

The Institutional Canopy of Conservation:  
Governance and Environmentality in East Africa (I-CAN)  
McGill University – African Conservation Center



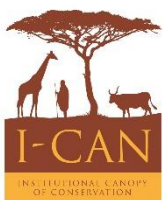
Research Scoping Report #10:  
Natural Resource Conflict in Il Ngwesi  
Group Ranch, Laikipia County, Kenya

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**Cover Photograph: Lower Sang'A in Il Ngwesi Group Ranch.** This village is located in between the Mukogodo forest, not visible because located behind the photographer, and the Lewa conservancy, which occupies part of the plain in the background.

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## Summary

We conducted a research scoping trip in Il Ngwesi Group Ranch, one of the four Group Ranches in charge of managing the Mukogodo forest in Laikipia County, Kenya, inhabited by the Il Ngwesi Maasai. We also conducted a few interviews in the neighbouring Lekurruki Group Ranch, inhabited by Yaaku people, also called the Mukogodo, and in Isiolo County where some members of Il Ngwesi Group Ranch have settled after the creation of the conservancy. During 6 days of field work, we interviewed various members of these communities to understand their livelihood strategies and challenges, with a particular focus on a deadly conflict that was taking place at that time with the neighbouring Samburu people coming from the North.

The Il Ngwesi people, who in the past may have been a Dorobo group<sup>1</sup> but have now adopted the Maasai identity and way of life, were forced to migrate from their home in Meru county to the Mukogodo forest area, apparently because of white settlement during the colonial period. They have experienced various conflicts, with the Yaaku people who occupied part of the land where they settled, with Somali people during the “shifta” war after independence, with Kikuyu people who settled on land that was vacated by white settlers after independence, and with Samburu people. Today, they have secured rights on the Mukogodo forest and the land that surrounds it, through the creation of Il Ngwesi Group Ranch and community conservancy, and through their strong involvement in a Community Forest Association (CFA) that manages the Mukogodo forest. They raise livestock and practice farming, growing mainly maize and beans on a plateau surrounded by forest and located on the top of a mountain. Their community conservancy was created with support from the neighbouring Lewa Conservancy and various NGOs.

A significant number of Il Ngwesi Group Ranch members do not live in their Group Ranch. Many of them are educated and have jobs in neighbouring ranches or towns. Others have bought private land, in part with the royalties generated by their share in the conservancy. They farm this land like their Kikuyu neighbours.

Since about 2015, the Il Ngwesi have been involved in an intense conflict with their neighbours, the Samburu pastoralists coming from the North. These Samburu groups come from drier areas where pastures are said to be degraded and grass is severely lacking during the dry season. They first invaded Lekurruki Conservancy and some of them have settled there permanently, ending the activities of its lodge. The Yaaku people failed to resist and some of them are now collaborating with the Samburu, possibly with the hope of taking revenge on the Il Ngwesi who obtained part of the land that the Yaaku claim to be theirs, when the Group Ranches were created. Using the Yaaku communities as their base, Samburu people then invaded Il Ngwesi Group Ranch and conservancy, killing some people. The Il Ngwesi evacuated their home on the plateau, a mosaic of pastures and small cultivated fields surrounded by forests and located at the core of their Group Ranch. This area is now occupied by Samburu shepherds and their herds.

Policemen and rangers from the community conservancies as well as from the neighbouring Lewa and Borana conservancies were mobilized to resist the invasion. Several *moran* died on both sides and three policemen were also killed. Many meetings were held between elders and morans from all sides to find a solution to the conflict, with involvement of authorities and facilitation by NGOs such as the Northern Rangeland Trust, which supports conservancies in the area. All negotiation attempts failed. The Samburu moran involved in the conflicts are

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<sup>1</sup> Dorobo are hunting gathering groups, sometimes destitute Maasai with no livestock, that lived on the margin of Maasai land and were more or less assimilated to Maasai identity of culture. The term is often perceived as derogatory.

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said to have been absent from the negotiations. They are, allegedly, not under the control of the elders of their own community and instead follow instructions from political figures, mainly Member of Parliament Thomas Lampurkel.

Thomas Lempurkel and other Samburu elites are said to drive the conflict from behind, facilitating the purchase of automatic weapons and the freeing of arrested morans. These elites possess abundant livestock that constitute part of the herds that invade the conservancies and ranches. Their purpose may be the breaking of settler ranches and opening of their land to pastoralists, in order to access grazing resources for their livestock and obtaining the votes of pastoralist people.

The conflict in Mukogodo forest reflects the complexity of the environmental and social situation in Laikipia County. The land distribution inherited from the colonial period, with large property leased to rich settlers facing communities of smallholder farmers or extensive pastoralists, creates political and economic imbalances that complicate the resolution of conflicts. Like during our research scoping study in Rumuruti, where similar conflicts occur, we found that customary institutions have experience and capabilities in conflict resolution. But the implication of powerful figures negates their negotiation efforts by creating extreme power imbalances in favor of very small groups of people that are given protection and are armed with modern weapons. In that context, the alliance in place today, with Il Ngwesi pastoralists collaborating with white settlers on one side and Samburu pastoralists backed by politicians on the other side, result in an highly volatile situation, rendering the outcome of the conflict extremely uncertain.

## 1. Introduction

McGill University and the Indigenous Movement for Peace Advancement and Conflict Transformation (IMPACT), partners under the Institutional Canopy of Conservation (I-CAN)<sup>2</sup> research project, conducted a research scoping study<sup>3</sup> in Il Ngwesi Group Ranch in the Mukogodo Forest and its surrounding area on November 12, 2016 (preliminary study) and from June 26 to July 1, 2017 (complete research scoping study). The team included Jacques Pollini, Research Associate on the I-CAN project at McGill University; Ramson Karmushu, Felista Shamim Mpanei, and Christine Simia from IMPACT; and David Barmes, an undergraduate student at McGill University doing an internship at IMPACT. The purpose of the study is twofold: firstly, to provide baseline information to identify research questions and facilitate the selection of study sites for graduate students and other researchers working within I-CAN, and secondly, to report on the current conflict that is affecting this particular region of Laikipia County.

## 2. Methodology

We used the same methodology as in other research scoping studies conducted by the I-CAN project. We do not use questionnaires; we conduct informal interviews using an analytical grid that owes much to the school of comparative agriculture (Cochet 2015),<sup>4</sup> but is also influenced by the works of Scott (1976)<sup>5</sup> on the moral economy of peasants, Chayanov (1984 [1922])<sup>6</sup> on peasant economics, Netting (1993)<sup>7</sup> on smallholder farming, Lhoste et al (1993)<sup>8</sup> on pastoralism, and Ribot (2007)<sup>9</sup> on representation in governance institutions. Typically, when visiting a community, we meet local leaders to explain the purpose of our work and ask a first set of general questions about local livelihood strategies and challenges faced by the community. We then recruit additional informants using a snowball sampling strategy to delve deeper into key issues. Given the short duration of the exercise (5 days of field work) and the broad range of topics to cover, we do not claim a high level of certainty for each single statement made in this report. We do not describe the situation in the study area as it is. We describe it as we are told it is by a limited number of informants. We derive conclusions that should not be considered as definitive. They are, rather, hypotheses to be tested by future research. However, by rarely asking the same question twice, we make it possible to address a much broader range of issues and collect a larger number of stories than what is typically found in baseline surveys that use closed questionnaires. We use triangulation, rather than replication, as a strategy to increase the level of certainty of our statements and conclusions.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.accafrica.org/our\\_work/explore\\_programs/conserving-biodiversity-in-east-africa/i-can-institutional-canopy-of-conservation/](http://www.accafrica.org/our_work/explore_programs/conserving-biodiversity-in-east-africa/i-can-institutional-canopy-of-conservation/) ; <https://www.idrc.ca/en/project/institutional-canopy-conservation> ; <http://cicada.world/research/programs/i-can/>

<sup>3</sup> The approach presents some similarities to Rapid Rural Appraisals (RRA), as it is similarly comprehensive in scope, the purpose being to understand how a landscape works and the main social and environmental challenges faced by people living on the landscape. However, as we use an approach quite different from what is typically done in RRA exercises, we prefer not to use that term.

<sup>4</sup> Cochet, H. 2015. *Comparative agriculture*. Versailles: Editions Quae.

<sup>5</sup> Scott, J. 1976. *The moral economy of the peasants: Rebellion and subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

<sup>6</sup> Chayanov, A. 1986 (1922) *The theory of peasant economy*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

<sup>7</sup> Netting, R. M. 1993. *Smallholders, householders: Farm families and the ecology of intensive, sustainable agriculture*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Lhoste P., Dollé V., Rousseau J., Soltner D., 1993. *Manuel de zootechnie des régions chaudes: Les systèmes d'élevage*. Paris : Ministère de la Coopération, coll. Manuels et précis d'élevage.

<sup>9</sup> Ribot, J. 2007. *Dans L'Attente de la Démocratie: La politique des choix dans la décentralisation de la gestion des ressources naturelles*. Washington, D.C.: World Resources Institute.



All interview notes are available on request, and large chunks of these notes are inserted into the body of this report. These notes are not exact transcriptions of the informants' speech. They were taken as accurately as was technically feasible. However, most interviews were conducted in Maa language and translated, meaning we took notes of the translation, not of the original speeches. The "citations" in the report are thus citations of notes, edited and reorganized for clarity, and cited as "D#", "I#", or "R#", where "#" represents the interview number. "D" stands for interviews conducted by David Barmes, "R" for interviews conducted by Ramson Karmushu, and "I" for interviews conducted by Jacques Pollini.

