in Southern Ethiopia: A Discussion of Natural Resources Management in Borana Pastoralism, *Working Papers in African Studies No 186*, African Studies Centre, Boston University, Boston.
- Hendrickson, D. et.al (1996). Livestock Raiding among the Pastoral Turkana of Kenya, Redistribution, Predation and the Links to Famine. *IDS Bulletin*, 27(3), 17 - 31.
- Hendrickson, D. et.al (1998). Conflict and Vulnerability to Famine: Livestock Raiding in Turkana, Kenya, *IIED Drylands Programme, and Issue Paper No. 80*. London.
- Horowitz, D.L. (2000). *Ethnic groups in conflict*, University of California. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) Press Ltd London. Smith, A.D. 1995. Nations and nationalism in the global era. Polity Press UK
- Ibrahim, D. (1994). *Report on the 'Peace and Development' Workshop*, Wajir, 19-22 December
- Ibrahim, D. (1996) Wajir Community Based Conflict Management. *Paper Presented to the USAID conference on Conflict Resolution in the Great Horn of Africa, June 1997*.
- Ihonvbere, O. J. (2002). *The State and Ethnicity in Africa*, in Udogu E. Ike (Ed). *The Issue of Political Ethnicity in Africa*. England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Intergrated Agriculture Development Consult (IADC) (2009). Assessment and consolidation Report on: Existing Approaches and Best Practices in Cross Border Peace Building and Conflict Mitigation and Strengthened CSOs across the Ethio-Kenya Border', pp. 17.



- Irobi, E. G. (2005). Ethnic Conflict Management in Africa: A Comparative Study of Nigeria and South Africa, Research Paper, May, 2005, at *Beyond Intractability.org of the University of Colorado*.
- Kassam, A. (1995). Gabbra; A Series of the Heritage Library of African Peoples. Rosen Pub Group; 1<sup>st</sup> edition
- Kassam, A. and Ganya, F.C. (2006) (Unpublished). Managing the Gabbra Oromo commons of Kenya, Past and Present.
- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30, 607-610 University of Connecticut
- Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) (2000). The forgotten people revisited: The Human Rights Abuses in Marsabit and Moyale district, publication of the KHRC
- Knight M, & Villanueva, D (1996). *The Peace Dividend: Military Spending Cuts and Economic Growth*. IMF Staff Papers 43.
- Krätli, S. & Jeremy, S. (2001). Understanding and Managing Pastoral Conflict in Kenya: How contemporary understandings and knowledge of pastoral conflict can guide practical work. Environment Team, IDS Sussex, UK.
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques. Delhi: Dahmesh Printers.
- Kumar, R. and Sanam, N. A. (2008). Civil Wars, Civil Peace: An Introduction to Conflict Resolution. London: Pluto Press.

- Legesse, M (1973). *Gada; Three approaches to the study of African society*. New York: The Free Press.
- Legesse, M. (1989). *Adaptation, Drought and Development: Boran and Gabra Pastoralists of Northern Kenya in African Food Systems in Crisis*. Volume 1: Micro perspectives. Gordon and Breach, NY.
- Little, P.D. (1996). *Cross-Border cattle trade and food security in the Kenya/Somalia Borderlands*. London: University of Kentucky.
- Loisel, SN (2004): The European Union and African Border Conflicts: Assessing the Impact of Development Cooperation. UACES Student Forum Regional Conference, Cambridge, May 7th 2004.
- Luckham, R.et al. (1985). *The Colonial Roots of Internal Conflict Resolution in Uganda*.
- Luckham, R. et al. (2001). *Conflict & Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: An assessment of the Issues and Evidence*. Sussex: Institute for Development Studies.
- Luling, V. (2006). Genealogy as theory, genealogy as tool: aspects of Somali clanship. *Social Identities*, 12 (4), 471-85
- Jonsson, (2007): "The Overwhelming Minority: Traditional Leadership and Ethnic Conflict in Ghana's Northern Region". Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University. CRISE Working Paper 30.
- Macartan, H (2005). Natural resources, conflict and conflict resolution: Uncovering the mechanisms. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49, 37-68.
- Malan, M. (2000). Disarming and Demobilizing Child Soldiers: The Underlying Challenges, *African Security Review*, 9(516).