There are very few bibliographic references in this report. The purpose of the exercise was to collect first-hand, up-to-date information, to make this information available in the short term to people interested in the study area, and to provide an independent view of the situation in that area to complement existing views available in the literature. Hence all information provided in this report comes from interviews conducted in the communities of Il Ngwesi Group Ranch, (including Il Ngwesi 1, Il Ngwesi 2, Lokusero B, Emurua, Upper Sanga, Lower Sanga, Sieku, and Siekoi, which is located in Isiolo County), except for a few interviews conducted in the neighbouring Lekurruki Group Ranch, and for the information in boxes or footnotes, which was extracted from the literature. A literature review will be done later, when the material presented in this report is used to prepare scientific publications.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Mukogodo Forest

##### 3.1.1. Overview

Mukogodo Forest is located in the northeast corner of Laikipia County, bordering Isiolo County (Figures 1 and 2). It is the largest forest in Laikipia, located on a beautiful plateau. It is a refuge for dry season grazing and attracts pastoralists from surrounding areas during the dry season:

Because of the issue of drought, Mukogodo is the only place where there is a buffer zone for grazing. So, you will find the Maasai from the 4 Group Ranches around the Mukogodo Forest. They all depend on its grass and water for livestock. (I4)

Today, the forest is mostly inhabited by Il Ngwesi and Mukogodo (Yaaku) people living in four Group Ranches (Il Ngwesi and Makurian for the Il Ngwesi people, and Kurikuri and Lekurruki for the Mukogodo people). The Il Ngwesi live in the eastern half, while the Mukogodo live in the western half. As the government owns the forest, the Group Ranches had to form a Community Forest Association (CFA), called ILMAAMUSI, which is the recognized body that manages the forest (Ia18).

Il Ngwesi Group Ranch has 16,000 hectares of land, including 8,000 hectares of buffer zone. The land is not subdivided. Some envisioned a division but there is fear that if that happened, many would sell their land and outsiders would buy it. Hence the management structure advocated for not dividing the land (Ia20). About 100 households live in Nadung'Oro, a place often referred to as "the forest," which is in fact a grassland plateau surrounded by the Mukogodo Forest. Other Group Ranch members live around the forest and around the Il Ngwesi conservancy, where the community operates a lodge.<sup>10</sup> A great proportion of the members live outside the Group Ranch, in Isiolo County near Il Ngwesi conservancy or on land in Laikipia County that they bought to practice farming.

The Il Ngwesi are considered one of the five Maasai groups living in Laikipia County. Laikipiak Maasai, who were defeated by other Maasai sections, are descended from ancestors of many

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<sup>10</sup> <http://ilngwesi.com/content/visit/>

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lineages. The Mukogodo also have mixed ancestry and adopted Maasai culture and language, but the fact that they used to speak a Cushitic language (Yaaku) makes them a distinct group from the Maasai. Il Ngwesi and Mukogodo people both practiced hunting and gathering in the past and are often referred to as “dorobo,” which is considered a derogative term among the Maasai. Today, they have adopted the Maasai pastoralist way of life and Maasai language and culture.

The Mukogodo (Yaaku) people are few in number and very poor compared to other communities, but have a large land area because the land was divided equally between the Il Ngwesi and Mukogodo communities when the Group Ranches were created (I20). Lekurruki Ranch is bigger than Il Ngwesi (I21). It borders Mpus Kutuk Group Ranch (in Isiolo County) in the north and Il Ngwesi conservancy in the south, and there is conflict at the boundaries. The Yaaku say they have been pushed away (I20).

### 3.1.2. History

#### 3.1.2.1. Settlement

Several informants explained the history of their community, revealing the many displacements associated with the establishment of today’s settlement. According to two informants (one Mukogodo and one Il Ngwesi), the place was first inhabited by Mukogodo (Yaaku) people, and the Il Ngwesi came more recently, pushed here by colonists who took their land:

Originally, we were the Laikipiak Maasai. Now we are the Mukogodo. We were taken from Narok by the Purko. We fought them spiritually through the Oloiboni Senteu. We fled and lived in stones caves. That’s where our name, Mukogodo, came from. The Il Ngwesi are not the original people from this place. They come from Meru. Regarding the Samburu, they mixed with the Rendille in Marsabit and did not live in this place before. As Laikipiak, we were the original owners of the land, and the Il Ngwesi came to Laikipiak to take over our land. The Il Ngwesi were brought to this place from Poise by the white settlers. The people from Poise went to a place called Mudur Oloiragai. The white settlers put a fence at the place that is now called Poise, and the Il Ngwesi people were asked to join the Mukogodo people here. The white settlers asked the Mukogodo people to accept that they would live together with the Il Ngwesi. When we agreed to live together, we gave them a portion of land in Sang’a, in Rigigo, which is down there, and in Sepeyo. We gave them those three places. (I12, a Mukogodo elder)

Initially, we lived on Maasai land, in Narok and Kajiado. The tribes called Laikipiak and Ilpurko started fighting against each other. The cause of the fight was cattle raiding. The Laikipiak migrated from Narok and came to settle around Mount Kenya forest. They were forcefully moved by the colonial government and then settled at Nadung’oro. In the place where we came and settled, we found the Yaaku community, who were hunters and gatherers. They don’t have specific homes. They only live in caves and their main food was honey from the forest and blood and meat from wild animals. They use the skin of the killed animals for bedding and clothing. The Laikipiak Maasai were affected by the white settlers. They came and settled where the Yaaku community initially was, so the Yaaku ran away and hid themselves or lived in a hill called Kiapei. The Laikipiak Maasai settled at Nadung’oro, and they continued rearing their livestock, that is, shoats [sheep and goats] and cattle. Fifteen different families had shoats, and 153 families had cattle (Ia21, an Il Ngwesi elder).

Both Il Ngwesi and Mukogodo seem to have absorbed the Laikipiak Maasai that survived their defeat, as expressed by the statements below:

In the past, there were Laikipiak, and they disturbed all their neighbours. In the end they were all killed by the surrounding communities, and the few remaining assimilated into other communities. (D7)

From Ngarendare up to Makurian, you find the Il Ngwesi people. All people living here are Il Ngwesi and were born and raised in that place. A long time ago, there were people known as Laikipiak. They came over and killed people who were living here and took over the land from the Makurian and

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the Ngarendare and took this place. When the government heard that the Laikipiak killed people, they came and killed them, so the Il Ngwesi came back and took the land after the Laikipiak were eradicated. The Laikipiak were here even before the colonial rule, and in 1952 they were all gone. The Il Ngwesi were here before the Laikipiak defeated them, and then the Laikipiak were defeated and the Il Ngwesi came back. The Il Ngwesi always practiced pastoralism and used that place. There are Il Ngwesi 1 and Il Ngwesi 2. The Il Ngwesi 1 live in Doldol and Makurian. (I8)

Before coming back to Mukogodo, Il Ngwesi people were apparently mostly living around Meru and had important social relationships with Meru people:

At first, we were living on the lower side of Mount Kenya (Meru). My father lived there and then migrated to this place. They migrated because of pasture. There was lots of pasture inside this forest. I don't know what year – maybe 1960s to 1970s. They overgrazed pasture in Meru. Originally, they were from around Narok, but left Narok because of population increase and lack of pasture. (D1)

We don't know where the Il Ngwesi came from. Maybe they came from Mount Kenya or from Meru. The Mukogodo were living in Borana and were moved to this place here. (I12)

The installation of white settlers who still own large ranches today probably contributed to the movement of Il Ngwesi people, who were pushed out by settlers on one side, and blocked on the other side by the gazetting of the Mukogodo Forest:

As I grew up, I found out that the Craig family owned the land [Lewa conservancy]. Ian Craig was the owner. Even Borana [conservancy] was there already. (I9)

The Maasai [Il Ngwesi] people who have settled here were initially living in the Mount Kenya forest, and when the colonial government came, it pushed them slowly until they settled here. The colonial government then marked the land to give them reserves where they could live. It also marked the forest which became a reserve, a government forest, but the community uses it (Ia19).

In the recent past, Il Ngwesi expanded their territory by buying land. It seems that early access to education played an important role in empowering the community and enabling its prosperity and expansion:

Chumvi is also for Il Ngwesi people, like Doldol and Makurian. Yes, some people moved to town and bought land, but they still own the land here. They started to do that around 1968 and continued up to today. This is because of education. They have been enlightened and started to go to other areas. They went around the country, also to Nanyuki. It depends on how one has been enlightened. (I8)

### *3.1.2.1. An history of conflicts with neighbour communities*

The Il Ngwesi people have experienced many conflicts in the past. Some of their ancestors are Laikipiak Maasai that survived wars with other neighbour groups, as we have seen. More recently, the Il Ngwesi fought with Somali in Ngarendare, a place where they practice farming today and that they consider to be among the best land they have access to:

In 1960, the Il Ngwesi fought with the Somalis in Ngarendare. At first, the Il Ngwesi raided the Somali, and they were helpless, but then they got weapons in 1960 and fought for revenge. After the Somalis fought with the Maasai, the government started fighting the Somalis and moved them away when the country got independence. (I8)

The fight with the Somali people was partly motivated by cattle raids and poaching:

The Il Ngwesi fought once with the Somalis, but they were on the wrong side. They went to raid the Somali animals. (I16)

Yes, we used to fight with the Somalis. The fighting was caused by the raids. The Maasai warriors used to raid a lot, and they raided cattle from the Somali community. When the Somalis revenged, they killed a lot of warriors and grown up boys. During that time, Rkishili were the warriors. They killed a lot of them, almost a hundred and even more. They were using guns, which we did not have.

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We did not know where they got the rifles that they were using. They also came in large numbers. We also fought with the Turkana, which was also caused by the raids by the Maasai warriors in our community. Samburu came to fight with the Somalis, and they all migrated towards Isiolo town. The Samburu then migrated to occupy the land in Isiolo that used to be occupied by the Somalis. (R3)

One informant also mentioned Somali or Borana people named “shifters,” who used to stay around where the Maasai community lives to do poaching and raiding, which resulted in deadly conflicts. In fact, the conflict with Somali people our informants referred to may be the “shifta war,” well documented in the literature:<sup>11</sup>

There was conflict between the Somalis and the Maasai where the Somalis started killing the Maasai. They didn’t want to take livestock and property. They were only killing people. The Somali community was armed with guns, while the Maasai had only spears and arrows. Many Maasai lost their lives. In the process of fighting, the Maasai managed to kill 2 armed Somalis and got 2 guns (Ia21).