- Markakis, J (1993). *Conflict and the Decline of Pastoralism in the Horn of Africa*, London: Macmillan Press.
- Markakis, J (1998). *Resource conflict in the Horn of Africa*. London: Sage Publications.
- Mburu, N. (2003). Firearms and political power of Turkana of Kenya 1900-2000. *Journal of International Studies*, 7, 98-107.
- Mburu, N. (2005). *Bandits on the Border; The last frontier in the search for Somali unity*. Asmara: The Red Cross Inc.
- McOnyango, O. (1995). "The Jews, the Gentiles and the Grudge". UNESCO seminar paper, 28 - 31, May.
- Mkutu, K. (2000). Cattle Rustling and the Proliferation of Small Arms: The Case of Baragoi Division, Samburu District in Kenya' in Improving Human Security through the Control and Management of Small Arms. APFO/IRG, Nairobi.
- Mkutu, K (2001). *Pastoralism and Conflict in the Horn of Africa* APFO/Saferworld/Bradford University.
- Mkutu, K. (2008). *Guns and Governance in the Rift Valley: Pastoralist Conflict and Small Arms*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Monty G. M and Tedd, R. G. (2005). *Peace and Conflict 2005: A Global Survey of Armed Conflicts, Self-Determination Movements, and Democracy*. College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland
- Mugenda and Mugenda (1999). *Research Methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*: Olive M Publication: Nairobi

- Mulugeta, G.B (2014). *A Delicate Balance: Land use, Minority rights and social stability in the Horn of Africa*. Institute for Peace security studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia.
- Mwangi, O (2006) 'Kenya Conflicts in the Badlands': The Turbi massacre in Marsabit District', *Review of African Political Economy*, 107, 81-91.
- National Steering Committee on Peace Building and Conflict Management (NSCPBCM) (2011). *National Conflict Mapping and Analysis: Peace and Conflict Trends in Kenya*.
- Njeru, M. (2005). Survivors Tell of Their Battle With The Raiders on How They Cheated Death. *Daily Nation*, July 14, 2.
- Nnoli, O. (1995). *Ethnicity and Development in Nigeria* (Aldershot: Avebury)
- Nyong'o, P. A. (1987). *Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa*. London: Zed-books.
- Nyukuri, B. (1997). The Impact of Past and Potential Ethnic Conflicts on Kenyan's Stability and Development. A Paper prepared for the USAID Conference on Conflict Resolution in the Great Horn of Africa, June 1997.
- Nyukuri, B (1992). "Ethnicity and the Politics of National Integration in Kenya". A Paper presented on 22nd October at Kisumu.
- Oba, G. (2000). Where the bulls fight, it is the grass that suffers": The impact of border administration on drought-coping strategies of the Obbu Booran during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. *Journal of Oromo studies*, 7 (1&2), 87-108.
- Ocan, C.E (1994). Pastoral Resources and Conflicts in North Eastern Uganda: The Karamojong Case of Nomadic peoples. Pp. 34 - 45, 123 -135

- Osamba, J. O (2000) The Sociology of Insecurity: Cattle Rustling and Banditry in North-Western Kenya. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 1, 2.
- Oyeniya, A. (2011). Conflict and violence in Africa: Causes and types: *The Salzburg seminar (article)*. The Entrepreneurial city.
- Rass, N. (2006). Policies and strategies to address the vulnerability of pastoralist in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Working paper No. 7, pro-poor livestock Policy Initiative*, FAO. Rome
- Robinson, P (1984). *Gabbra Nomadic Pastoralism in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Northern Kenya: strategies for survival in a marginal environment*. Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Northwestern University.
- Ruto, P et.al (2003) *Conflict in northern Kenya: A Focus on the Internally Displaced Victims in Northern Kenya*, Nairobi: ITDG-EA
- Salih, M. A. (1992). *Agro-Pastoralism: An underestimated regional food production system*. *Eastern Africa Social Science Review (EASSR)* Vol. IX, No. 1, 23-37
- Saferworld, (2001). 28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT, U
- Schilling, J., Akuno, M, Scheffran, J. and Weinzierl (2012): On raids and relations to climate change, pastoral conflict and adaptation in Northwestern Kenya (under review). In climate change and conflict: where to for conflict sensitive climate adaptation in Africa? Ed. Bronkhorst, S. and Bob. Durban: Human Sciences Research Council
- Sobania, N (1980). The Historical Tradition of the Peoples of the Eastern Lake Turkana Basin c.1840 -1925. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of London.