We could not clarify the cause of the conflict with the Kikuyu, but the fact that people from Il Ngwesi buy land outside the ranch for agriculture may result in competition with Kikuyu people to obtain this agricultural land:

In 1963, the Kikuyu moved to Ngarendare and started to buy plots. They had title deeds, and 4 years ago, the Kikuyu and Il Ngwesi fought. The Kikuyus looked down on them, so the Maasai started fighting. The fight took one day, and they killed 100 Kikuyu. After the fight there was peace, and to-date they have never fought again. (I8)

On the road from the Group Ranch to Nanyuki, there are Kikuyu people. They applied for government land from settlers who left the land. Now they do business farming and rear livestock. They have big herds like the Maasai. They also do business like selling crops to Maasai people and other communities (Ia).

The conflict with Kikuyu people has been extremely violent recently:

Ngarendare is a community where the Kikuyu, Meru, and Maasai were living for so many years. They also applied to the government for that land. It was settler land before. Then, in 1999, there was a conflict between the Maasai and the Kikuyu. The cause of the conflict was that Maasai warriors raided against the Kikuyu. They stole the small number of livestock they had. As the Kikuyu were tracking the livestock to recover it, they met with a moran who was walking from Ethi to Ngarendare. They treated him as if he had stolen the livestock and cut him with a machete, without killing him, without asking any questions. Two old Maasai men saw that and alerted the community, who ran aggressively to the Kikuyu community, killing many, burning the houses, destroying the businesses, and stealing. The fight took just one day, and close to 100 Kikuyu were killed. The police came and stopped the fight, and the 2 communities never fought again. They live in peace so far, but so many left, while some stayed and others left and came back. The fight happened on a stretch of land that goes from Ngarendare to Ethi and Chumvi. It affected all areas where Kikuyu and Maasai live together. The Maasai never tried to attack any other person, but many Kikuyu left the area. No, this is not documented. Maasai people don’t fight easily but when they do, they can be dangerous, when they are forced by the situation. They mostly killed men and had no guns. They used spears, rungas [clubs], bows, poisonous arrows, and knives (Ia).

The conflict with the Samburu, which occurs today and will be treated in Section 3.1.4, is recent. But Il Ngwesi and Samburu also fought in the past, possibly during the fight with the Somalis as already suggested but also in a more ancient past:

They [the Samburu] always create conflict when they come. They always came. When I was a young man, they came to graze but did not fight. They went back to their place. But during the time of Ilterito, they fought with spears, and now they use guns. Ilterito was a very long time ago. They

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<sup>11</sup>

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=VAwSBQAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=shifta+war+kenya&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwib7P76gcraAhUBT98KHToXAhQQ6AEIKzAB#v=onepage&q=shifta%20war%20kenya&f=false>

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would find small children in the forest, but just a few Samburu were criminals. They killed the kids because of taboos. They had the belief that a boy should be circumcised after killing a person. Yes, it happened in this forest. We grew up knowing that this happened in the past. (I14)

This frequent contact with Samburu people has also resulted in the assimilation of some Samburu among Mukogodo and Il Ngwesi people:

People living here are Maasai. There is also community called Yaaku whose origin is from the Cushitic community. They were hunters and gatherers and used to hunt wildlife and harvest bees. They kept on moving to hunt until they settled here. They were from the north, from Rendille land. And there are also a few Samburu assimilated in either the Il Ngwesi or the Yaaku. There is no boundary in this area. These Samburu migrated to look for fresh pastures and clean water. After migrating here, they found an area that was good for livestock, so they stopped migrating and stayed. Although some are living here, they are not members of the Group Ranch, except for those assimilated in the Yaaku or Maasai community (Ia19).

### 3.1.2.2. *Environmental changes*

Like elsewhere in Maasai land, pastoralists in Mukogodo experience an increasing frequency and severity of droughts and observe the impacts of these changes on the vegetation and on their livelihood:

We are fine grazing here. We don't need to go to the forest. A long time ago the environment was really good, with many trees and much grass, but because of population growth and the Samburu finishing the vegetation, the grass will not grow again. The rainy season has changed. (D5)

The climate has changed: there used to be many trees and there was a rainy season, but now there is drought and the pasture has degraded. When there is drought, we move our livestock to another place, whereas before we just grazed around this place. Now we have to go to Mount Kenya. (D2)

I was born here and raised here. This place has changed. There was vegetation and now there is none. (I16)

### 3.1.3. *Livelihood strategies*

After gaining access to education, and given the limited land available to sustain livelihood, squeezed in between private ranches, conservancies, and the forest reserve, many Il Ngwesi diversified their livelihood strategies. They have jobs in town or practice farming on land they bought outside the ranch, mainly in Ngarendare, Chumvi, and Ethi (Figure 2):

Seventy percent of the people who own the Group Ranch in fact live outside the Group Ranch because they received education, like Ramson, our colleague from IMPACT. They live in town to have access to health facilities. The ranch is communal land, but outside, they can buy private land (Ia20).

For those living in the ranch, pastoralism is the main activity, complemented with small scale farming for those living on the plateau:

For those still living in the Group Ranch, livelihood is based on livestock, small scale agriculture, external jobs, and tourism, although it generates very limited income. A family would need 100 shoats, 30 to 40 cows, and 1 acre of farmed land to sustain itself. Maybe half of all families would have this economic level, while the other half would have less. Some families suffer from hunger, but they are very few. The families with much livestock are not interested in agriculture and do not do it (Ia19).

#### 3.1.3.1. *Pastoralism*

Like elsewhere in Maasai land, pastoralism is at the core of the local economy in Il Ngwesi, even for those who have moved away to take a job:

Here we have cattle, sheep, goats, and donkeys. We have no herd limits. When a Maasai child is born, he or she is given shoats and cows. As the child grows, his herd grows in size. After circumcision, friends and relatives will give you more. You must have some livestock to marry, so

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that you can pay the dowry. Your father gives you animals first, and then your sisters and brothers. Pastoralism provides enough income for us, although some of us are employed. Some are employed by the government, others by the ranches, and by private companies. But they still keep herds. (D1)

Ia21 explains the purposes of raising livestock:

We sell livestock to pay school fees and have education. The schools are far away, in Nanyuki town and Nakuru town. Nowadays, we also keep chickens, and we sell the eggs for 20 KSh per egg. Two families manage to have 200 eggs sold per day, which amounts to 2,000 KSh per day (Ia21).

Pastoralism faces the usual challenges, including lack of grazing resources following droughts, which leads to pressure on ranches:

The climate impacts the pastoralist communities. Also, the best conservancies are encroached on by pastoralists from the neighbouring counties of Isiolo and Samburu. The natural resource is limited compared to the demand of the people (Ia20).

Because of the drought, 80 shoats have died. Two years ago, they started dying. We had 4 cattle, but they all died starting 4 years ago. (D2)

Pastoralists also faced livestock diseases and locust invasion:

Initially, it rained a lot. One of the main challenges was livestock illnesses due to prolonged rain. After a while, there was an invasion of locusts that consumed the grass, and the cattle started migrating, searching for pasture and water. They migrated to the Sieku River, where they got enough pasture and water (Ia21).

Livestock also suffers from the lack of water:

Due to the increasing population of people who mainly rear livestock, there was more drought and famine, but mainly water was insufficient. We migrated to Isiolo district, to a place called Ilboo Oibor [the border between Isiolo and Laikipia County], where we get enough water for our livestock (Ia21).

There is also the problem of interaction with wildlife:

Cattle have been attacked by elephants and buffaloes inside the forest where they were grazing. The leopards and hyenas kill shoats, and the lions kill cattle. We reported this to the chief area, to KWS [Kenya Wildlife Service], but no compensation was provided (Ia21).

During the dry season, livestock moves to areas reserved for dry season grazing, while during the rainy season, it stays around settlements:

When we have enough rain, we bring our livestock to our homes. And when there is drought, we bring them to the place in the Group Ranch that we saved for dry season grazing. (I3)

Livestock mobility is essential if pastoralism is to sustain people's lives. Grazing management includes agreements with neighbouring ranches to facilitate herd mobility, in spite of tensions with encroachers coming from other areas:

Relations with private ranches are good. We lease and borrow pasture. We give freely. We have a good relationship with them and lend pasture to them for free during every draught, but the pressure comes from around. People are accessing resources by force, so we don't know what will happen to the community (Ia20).

We go to Ardiju, and Borana and Lewa [private ranches and conservancies] give us opportunities to graze. We have strong relations with them because they are our friends, so we act together with them. For example, they were the ones who first came up with the idea of building Group Ranch lodges, and our people are working for them. (D1)

During severe droughts, long distance migration to the Aberdare range and Mount Kenya occurs, or livestock is brought to neighbouring private ranches:

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We have a lot of droughts. Once we finish the grass in the forest, we all go to Mount Kenya or to the Aberdare. Those are the directions that we take. Even right now, that is where our livestock is. The rest are in the ranches around, like Borana, Olenaisho, and Loldaiga. (I4)

Facing a shortage of grazing resources, the community is developing hay production with external support from NGOs. A local leader involved in the hay project explains the approach to us:

We started the hay business 20 years ago. We started because a company gave us the idea. It was an NGO. After the NGO enlightened us, they left, and the government came in and gave us the money to plow and plant the grass. The government project is called NDMA.<sup>12</sup> Yes, they are still there. They give money to plow the land, pay the workers that plant the hay, and harvest. They do that for free. The whole Il Ngwesi community benefits. (I2)

Grazing management is evolving with the adoption of “holistic management”<sup>13</sup> through partnerships with NGOs like Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT)<sup>14</sup>:

I am the rangeland coordinator. I work with the community to decide how to graze, how to use the available grass, and how to ration the pasture during the dry season. We have partner organizations like NRT, and then we have experts, consultants who bring the idea of “holistic management.” We hire consultants who have these skills. NRT used to support us in empowering pastoralism with holistic management. The conservancies are the entry points. Population is increasing, so elders are overwhelmed by such tasks as managing grazing. They use other hands like experts to handle grazing. People see how the climate is changing. Ownership will be an issue. People say we have to manage from here to here and ration. People see what causes degradation. They think about other tools to manage the land (Ia20).