- Sobania, N.W. (1988) *Pastoralist migration and colonial policy*: A case study from Northern Kenya. In *The Ecology of Survival: Case Studies from Northeastern African History*, edited by D. Johnson and D. Anderson, pp. 219-239. London: Crook Greene, and Westview Press.
- Sobania, N.W. (1991). Feasts, famines and friends: nineteenth century exchange and ethnicity in the eastern Lake Turkana Region. In *Herders, Warriors and Traders*, edited by J.G. Galaty and P. Bonte, pp. 118-142. Boulder Colorado: Westview Press.
- Sobania, N.W. (1993). Defeat and Dispersal: The Laikipiak and their neighbors in the 19th century. In *Being Maasai: Ethnicity and Identity in East Africa*, edited by T. Spear and R. Waller, pp.105-119. London: James Currey. Smith, K., 1998, Farming,
- Staines, N. (2004). *Economic Performance over the Conflict Cycle*, IMF working paper WP / 04/95
- Stiles, D. (1983). *The Gabra of Northern Kenya. Kenya, Past and Present*. No. 13, 1983.
- Tablino, P (1999). *The Gabra: Camel Nomads of Northern Kenya*. Limuru: Diocese of Marsabit. Originally published in 1980 as *I Gabra del Kenya*. Italy: E. M. I. Bologna.
- Torry, W. (1973). *Subsistence Economy among the Gabra, Nomads of the Kenya/Ethiopia Frontier*. Ph.D dissertation, Columbia University Faculty of Political Science.
- Tosco, M. (2001). *The Dhaasanac Language. Grammar, texts and vocabulary of a Cushitic language of Ethiopia*. Köln.
- Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) (2013)*
- Umar, A. (1994). Symposium for the Sustainable Development of North Eastern Kenya. Kenya Pastoralist Forum. Nairobi: Crescent of Hope.

- United States Institute of Peace (2007). Natural Resources, conflict and conflict Resolution: A study guide series on peace and conflict. Washington DC: Macmillan Publishers.
- USAID (2008). Management Systems International and Pact-Kenya. 2008. Regional Enhanced Livelihoods in Pastoral Areas (RELPA), Conflict Sensitive Service Delivery.
- Von Höhnel, L (1894). Discovery of Lakes Rudolf and Stefanie. A narrative of Count Samuel Teleki's exploring and hunting expedition in Eastern Equatorial Africa in 1887 and 1888. Vol.II. London. (Original work published in 1891)
- Walker, I. (2010). Research Methods and Statistics. Macmillan Publishers, UK.
- Whittaker, H. (2012). "The Socio-Economic Dynamics of the Shifta conflict in Kenya. Nairobi: Cambridge University Press.
- Whitely, E.D. (1974). Language in Kenya. Nairobi. Oxford University Press
- Witsenburg, K and Roba, A. W. (2003). The Management and uses of water sources in Kenya's Drylands: is there a link between scarcity and violent conflicts? Amsterdam: Amsterdam Research Institute for Global Issues and Development Studies.
- Witsenburg, K., & Roba, A. W. (2009). Of Rain and Raids: Violent Livestock Raiding in Northern Kenya. Civil Wars 11(4): 514 -538.
- Wood, J .C. (1997). Inside the Outside: The Construction of pastoral identities at the margins of Kenya and Ethiopia. Wisconsin: Wisconsin Uni. Press.
- Wood, J. C (1999). When Men are Women, Manhood among Gabra Nomads of East Africa, Wisconsin Uni. Press. Wisconsin. USA.

Yohannes, G., Hadgu, K and Zerihun, A. (2005). Addressing Pastoralist Conflict in Ethiopia.  
.The case of the Kuraz and Hamar sub-districts of South Omo zone. Africa Peace  
Forum Research and Development Association, Inter Africa Group, Saferworld.



## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Questionnaire for Religious Organizations and NGOs

Hello! I am a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University pursuing Master of Arts degree in Political Science. Currently, I'm carrying out a research on Inter-ethnic conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch communities of Marsabit County. I kindly request you to spare some of your valuable time to fill this questionnaire for me. The information provided will be used strictly for the purpose of this study and will be treated confidentially. Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in the study.

Please answer all the questions to the best of your knowledge.

#### Section A: Background Information

1. What is your gender?      Male [    ]      Female [    ]
2. What is your age? Between 18 - 25 [    ] Between 26 - 35 [    ] Between 36 - 40  
Between 41 - 50 [    ] Between 51 - 60 [    ] Between 61 - 70 [    ] Between 71 -  
80 [    ]
3. What is your highest level of education attained? Primary [    ] Secondary [    ]  
College [    ] University [    ]  
  
Others (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Marital status: Married [    ] Divorced [    ] Single [    ] Widow [    ] Widower [    ]

#### Section B: Main questions

1. There have been many cases of conflict between members of the Gabra and Dassanetch communities, what have been the causes of these conflicts?

i) Scarce resources (water and pasture) ☐

ii) Political power ☐

iii) Colonial ethnic boundaries ☐

iv) Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. (a) Is there a possibility that the two communities compete for natural resources?

Yes [ ☐ ]

No [ ☐ ]

(b) If your response in (a) above is “Yes”, explain which resources are responsible for the conflicts?

---



---

3. What economic effects do you think the conflicts brings?

i) Loss of markets ☐

ii) Loss of livestock ☐

iii) Destruction of properties ☐

iv) Others(specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4. How did inter-ethnic conflict between Gabra and Dassanetch affects the socio-economic dynamics of immediate victims?

i) Loss of livestock through raiding ☐

ii) Disruption of education ☐

iii) Destitution ☐

iv) Others(specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. In what ways did the government, NGOs and FBO make adequate interventions to assists the victims of conflicts?

- i) Through provision of humanitarian aid: food, temporary shelter and clothing ☐
- ii) Establishment of strategic settlement schemes ☐
- iii) Provision of security forces ☐
- iv) No assistance at all ☐
- v) Others(specify)\_\_\_\_\_

6. How can the frequent conflicts be prevented in future?

---



---

7. (a) Have there been any previous mechanisms to resolve the conflicts between Gabra and Dassanetch?

Yes [ ☐ ]

No [ ☐ ]

(b) What were the results of such conflict resolution mechanisms?

- i) No cease fire ☐
- ii) Peace agreement ☐
- iii) Disarming both warring countries ☐
- iv) Others (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

8. What can be done to end the conflicts once and for all? \_\_\_\_\_

---

9. Please tick the numeric value corresponding to your personal opinion for each of the following statements regarding conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Livestock raiding is one of the main causes of conflict between the Gabra and Dassanetch	①	②	③	④	⑤
Livestock raids are now an organized violent commercial enterprise supplying meat to urban areas and for export.	①	②	③	④	⑤
Livestock raiding greatly impoverish the both communities	①	②	③	④	⑤
Nobody benefits from the frequent raids and counter raids from both communities	①	②	③	④	⑤
Water is one of the main causes of frequent conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch	①	②	③	④	⑤
Frequent conflicts greatly affects economic development of the communities in conflict	①	②	③	④	⑤
Frequent conflicts greatly affects education of children from the two communities	①	②	③	④	⑤
Conflicts are complicated issues that consume time and resources.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Conflicts result in reduction in labour thereby increasing poverty levels	①	②	③	④	⑤
People desert areas of conflict affecting short and long term production.	①	②	③	④	⑤
Due to the conflicts, physical insecurity bars people from moving to market places, further reducing economic activities	①	②	③	④	⑤
Stolen livestock moved to market, have a substantial effect on local prices.	①	②	③	④	⑤
Trade and exchange routes and relationships are disrupted by conflict.	①	②	③	④	⑤
Frequent conflicts reduce crop production through the destruction of crops and displacement of labour.	①	②	③	④	⑤
Land and grazing fields is one of the causes of conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch communities	①	②	③	④	⑤
Frequent conflict results in loss of access to land, property, jobs, and assets and therefore means of livelihood	①	②	③	④	⑤
Conflicts can be prevented if the natural resources are properly utilized and conserved	①	②	③	④	⑤

Teachers abandon conflict prone areas due to lack of security resulting in the schools closure.	①	②	③	④	⑤
Disruption of school leads to low levels of education	①	②	③	④	⑤
Children are forced to drop out of school when families flee from conflict areas.	①	②	③	④	⑤
Armed violent conflict leads to wholesale destruction of medical facilities and schools, resulting to long - term negative impacts	①	②	③	④	⑤
Armed conflict increases government expenditure going to the security sector, reducing provision of social services fall.	①	②	③	④	⑤

### **Appendix II: Interview Schedule for Chiefs and Women representatives**

1. There have been numerous cases of conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch communities, what have been the causes of the conflicts?
2. Are there situations where the conflicts have been caused by scramble for natural resources?      Yes      ☐      No      ☐  
 (b) If “Yes” in (a) above, what resources have the two communities been fighting over?
3. What aspect of the natural resources has been a subject of conflicts?
4. What role do you play during conflicts in your capacity as administrators?
5. What has been the effect of the conflicts on the following?
  - i) Education of children

- ii) Human economic activities
- iii) General security in the region
- iv) Medical services
- v) General welfare of the people

6. (a) Have there been any attempts to resolve the conflicts in the past?

Yes ☐

No ☐

(b) If “Yes” in (a) above, what were the attempts made?

(c) Why do you think the conflicts still erupts even after attempts to resolve them?

7. What do you think should be done by the following to resolve the conflicts once and for all?

- i) Leaders of each of the communities
- ii) Religious organization
- iii) Chiefs
- iv) NGOs and Government bodies
- v) Women representatives
- vi) Other groups (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Appendix III: Focused Group Discussion Guide for Elders**

1. There have been numerous cases of conflicts between the Gabra and Dassanetch communities, what have been the causes of the conflicts?
2. Are there situations where the conflicts have been caused by scramble for natural resources? Yes ☐ No ☐
3. If “Yes” in what resources have the two communities been fighting over?
4. What aspect of the natural resources has been a subject of conflicts?

5. What role do you play during conflicts in your capacity as elders?

6. What has been the effect of the conflicts on the following?

- a) Education of children
- b) Human economic activities
- c) General security in the region
- d) Medical services
- e) General welfare of the people

7. (a) Have there been any attempts to resolve the conflicts in the past?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If “Yes” in (a) above, what were the attempts made?

(c) Why do you think the conflicts still erupts even after attempts to resolve them?

8. What do you think should be done by the following to resolve the conflicts once and for all?

- i) Leaders of each of the communities
- ii) Religious organizations
- iii) Chiefs
- iv) Government bodies
- v) Women representatives
- vi) Other groups (specify)\_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix IV: Working Schedule**

<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>DETAILED ACTIVITY</b>
January 2014	Obtain research permit. Familiarization with the area of study, those affected directly and indirectly by ethnic conflict.
February 2014	Recruiting and training research assistants, acquiring research instruments to use and selecting samples of study. Reading of literature and analyzing it will be done.
March 2014	Data collection in the field and pre - processing data
April 2014	Data interpretation, analysis and storage of the used data will be done.
May 2014	Report writing and review by supervisors.
June 2014	Revision and writing of final draft and submission to the university.

**Appendix V: Proposed Budget**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	
	<b>USD(\$)</b>	<b>Kshs.</b>
Conducting reconnaissance survey	160	13,440
Tools and materials for study	100	8,400
Production of interview schedules, questionnaires and lead questions.	300	25,200
Stationary and typing	300	25,200
Training of research assistants and pre-testing of questionnaires.	300	25,200
Transport costs within the field for three people for one month.	2500	210,000
Allowances for researcher for one month 4,000 per day.	1580	132,720
Data entry, analysis and computer costs	500	42,000
Production of final report	250	21,000
Miscellaneous	400	33,600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,420</b>	<b>536,760</b>