The neighbouring Mukogodo community adopted a similar management model, also with support from NRT. It tried, unsuccessfully, to adopt the “holistic management” model proposed by this NGO:

As a rangeland coordinator, I work with the community on grazing planning. We have livestock and our livelihood depends on the grass, on the pasture. It is my role to work with the community to make a plan for the conservancy. It is a community conservancy. The grazing area has been divided into blocks. We have 3 zones. Each has its grazing block and we have a small section in the conservancy that is common to all three zones. I work with the community to come up with a plan for each village. My role is to mobilize the community on issues of grazing. I meet the elders and contact partners to search for help. When there is a conflict, I try to solve it through dialogue. The three zones are Nadung’oro, Sieku, and Naimaral. Here, we are in Nadung’oro. Sieku is down the hill, north and west along the Sieku River. Naimaral is down, to the north-northeast. No, these places are not sub-locations. We call them villages. In each of these places, we have a settlement area, and the bush is divided into dry and rainy season grazing areas (I11).

I am paid by NRT and I am coordinator for the conservancy. I report to the conservancy manager. The conservancy has a rangeland department where I am the head. It also has a water department and a security department. We all report to the manager. We all work together. I have a grazing committee with 4 members per zone. If we discuss issues, I mostly use these committee members. They are elected by the community through a general meeting. They have a 3-year term. Yes, in every village, there is a wet and dry season grazing area (I11).

The conservancy is for the whole community but is divided into 2 zones: a buffer zone for grazing and a core area for wildlife. The conservancy is 6,000 acres. The buffer zone is the big area, with maybe 5,000 acres, but it is subdivided into 4 zones. We do bunching livestock. We do collaborative assessments and request livestock for each zone. This is the holistic grazing approach of NRT. We

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<sup>12</sup> The National Drought Management Authority (<http://www.ndma.go.ke/>)

<sup>13</sup> <http://laikipia.org/holistic-management-a-rangelands-solution-for-laikipia-or-a-hole-for-donor-money/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://kwakenya.com/regional-associations/northern-rangelands-trust/>



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divided the land into 4 blocks to avoid overgrazing. We bunch all livestock in one block and move it. We rotate. All communities put their livestock together in these blocks. (I11)

### 3.1.3.1. *Farming*

Farming is mostly practiced on the “plateau,” in Nadung’Oro. According to Ia20, it was adopted following an increased interest in education and changes in diet:

Fifteen years ago, people started to cultivate. Before that, you would never see any person doing farming here. Before they started farming, the Maasai people consumed meat, blood, and milk. Later on, they started to consume flour and maize and started to cultivate to have food from their shamba [field]. Up to now, people have been selling livestock and buying food. Livestock rearing does not allow for much farming because during the dry season, we have to migrate and leave the shamba. But now people remain here. They used to migrate to Mount Kenya during the dry season but stopped because of schooling (Ia19).

Farming is also practiced in a few localities outside the plateau, where it is riskier because of the lack of rain, especially following climate change:

Last year I grew beans and maize. I was only able to harvest the beans, as the maize could not grow. I plant on 1 acre of land. I started growing crops a long time ago, but due to climate change, I stop at times. I used to grow many different crops. I even used to plant potatoes in the past, and the harvest was good. (D2)

At least in this area, you can see that people are planting crops. In the past, we only kept livestock, and no one did any other thing for their livelihood such as farming. We don’t plant crops down at Sang’a but here at Emurua, at least, many people have got farms to plant crops. (R3)

Farming is also practiced at a larger scale outside the Group Ranch, on land bought in Chumvi and along rivers:

Yes, we do farming in Chumvi. We grow maize and beans. When we go there, we find people who know farming better, the Kikuyu, and we pay them to cultivate the shamba. (I16)

People who are living ahead are a little bit better off because they do farming. They have food from farming. They do farming along the Leparua River. (I17)

Returning to farming on the plateau, Ia21 details farming activities:

We only grow maize and beans. We get the capital by selling cattle and shoats. One cow is sold for 10,000 and one shoat for 800 KSh. That’s how we managed to get the capital. Then we went to the market and got the seedlings and started cultivating. No one is allowed to exceed one acre of cultivated land. We are only allowed to cultivate a small piece of land around our home. The rule is decided by the community forest association. The production is for consumption only. We also get honey from the forest and sell it for 250 KSh per kilogram. We sell it to white settlers. We also get fruits in the forest that provide lunch to those who graze their cattle (Ia21).

Agriculture is constrained by human-wildlife conflicts and restricted by KWS’s concerns about these conflicts:

We grow maize, beans and potatoes. Any food you grow here does well. Farming activities are not allowed much in this area by KFS because they say that when you plant a lot of crops it will cause human-wildlife conflict, because there are a lot of animals and they will destroy crops, so there will be many complaints. Yes, they can say that because the forest belongs to the government. We are not allowed to plant crops because the animals live in the forest (I20). According to the Kenya Forest Act, you cannot plant in a community forest because that would attract interest in destroying the forest (Ia1m).

Around the settlements, we can plant but if we plant much, we will have no place for livestock. There are places where the canopy does not allow grass to grow in the forest, so we have to keep that pasture around. So we set up our rules. You can plant a small farm where you are living, like 1 acre. The CBO [Community Based Organization] ensures that this is applied. The CFA also has the same mandate.



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It is not clear whether agriculture is also constrained by the commitment not to clear the forest. We did not stay long enough to detect whether people avoid practicing agriculture in the forest on their own will, or because of the fear of government reprisal:

People had been living in this forest since our ancestors. The government tries to orientate people to do agriculture there and plant trees here. In other places, the government has given the forest away in plots. We don't have water here [in the forest], so I don't think people will do agriculture (Ia20).

Maasai abide by the law. They would think about clearing the forest unless others come here to clear, like the Kikuyu and Meru, who like burning trees to make charcoal. No, we never had them coming here, except for those who came to get some logs and were punished by community members. They were fined and sent away. They saw the big forest and saw that Maasai people did not know how to use the forest, so they came back with a tractor and power saw and felled 3 African cedars to make timber. The community came and brought them to the police and told them to plant trees (Ia21).

Given these restrictions, the potential to develop agriculture inside the ranch or the “forest” may be limited, as reflected by the fact that people invest in buying farm land outside the ranch. Agricultural expansion is, in fact, externalized:

People are buying private land to do small scale farming where you can do irrigation. They do small scale agriculture here [in the ranch] during the rainy season, especially maize and beans, and then move to do irrigation agriculture in Ngarendare or Munyangalo, outside the Group Ranch and around Mount Kenya. The land is expensive, but they can afford to buy it. They sell livestock or are employed or borrow money from a bank. Now pastoralism is not supporting life, so people are seeking other ways to support their livelihood (Ia20).

### 3.1.3.2. *Conservation and tourism*

Il Ngwesi Group Ranch has a community conservancy with a lodge<sup>15</sup> that is managed by the community itself. The initiative was pushed forward by external people but seems to be well accepted now:

We used to hunt some of the wild animals for food. We mostly killed giraffes because we loved their meat and the bone marrow. These settlers who neighboured us, mostly Ian Craig, educated us on the importance of wildlife until we decided to do the tourism business by building the Il Ngwesi Lodge. People were very reluctant. They said that he wanted to grab the land. But after they took people to Narok and Kajiado to see what the other Maasai were doing, those who were reluctant accepted starting the tourism business. (R3)

A specialist told us how we can benefit from this Group Ranch. They advised us that we could not keep a lot of livestock and that we should attract tourists. That's why we started the lodges. (...) Before the lodge, a muzungu used to do a camel tour. He is called Makin. He said we should do tourism and we looked for people to help us. That was in 1974 to 76 and in 1980. We built the lodges. No, it was in 1998 in fact. We prefer the tourism work to livestock keeping. We benefit a lot from tourism. (I3)

Two important players for conservation initiatives are NRT, an NGO created by Ian Craig, from the family who owns the Lewa Conservancy, and the Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF), a forum on landowners also created at the initiative of white settlers. The manager of the rangeland has his salary paid by NRT, which trains him, but he also collaborates with LWF. We asked him to compare these two organizations and explain how they work. His answer focuses on NRT:

The approaches are the same, but their funding is different. NRT tries to empower the conservancies. LWF empowers the consultants who work on the ground. NRT helps the communities to own the model. We have a rangeland coordinator, a conservancy manager, and 17

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<sup>15</sup> <http://ilngwesi.com/content/visit/>

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securities wardens paid by NRT. NRT supports the management structure, facilitates meetings, and also provides mobility. They paid for my bike and for the manager and the security team (Ia20).

In Il Ngwesi, we have the Group Ranch Committee, the Trust Committee, and the Board of Directors. Other Group Ranches also have their chairman, and all chairmen make decisions together. They are the Council of Elders. That's the top structure of NRT. NRT supports 37 community conservancies, so we have 37 people in the Council of Elders at NRT (Ia20).

NRT has working structures for rangeland, for security, for livelihood (microfinance, etc.), education and tourism. They also have a monitoring and evaluation unit. If the rangelands have problems, there is a department at NRT where we can report them, but the final report goes to the NRT Council of Elders. Ian Craig is a consultant at NRT. Mike Harrison is the director. And Thomas Lalampaa is the program manager (Ia20).

Communities think that I am employed by NRT. But I am employed for the community. NRT says the community owns NRT. But people feel NRT is an outside thing. It takes time to make them understand [what NRT is], but eventually it will happen. You can see that the Council of Elders is made up of people from the communities, and they are the top people at NRT (Ia20).

Il Ngwesi Group Ranch, together with 3 other Group Ranches, is also involved in the conservation of Mukogodo Forest. The forest does not attract many tourists, and no lodge has been built in or around it. The main motivation for its conservation is a desire to stop encroachment by neighbouring communities and a fear of losing control over its resources if the government decided to manage it itself. Local leaders tell us how the community became involved in its conservation:

I was born in 1962, and I can remember that when I was a boy, there were forest scouts around. No one ever planted trees in this forest. It is a natural forest. The forest scouts stayed here a long time. There was a forest scout headquarters here in the plateau close to the forest, and there were others around the forest. Then the government saw that the community was managing the forest well and so the scouts had nothing to do. The government stopped employing rangers. After the last scout left 10 years ago, the government started moving out the people who were living inside the forest. That rule came to the community. Then the government came to assess the forest. We were the first forest to be protected by the people themselves (Ia19).

The forest was recognized as the best community-maintained/managed forest and given a certificate by Kenya Forest Service (Ia21).

After that the Kenya Forest Service came to the community to make some arrangements and show how long people could stay and under what circumstances. They said we would not be removed from the forest unless we destroyed it. They signed a 10-year agreement with us and if we don't destroy the forest during those 10 years, they will renew the contract. Then the community and those living in the forest created a movement, a forum, called ILMAAMUSI [the CFA], to lead the initiative of protecting the forest.<sup>16,17</sup> Four Group Ranches are represented in ILMAAMUSI: Il Ngwesi, where we are, Makurian, Kuri Kuri in a Mukogodo location, and Lekurruki in a Sieku location. We obtain grass, water, firewood, and building materials from the forest. We are born here, live here, do farming here, and rear livestock here. Everything we depend on is here. Nothing is outside this "forest".<sup>18</sup> Many people from outside try to destroy it but we make sure they don't. We graze our livestock in the forest and do some subsistence crop farming. We also do some tourism activity, because the area is a tourism attraction site. We also conserve some areas as a grass bank because

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<sup>16</sup> The same informant said that "people were not asked to move away from this forest. Nobody was living in that forest, so nobody was removed." This contradiction could be explained by what is meant by "the forest". It could be the forest itself, or it could be the whole land managed by the forest association, which includes the area with settlement. The contradiction could also be explained by hesitation to reveal the displacement of minority groups like the Yaaku. There seems, in fact, to be a conflictual situation between the Maasai and the Yaaku.

<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.laikipia.org/mukogodo-forest-news/>

<sup>18</sup> When people say, "the forest", they in fact refer to the land they manage, which includes the actual forest and the plain, covered with grass, where their settlements are established.

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the members of the Group Ranches use the forest as a grass bank during the dry season. That makes it a very important forest to preserve. Even those from outside take initiative to protect it (Ia19).

One of the directors of the CFA gives additional details about the organizations that manage the forest:

We are 4 Group Ranches trying to manage that forest. We pick the chairmen of all these 4 Group Ranches to constitute the board. Now they want to combine the Group Ranches into one (I20).

The CFA was formed after the Forests Act of 2005 or 2008. It involves the 4 Group Ranches. It has a board whose members come from the 4 Group Ranches. It is responsible for meeting with KFS to discuss issues related to the forest. It has an office, a manager, and its own rangers. It has paid staff, who work here and are recruited here. They patrol the area and they guide the tourists. They also make roads inside the forest that the community and the tourists will use (Ia20).

The CBOs were formed in 2013. There are 4 CBOs, one in each Group Ranch. At first, they were not very active. It takes time. They hired their manager a week ago. They have funding from NRT and possibly others. They also pay a coordinator and a security team. They are responsible for the protection of the forest in a specific Group Ranch. They also feed the CFA with information about the forest and elect members to go to the CFA Board of Directors (2 members per CBO). They represent the people who are living in and close to the forest. Their committee is elected by these people. There are 13 members in each CBO committee: a chairman, vice chairman, secretary, vice secretary, treasurers, and members. And we have board members, men and women, and co-opted board members from outside, like those assisting with financial aspects. They are people from Borana Conservancy, NRT, LWF, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Kenya Forest Service, and KWS. No, there are no disagreements between co-opted members and community members. No, there is no paid staff in the CBOs (Ia20).

The CFA includes representatives from the Yaaku community; however, they do not seem to recognize this institution:

The CFA is a new thing. For the CFA, the forest is divided into 4 sections, one for each Group Ranch. Each Group Ranch manages its part. Now that the CFA has been introduced, the CFA and the conservancy divide their roles (I11).

There is no area where we cooperate. When this forest started, we were inside, and we are still here, and we don't work with this CFA. This has been brought to us, and we don't recognize it. We are the ones who managed the forest even before the CFA. No, we don't have members of the community in the CFA. (I14)

External stakeholders may significantly influence decisions. We did not stay long enough to investigate whether this is the case. However, the community organization had an opportunity to show that it could resist external suggestions regarding the management of the forest:

A nominated MP [Member of Parliament] explained to the community that they were losing their lives to the wildlife and proposed to fence the forests. The community said the fence would not help because both people and animals live inside the forest. It would be a big problem to have a fence while people live inside, so this would not improve anything. The nominated MP saw that she had made a mistake and she apologized to the community. The community told the committee and the National Government to drop this project (Ia19).

Conservation stakeholders, especially the neighbour private conservancies, are generally quite well perceived because of the supports they provide to the community. They provide security in case of conflicts (see Section 3.1.4.4.2) and help with building infrastructure and accessing education. They substitute the government in many respects:

Lewa is very helpful. Lewa does more for us than the government. In terms of infrastructure, it is completely Lewa. The government chips in by subsidizing primary school, but that is all. Most students here will attend secondary school, but few of them come out of form 4. Many drop out during secondary school. Fees are not the main reason they drop out, because Lewa assists some

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of them. One year, Lewa sponsored all of them to go to secondary school, but only 2 finished. Maybe they drop out because they find that urban life is tough. Some even believe that they cannot be taught by a lady. Lewa sponsors the top 2 pupils (one boy, one girl) every year. Also, some other donors come through Lewa to sponsor the students, but I don't know who those donors are. (D11)

### 3.1.3.3. *Salaried jobs*

Il Ngwesi people seem to have benefited from access to education for quite a long time. Many are not living in the countryside and have jobs in town or at the farms, ranches and conservancies nearby. Today, they still invest a lot in education, probably because they are aware of the finitude of the natural resources they depend on. They also engage in various businesses to diversify their livelihood strategies, as reflected by the life stories below:

Some people benefit from employment opportunities at ranches: Borana ranch, Il Ngwesi [wildlife conservancy], Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, and Oreteti Conservancy (Ia21).

My son dropped out of secondary school in year 3. He works in Ethi now. (...) My husband goes away to find jobs. He goes to town and buys food to bring home. My husband is the supervisor at a farm called Cox in Ethi. (D2)

My father migrated to a place called Sepoyo (in Makurian Group Ranch), where I was married. We stayed there with my husband until when he went to work in the private ranches. (R5)

Women also do bead work that they sell to other people in the community or to tourists. A few women may obtain significant benefits, but the activity seems to be constrained by a limited market:

[Displaying her beads] It takes maybe one day to make a small bead work item. VSO came to show us how to make the bead items. They came 5 years ago. Now I spend most of my time making these, but the problem is I don't have a market; no one is buying them. I used to take them to Borana, but now they don't take them anymore, starting 5 months ago, because they have too much, they have enough. I invested 4,000 KSh for the beads. I would sell at approximately 200 KSh for each item at Borana. If this bead work doesn't work, I don't know what to do next. Maybe we can do something if the women's group develops. (D2)

We are still doing bead work and we sell it to NRT. NRT used to come pick up the bead work, but now we send it to them when there are orders. (D8)

We do a lot of bead work, and all the money to educate the kids comes from that. (I15)

### 3.1.4. *The conflict with Samburu herders*

The purpose of this field work was to assess the conflict between Il Ngwesi and Samburu people that remains ongoing at the time of writing. This conflict is part of the broader conflict in Laikipia County, where armed Samburu herders have been bringing their herds to private ranches and conservancies since about June 2015. We gave a brief overview of that conflict in Research Scoping Report #5, which focused on Laikipia West, where two white settlers were recently shot (one died) after we completed that field work. In this section, we describe the ramifications of this conflict in Il Ngwesi Group Ranch and neighbouring Lekurruki Group Ranch, based on information collected in Il Ngwesi and Lekurruki Group Ranches. After completion of this report, we collected additional information regarding the causes of the conflict from the perspective of Samburu people, whom we interviewed in their home communities north of Mukogodo Forest. The results of these interviews are presented in Appendix 4.

#### 3.1.4.1. *Overview*

The conflict with Samburu people was already present when we first visited, in November 2016:

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We, as Il Ngwesi community, are a sub-tribe of the Laikipiak Maasai. The name “Il Ngwesi” means wildlife. We are the people of wildlife. We call ourselves Laikipiak Maasai. The people living outside are Samburu. We have tried to conserve and grow enough pasture to resist a long dry season. We have a buffer zone that should have no settlement. There is a paddock in the buffer zone with 5 grazing zones. We have a grazing committee that is made up of livestock owners. They are the ones involved. But bordering communities encroach when their pasture runs out. They come to Il Ngwesi, which tries to defend its resources as much as it can. Some people lost their lives while defending their property. There is a lack of control because many people are encroaching now. The management is not strong enough to stop it. This encroachment started in the last 2 years (Ia20).

During the dry season, there is encroachment by pastoralists coming to the forest from outside. They are a few herders with many animals. The leaders have a lot of meetings and allow these communities to graze in various areas (Ia19).

The encroachment on the land by Samburu people just started recently because their land is bare, and that forces people to encroach. There is an increase in stocks, cattle and shoats, and settlement. The rain patterns contribute to this. They have very big herds. They are nomads who used to move wherever pasture is available. During severe droughts, they used to move, but in a disciplined way. Now, they are not disciplined. They are armed, and they feel they can do whatever they like. Before, they had no guns. Before, they sought permission or just asked for a corridor they could use. Now, in private ranches, you can see what happened. Before, they would pay. Now, they don't buy pasture because they have guns. Before, they asked permission from the owner of the ranch. We don't know where the guns come from. They do cattle raiding. We border countries where they can find guns. They have all sorts of guns, but they have no bombs. It will be worsening because the communities who used to live in peace are forced to have guns too. They feel they have to protect themselves and defend their land, so things will be worse. Also, there is climate change with drought every year, so people will fight for the little available pasture (Ia20).

The conflict intensified recently. Here, we report the chronology of events by patching together excerpts from several interviews:

This is a border conflict. It started at Lekurruki (CS) Group Ranch in 2010 or 2011. The Samburu people were grazing livestock inside the Group Ranch without permission. The owners are Yaaku. Pressure was increasing, and fighting started in Tassia. (IIm)

[The Samburu encroachers] are from Maralal [the biggest town in Samburu], Oldonyiro, and Wamba [see Figure 2]. (I6)

The problem started when the Il Ngwesi lodge refused the Samburu access to their lodge for grazing. The Samburu want to graze everywhere, and they weren't listening to the Il Ngwesi community. That is what has caused the fighting. The Samburu wanted to get inside the core area, which is restricted for wildlife conservation. (D9)

The main causes of insecurity today are Samburu warriors who are invading our conservancy, raiding our livestock, and killing our people. We have not yet determined what they really want, but we still think that they are running away from the drought that affected their areas more than here. We think that there are still some thieves in the Samburu community who are loitering in these bushes to look for animals to raid and for people to kill. (R6)

There is a place called the core area [around the lodge], that triggers the fights in this area. We have rangers who are protecting the lodge. Both the rangers and the Samburu herders have guns. Every time the Samburu bring their livestock to the core area, the rangers drive them out, and they will always do that once or twice until the Samburu herders fire at them. Anytime the Samburu try to shoot the rangers, a fight starts, and things will not be good for a while. (R7)

The conflict also involved Turkana people:

The second community that started to affect our community here are the Turkana. They were accusing us of being with the Samburu because they were fighting with them and [because of] the fact that we speak the same language. (...) They have been stealing one to five livestock in the grazing areas. They have also hijacked vehicles with our people in them. They even killed a lot of

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people, and one day they hijacked a car transporting food and people to the community from Isiolo. Recently, the fight took a new shape after the Samburu cattle herders started invading our community conservancy, raiding our livestock and killing the people. This gave the Turkana community a different idea. The Samburu have been fighting the Il Ngwesi people, who are not part of the Samburu, and they have started raiding us as well. These raids are still ongoing and a total of 45 cows have been stolen by the Samburu raiders in few days. (R7)

According to some informants, the conflict originated in 2004, when herders realized that white settlers could keep rights over the land leased to them, whereas there was expectation among the Maasai that the settlers' leases would end in 2004:

The problem started in 2004, when they said that the land agreement between the British and Maasai was over. They were talking about a period of 100 years. There were some problems at that time. A ranch called Loisaba experienced some problems. It was invaded. In 2004, ranch invasion for grazing started, especially during the dry season. (...) There was no particular tribe invading Loisaba. (D12)

### 3.1.4.2. *Driving forces*

#### 3.1.4.2.1. *Drought and lack of pasture*

The first explanation that come to people's minds when we ask about the cause of the conflict is the increasing frequency and severity of droughts:

This conflict with the Samburu is only caused by the drought, which makes other people come here from other places. (I14)

The contention is only grazing fields. That's the main cause of that conflict. It is only pasture because it is very dry there [in Samburu]. They had no rain at all during the past few years, so they want to graze their cattle by force here in the forest and in the conservancy. (I19)

In my opinion, it's not about land. It is just about pasture. I don't see the reason for land conflict. (I19)

The attractiveness of pastures in Il Ngwesi and Laikipia in general is accentuated by the fact that conservancies have abundant grass, since much land is occupied by wildlife which results in less intense grazing than by livestock. Moreover, large ranches and conservancies adopted a management approach called 'holistic management' to avoid overgrazing, resulting in the availability of abundant grass during the dry season:

In 2012, [holistic grazing] worked very well [in Lekurruki Group Ranch]. We did not have to move livestock to other communities. We managed well and had enough in our pastures. Then the success of the approach attracted the livestock from Westgate and from Oldonyiro, which has 4 conservancies inside it, and from Mpuskutuk, which is now part of Oldonyiro. We had brought people [from there] to show them our grazing plan, and instead of applying it on their land, they just brought their livestock to our land. The conflict started from there. It happened like that. The grazing committees from these conservancies, and from Masuru, came for exposure and were happy. But when they went back they told their guys that there is grass somewhere and the whole community brought its livestock, like 10,000 animals, with no plan. They flocked into the conservancy, without negotiating, and paralyzed our grazing plan. That was in 2014. (I11)

Holistic management is one of a series of tools. It is largely a land use tool, which uses livestock for rangelands rehabilitation. If the Samburu were better at this they wouldn't come here, but they haven't been successful, and greater numbers are coming here. Holistic management is quite easy to sell to pastoralists. It has been a bit of a magnet drawing in other people. It is a great approach to land management. (D13)

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### 3.1.4.2.2. Accessing grass or grabbing land?

Beyond the search for grass, the other possible explanation for Samburu encroachment is the search for land. There is intense debate about whether Samburu people come to access grass or to grab land.

The Samburu also tell us that in Samburu, the place has become very small so now they want to come to Laikipia. (D4)

When the Samburu come here now, their aim is not grazing; it's to take our land, because in the past they would come to graze but wouldn't kill people, whereas now they do kill people. (D5)

The Samburu saw that the land is good and that it has no wildlife. The trees provide leaves to animals during the drought, so they don't have to move to other places. (I12)

Nowadays it takes on another dimension because they are also looking for land where they can settle, because in their area, they are always fighting, year by year, while here there is peace. They are really looking for a place to settle. Also, there is no malaria here and there is no common disease for livestock. Where they come from they have diseases, so they are changing tactics nowadays. They don't come so much for grass. They go ahead and kill people. They want to displace people so that they can stay and live in this forest. (I4)

Some Samburu have indeed already settled within the Yaaku community:

So many Samburu are living in the Yaaku conservancy. Some have a small house like in the cultural boma, with some small paper and small pieces of clothes, not just mud. Some have brought kids and women. They are in Lekurruki, and they sometimes come briefly to Il Ngwesi. (I17)

The Samburu were just staying in their area in Samburu County, but recently they started migrating to this side, and they want to take our land so that they can settle here. Even the Samburu are telling us there is no other good place like this. In Mukogodo Forest, the cattle grazes very well, the environment is very nice, so they conclude that they want to fight to live here. If you go to Samburu, there are no very old men and women because there are a lot of mosquitoes, so they are dying, and the environment is not very friendly to them. The Samburu are fighting and killing us because there is no other place to migrate. (D3)

### 3.1.4.2.3. Targeting private ranches and conservancies

Land issues are omnipresent in Laikipia. The county was a priority area for white settlement during the colonial period, and Maasai people were evicted to make space for settlers. After independence, some settlers left and their land was taken by the government, which allocated it or sold it to non-Maasai settlers, generally Kikuyu farmers, like in Ngarendare, where took place the conflict briefly described in Section 3.1.2.1. Other settlers stayed and took Kenyan citizenship. These private ranches, which are owned or managed by white settlers or other rich people who bought the land, are obviously an important target of Samburu encroachers. Il Ngwesi is located just in between Samburu territory and several large ranches, mainly Borana, Lewa, and Ole Naisho. Samburu people may have invaded Il Ngwesi to be at the gate of private ranches with greater grazing resources:

The Samburu want to fight these people around here so that they can migrate and live on the ranches. Once they have settled here, they will start invading the ranches. They just want the area as a place to graze and to live. (D3)

I also think that the main target for these Samburu is these ranches. To access the ranches, they must go through the Il Ngwesi community. (R4)

The main problem is that the Samburu believe we are on good terms with the ranchers, and that that's why the Samburu don't get access to the ranches. So they first want to get rid of us here so that they can access the ranches. The Samburu want to get the muzungus to go away. They want to live all over here. (D4)

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In fact, the Samburu have already invaded a private ranch, Ole Naisho. They were followed by herders from other groups who all took advantage of the breaking of the gate. But they remain reluctant to invade Lewa and Borana conservancies, which are better protected:

In recent times, Olenaisho farm [ranch] was invaded around here by Samburu people from Isiolo. They have invaded the farm that neighbours Borana. We have seen that things are not good there. Maybe they will invade others, like Oldaiga, which is a private ranch. When they finish the grass from Olenaisho, they will invade this one. There are a lot of cattle in Olenaisho, like 50,000, and they are still coming from Samburu. Even Meru, Turkana, and Borana people are invading that farm. They are different communities and all of them are armed. Maybe they will invade Oldaiga only after Olenaisho, because the other ranches are conservancies. They are afraid of conservancies because Borana, for example, is well prepared and has rangers. KWS is looking at these farms because they have wild animals. They are looked after by the government. The Samburu can only invade livestock ranches because there are no wild animals there. (I19).

But the conservancies may be their long-term target, which may explain the great support that Il Ngwesi received from Borana and Lewa conservancy to stop the Samburu encroachment:

The conservancies are worried, and it's obvious that the Samburu are also going for them because now they are already in Ole Naisho. Maybe when the grass is gone there, the next step will be Borana or Lewa. (D7)

The Samburu are not able to reach the conservancy because of the communities, so maybe they fight [with the Il Ngwesi] to be able to eventually reach the conservancy. (D2)

### 3.1.4.2.4. Land and politics

Whether settlers' ranches in Laikipia will eventually return to local native communities, be they local Maasai or their non-Maasai neighbours, is a hot political issue. According to many informants, the conflict with Samburu encroachers is in large part explained by the fact that an elected Member of Parliament (MP) for Laikipia County, named Mathew Lempurkel, is from the Samburu group. Samburu confidence and use of weapons could be explained by protection and support received from this MP. Samburu morans may even be in charge of managing and moving large cattle herds owned by this MP and other elites:

The communities have tried everything, but this did not work. When there is a security issue, the best approach is the elders. If they discuss the issue, they normally stop things, but this has been changed by politics. Before, when there was a security issue, the elders discussed and stopped it completely. This time, all approaches have been tried but the conflict is still there, so that means that there are politics behind the issue. If you allow your people to graze on the land of other communities during election time, they will vote for you. So that's the game behind it, although I am not sure. (I11)

We think Lempurkel and Samburu leaders are backing up the Samburu people coming here. (...) The cows inside this forest are for Lempurkel (MP of Laikipia North), Lesingei (County Executive Committee for Land in Isiolo), Letimalo (MP of Samburu East). The majority of these cows are owned by these people. Even the Samburu herders say that the cows belong to these people. ... The nominated female MP told the politician in charge of security what is happening here, what the Samburu are doing fighting people here. But Lempurkel told him that this was false and that the Samburu have done nothing wrong. And at the same meeting, the Samburu leaders backed up Lempurkel and said that the problem here is the Il Ngwesi fighting each other. Also, the national government provided 40 guns to this area, but they think that Lempurkel gave those guns to the Samburu. (D4)

The elected Member of Parliament in this area is on their side. He is from the Samburu tribe and is really encouraging people from his tribe to come. He is telling them to come. In the recent past, the Samburu came during the dry season and went back when it rained. But recently, since 2013, which is the year when this MP was elected, we have been seeing all these issues year by year, from 2013 to 2017. (I4)



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There are also politics behind it. Ever since the MP [Mathew Lempurkel] was elected, that is when the fights started. Before 2013, there was no issue at all. I'm not sure if the MP has actually told people to come here. (D2)

We did not have this problem at all before they elected the MP. We only had some simple, normal theft, maybe one goat to eat, but this scale just started after the election of the Samburu MP. (...) Maybe their leaders are pushing them to come to this side. An MP called Lempurkel is pushing them. I have heard from the community that Lempurkel is telling them: you just go to that area and push people because they will not do anything to you; this community will not harm you. (D3)

I think [the Samburu] have very strong support, even from people who are working in the government. I can't really know who, but they must have some strong support from the government or the county government. They have support because when the livestock goes to their side, the government does not follow. They don't listen to the chiefs and the District Commissioner. They can even fight them. So, I think that there is someone that tells them to fight anyone who tells them to bring the livestock back. (I17)

If you look at the inside, you will find that some herders are employed by the elites, and maybe the owners of this livestock are living in Nairobi. Rich people and these herders are well connected. I think it is a bit of mix. (I4)

Some elites are Samburu and have big herds. Their herders are the people we have conflict with. The moment we arrest them, they are bailed out. We take them to court and you will think the case will continue, but the following day they will be released because there is that collaboration with the owner who is working in a government department. So they bail them out. Yes, there are rich Samburu people working for the government. (I4)

### 3.1.4.2.5. Guns and ammunition

Samburu encroachers have automatic guns that apparently make them feel overconfident and aggressive, contributing to the escalation of the conflict:

The Samburu always used to come and even went all the way up to Mount Kenya, and they went back peacefully, not disturbing anyone, because at that time they were controlled. But now it is very hard to control them, and maybe what is making them superior is that they have guns. All these problems are just brought by the guns, nothing else. Whenever they come to your small home, they just come in and do what they want, destroy anything, and beat you if you ask questions. So it is all the problem of the guns. Civilians having guns is the problem. If the government supplied us with guns, that is okay because we would be trained on how to use those. But if someone just buys a gun, he can use it to do anything, especially illegal things. (D7)

Maybe it is the pride of having a gun [that makes them violent]. That's the only explanation I can see. (I17)

According to some informants, the presence of guns is explained by the war occurring in neighbouring countries, especially Somalia:

There are guns everywhere. There are wars in surrounding countries. The conflict is aggravated by weapons. There is a sort of gang mentality. (D13)

Politics and the presence of the British army would also facilitate access to guns:

There is not just one politician involved. The majority of major politicians from the neighbouring counties are involved because they have cattle but no grazing land. They will use the situation to get grass for their cattle. They have a way to get grass, with the guns. Sometime back in the year 2006 and until 2010, when the Samburu and Pokot were heavily fighting each other, it was well known who was selling the firearms. Young guys in manyattas now demand firearms. They want firearms that are resistant and of good quality, with heavier caliber. They get advice from people in the army and the police about which firearms are good. The ammunition is supplied from within. They have access to this. A policeman might go out on duty and say he has used 40 rounds, but he actually only used 4, and then he can sell the rest. Also, when the British army goes on training out in the bush, the young morans come and shoot at the guards and scare them off. The morans are

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able to steal much ammunition that way. Once, when there was heavy gun fire exchange in Finafran, I picked up the cartridges and traced them back to the British army using the code on the cartridge. They have a training field in Samburu near Archer's Post where these morans take advantage. They come in big numbers. This stealing has been happening since 2011. There was an incident with a British officer that shot morans, and it caused mayhem between the British and the Samburu community. (D12)

### 3.1.4.2.6. Samburu moran disobedience

Guns may be particularly empowering since they are in the hands of young men who travel around for entire years with livestock and do not listen to their fathers and elders:

[The youth today raid and changed their attitude] because of the guns. They can do everything, feeling they are superior with these guns. They do not respect the elders. When we say something, they should stop, but they don't respect to us. They buy the guns, but I don't know where. (I14)

The young Samburu morans don't listen to the elders. They are not like the morans from this area. The morans and elders here are in good terms. The morans listen to the elders here. But a Samburu moran thinks he can do anything without the permission of elders. That is what is contributing to the Samburu coming and disturbing things here. The Samburu have been like this for many years. When a Samburu boy grows up and can look after the animals, the father lets the boy go look for grass very far away, and when the Samburu boy goes for months or even a year, and then comes back with healthy livestock, the father trusts the boy and circumcises him. Then he will let the moran go off by himself with the livestock again. So, in the end, they are very rarely around the parents and elders, and when they come back, they aren't asked anything. They just get more trust [from their parents or community]. The morans get pride from being able to go off and do whatever they want. This is how it has been ever since the Samburu have been herding livestock. Young Samburu boys are trained from the age of 9 by the other morans, who go with him to look after the cows until the boy is 18 years old and is able to look after his own cows. (D9)

There are elders, and they used to say something in the community, but they don't even have a say in Samburu anymore. The morans from Samburu don't listen to their fathers. (D4)

### 3.1.4.2.1. Other possible explanations of the conflict

During discussions, informants also referred to cultural changes to explain the conflict, mainly the collapse of traditional institutions in favor of private property regimes and the rise of individualism, including among Il Ngwesi people:

The pastoralist tradition has always been centered on negotiating access. There is a traditional aspect to be addressed here; with growing populations and livestock numbers, the system is beginning to breakdown. There is a breakdown in the pastoralist tradition towards private ranching. (D13)

I am not even blaming the Samburu, even though they are doing something that is wrong; I will take the blame back to the Il Ngwesi community. For one, they are not united, and therefore, they have no good plans. If a man decides that he will migrate the next day, he just wakes up and migrates, or if that is a plan created by his wife, he follows it, and that is not a decision by the whole community. I think there is a problem with the men that live in this area (R2)

### 3.1.4.2.2. Conflicts between Il Ngwesi and Yaaku

The Il Ngwesi and Yaaku border each other and there are tensions between the two communities, which can be explained by history (Il Ngwesi settled on land occupied by the Yaaku after they were removed by the colonial administration, as we have seen in Section 3.1.2.1.). These tensions are exacerbated by the conflict with the Samburu. When we asked if we could visit the Yaaku community during our first trip to Mukogodo in November 2016, we caused embarrassment. We were answered that the Yaaku live quite far away, maybe inside the forest, which covers 28,000 hectares, and that there is no good road to reach there. The place would be insecure, with armed people who sometimes kill and attack. The danger would

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come from both Samburu and Yaaku. We were told, though, that if we came back early in the morning with an appointment, we could do a trip there (Ia19). During our second visit, we visited the Yaaku community in Sieku, on the plateau, and tried to travel farther to the Yaaku Group Ranch. But the road was difficult, and we did not take the risk of being stuck overnight in an area with conflict.

There are important interactions between the Samburu and the Yaaku. According to an informant met in November 2016, the Samburu are trying to assimilate the Yaaku community to access their land. They have much livestock and demand land for grazing. If they succeeded in possessing Yaaku land, they may become a more direct threat to the Il Ngwesi Maasai people, who thus support the Yaaku in defending their land (Ia20). The threat is indeed already there: the Yaaku host the Samburu when they come to raid in Il Ngwesi. The Samburu stay in their village and come to Il Ngwesi in the night to raid cattle (Ia21). Several informants mentioned collaborations between Yaaku and Samburu:

The Yaaku collaborate with the Samburu to fight us. (I8)

The Samburu would use the Mukogodo [Yaaku] to fight us, and that's why we don't authorize them to come. (I16)

Yaaku people are causing the conflict between Samburu and Il Ngwesi. When I was young, the Yaaku would steal the goats. The Samburu recently said that the Yaaku have asked them to fight the Il Ngwesi. Some Yaaku are there fighting with the Samburu. (D6)

I think this fight came when the Yaaku and the Samburu united and maybe decided that they will force the Il Ngwesi people to migrate out of the forest. (R3)

The Samburu that come to raid us come through the Yaaku community. Maybe the Yaaku are collaborating with the Samburu, and maybe the Yaaku are coming with the Samburu to raid us. (...) Whenever they come to raid, they come through the Yaaku community, so why don't the Yaaku warn the Il Ngwesi that the Samburu are coming.... They don't even comment that they saw the Samburu morans coming through their land. That's why we doubt about the Yaaku people. (D9)

The motivation of the Yaaku would be resentment against the Il Ngwesi for having taken their land after their relocation by colonial authorities:

The Yaaku want to remove the Il Ngwesi because they blame the Il Ngwesi for giving away their land to the white settlers. The Il Ngwesi and whites have a good relationship. The Yaaku think that the land here and in Borana is theirs. The Yaaku cannot take this land, but they will not stop until they remove the Il Ngwesi. (D6)

The Yaaku may also have simply abdicated when confronted to the superior force of the Samburu. Collaboration may have been their only option for not losing their land.

The Samburu have weapons and are many. They are superior to us [to the Yaaku], so the community has to make a decision. We see that if we fight we will be losers. That's why we have meetings and collaborate. The Samburu came and raid the Il Ngwesi because we [the Yaaku] and the Samburu now collaborate. That's why you see Yaaku people here [in the plateau], because we have surrendered. The Il Ngwesi try to resist, but people lost their lives and their livestock is stolen. They are gone now. For us, we recovered our livestock with dialogue, even without carrying guns. (I11)

Not all Yaaku surrendered, though:

I don't confirm that the Yaaku have stopped fighting the Samburu. We still fight them; there is nothing you can tell the Samburu – they just continue fighting. (D7)

I think the story of the Yaaku being happy about the fighting with the Il Ngwesi is not true, because the Samburu also steal the Yaaku cows and kill the Yaaku people. (D3)

The Samburu used to come through the Yaaku community, raid our livestock, drive them through the Yaaku community, and no one would tell us what they saw, even if we [Il Ngwesi people] went there asking. But we saw that the Yaaku were not collaborating after the Samburu started to raid

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their community. [The Samburu] did some raids, and they also shot some people, trying to kill them. Two Yaaku were injured. (R1)

Someone also reported that the Yaaku suffer from raids by both Samburu and Il Ngwesi people, when victims of raid become raiders themselves:

People have been frustrated. Il Ngwesi livestock has been stolen so the mindset has been changed. They say that to get livestock they have to steal. That pressure is fuelling differences. We [the Yaaku] are in between the Il Ngwesi and Samburu, so the Il Ngwesi steal our livestock and the Samburu steal our livestock too. Yesterday we had 2 missing cows. Before, we had no issue with the Il Ngwesi. (I11)

Division inside the Il Ngwesi community may also appear, with Il Ngwesi people collaborating with Samburu to organized cattle raids:

One of our people was suspected to have brought the Samburu to his home, hid them, and later at night shown them the homes to raid. He has now migrated to the Samburu side. It was said that he also took the Samburu warriors to raid the Turkana community. The Turkana got this information, and one day, they came to raid his shoats. No one in the Il Ngwesi community followed, but the Samburu warriors with whom he was collaborating went [they followed the raiders] to bring back his livestock. A few days ago, all the houses in his home were razed by unknown people. Maybe the people who burned his houses are the Turkana. There are rumours that he will create more problems to the Il Ngwesi community and make sure that the Il Ngwesi people will be poor. The Turkana came to raid his livestock because one day he brought the Samburu in his car to raid the livestock from the Turkana community. Other Samburu came to stay in his place the whole day, and at night they raided the Turkana livestock of a Turkana who was living at a place called Engaramata. This place is far beyond most of the Il Ngwesi homes. I believe they would not have located that Turkana home if they were not shown the place. His sons also migrated to the Samburu area and are now collaborating with the Samburu morans to conduct the raids in our community. His sons are natives of this place who were born here, so they know this area inside and out. (R6)

Transport is another problem that is faced by the people living in this area. Our main town is Isiolo, where we do our shopping. Some years back, we usually had two vehicles that worked as matatu [minibus used as collective taxi] in this area. One of them was Mzee Lekarumpa's, who left this area to follow the Samburu after he collaborated with them. (R7)

### *3.1.4.3. Impacts of the conflict*

#### *3.1.4.3.1. Serious injuries and loss of life*

Violent acts, including shooting people, stealing livestock and burning houses, were already reported to us during our first visit in November 2016:

The Samburu community is raiding livestock in Il Ngwesi. They killed people and shot one house until it burned. A lot of livestock has been stolen. The total number of stolen livestock is 1,830 shoats and 62 cattle. We managed to get 1,000 shoats and 5 cattle back but not the original ones that had been taken (Ia21).

Violence increased after that first visit, as reported by several informants. Below is the report by a Yaaku man injured during a Samburu raid that took place one month before our visit:

The Samburu criminals just came to steal cattle. They started to shoot at us. They came here exactly, to this home where you parked your car. I don't know the brand of their guns. It was an automatic like an AK. It happened last months, at 6 pm. They started shooting and we started running. Another young man was shot. He was on the team that followed the stolen livestock. There were about 8 Samburu, all morans. I don't know the exact number, but many homes were raided. After the raid we called the local authorities. We called the chief and he called the police. The rangers came from the Lekurruki conservancy. They started following the cattle during the night. My brother brought me to hospital. He used the matatu. I was taken to the hospital in the Borana conservancy car. The night after it happened I slept at home, before being brought to hospital. Money was the problem.

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We had to wait for hospital transportation. We normally depend on conservancy vehicles. The Borana vehicle came the next day and we had no money to take transportation ourselves (I13)

Another informant confirmed the violence of the Samburu raid:

A few weeks ago, my cows were stolen, and my brother was shot on the hand. Another person was shot in the leg when we recovered the livestock. Fifty-six cows were stolen but they were all recovered. I am a KPR ranger and I have my gun at home. Ten raiders came for the cows. (D7)

But most casualties seem to have taken place in the Il Ngwesi community. Five men were killed by Samburu in Leparua alone, a community of Il Ngwesi people established in Isiolo County, neighbouring the Il Ngwesi conservancy:

We also lost people. Five people were killed and three were injured. I don't want to mention the names. Two people at the cultural boma were ambushed [by the Samburu]. They killed them and took their gun. One was looking for his livestock. He was killed and his gun was taken. The Samburu came for the cows. They started fighting and two were killed. One person was also injured during that fight. We responded to the fight and killed one Samburu. We also injured some, but I don't know how many because they ran away. Four people killed on our side were morans and one was a boy, not yet circumcised. I have a brother who is in hospital because of injury. He is in Nanyuki. He is a ranger in Il Ngwesi conservancy. (I17)

Casualties were also reported at the cultural boma that borders Il Ngwesi conservancy, on the Ngare Ndare River. These deaths, however, could be the same as those mentioned above:

We lost three people around this cultural boma and I believe this was all well planned. One moran was killed while he was looking for his lost cows, which were believed to be within one of the Samburu's herds. I think it was planned. Other warriors refused to go with him and as he went alone, one of the Samburu herders who was believed to have his cows came to meet him on the way. They started talking and after that, [the Samburu] shot him dead and went away, leaving his body there. The other two were killed around that dispensary close to this cultural boma, while leaving here for their homes after dancing for the visitors who came to the cultural boma. This makes me think that some warriors or other people collaborate with these Samburu and tell them where others are passing, so that they can go for them and kill them. (R6)

I have been involved myself and one of my brothers was killed. (I16)

Casualties were also reported in Enkare Oo Sirkon but we could not be sure about whether they were different individuals:

In the Lekodei family, from the Masula clan, 2 were killed. In the Kiperus family, there is 1 death. And in the Lekutai family, 1 death also. They were all [Il Ngwesi] morans. No, no one brought help to these families. (I18)

We interviewed a police officer who did not mention these deaths among Il Ngwesi people but reported that casualties also occurred among policemen and Samburu morans:

Even police officers have lost their lives, especially one month ago. We lost at least 3 officers, one when pursuing stolen cattle. We fought with them around Samburu lodge area, last month, in Archer's Post. We lost 3 officers. (I19)

Samburu morans were killed when they invaded the Il Ngwesi conservancy this year [2017]. In 2016, I think 3 Samburu morans were killed in the Il Ngwesi conservancy. They defeated the conservancy. The three officers were killed last month this year. One moran was killed in Il Ngwesi earlier this year, in March, and three other morans were killed in 2015, 2 years ago. One Samburu moran was also killed at the same time as the 3 police officers. These are the cases where people were killed around this place. (I19)

### 3.1.4.3.2. Loss of livestock

Raiding also results in cattle losses. Here are the records or testimonies we collected:

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1,000 livestock have been stolen. It started around 2010 and became more and more a problem from 2013 onward. (I4)

Yes, they took a lot of livestock (...) They took 60 goats from one home, 68, 30, 30, and 40 from other homes, and 60 plus 17 cows from other homes. But I don't remember for all homes. (I5)

We lost 18 cows to the Samburu but no sheep or goats have been stolen. We sold a lot because of the fighting, just to buy food. (...) We lost so much livestock through raiding! We feel very much affected. We used to have a place called Oltinka, where we auctioned our livestock. Now it's closed because of the conflict and the road we came through is closed. (I17)

The Lekiyaa family had 100 shoats and was left with nothing. That's the family married with my sister. The Kitonga family was taken 200 shoat. Many families have been raided but these are the one I am really sure of. The others just had a few animals taken. Even Kichangumu family was raided. A Turkana man [living here] had 250 shoats and all were taken. (I18)

The raids have economic and social impacts beyond the losses of animals since they force herders to spend more time looking after their animals:

We never even used to look after grazing cows. They just went and then came back on their own, but now we are worried and we have to go with them to graze. It is the same with shoats. Now it's necessary to accompany our shoats as well. In the past, there were no worries. (...) Accompanying the livestock grazing changed our lifestyle and the conflict makes us think in another way. We always have impaired judgment because we're always worried that we will be shot, and we're not 100 percent sure of the safety of our livestock. We are not fully focused on what we're doing. Also, we don't do our work 100 percent. We do other businesses that generates income. We have shops. But if we have to go look after our livestock, we sometimes close these shops. (D7)

### 3.1.4.3.3. Other social and economic impacts

The raids also negatively impact other economic activities, such as tourism. In the cultural boma, for instance:

No, [there are not many clients]. I don't know why exactly but things just changed. There were campsites in the forest, but now tourists are not coming. We have the cultural boma and they don't come either. (...) Insecurity destabilizes all the things we do. We are not selling and cannot do the greenhouse. But we make sure that we make bead work and that it is brought to me and to NRT when the lady comes. Yes, they are still coming to buy [bead work]. (I15)

People do come to the cultural boma. Many visitors come to see and buy beads. Many people from the community come to sell their beads to the tourists. There have been changes in the amount of people visiting. Since the conflict started the number of tourists has decreased. I don't know much about the income of the cultural boma. I am just a neighbour. But yes, the income is reducing because tourists are fewer. When the environment is good and there are more tourists, they receive much income. (D9)

We have many problems, but our main problem is actually the insecurity issue. We never had problems because we moved freely, did businesses and sold the beads to the wazungu who visited the boma. We got money that way to buy the things we needed. [But] nowadays our beads business is very little. No clients visit the lodge to buy our beads. (R6)

The Yaaku community is impacted too:

The ladies here have so many groups. We used to do the bead work and the tourists would come from far places to buy the beads, but nowadays they don't. Furthermore, Tassia Lodge has been closed, so there is no more tourism there. (D8)

Small businesses are also impacted, because of the dangers associated with travelling with merchandise:

There are no more vehicles because the Samburu ambush vehicles. It affects us, even small businesses. They ambush small businesses that bring food or other things. (I17)

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Insecurity when circulating also affects education:

The conflict has really affected the school and the education system. The first term, which is January to late March/early April, the school was closed because of insecurity and the pupils did not do their term exams. During the second term in May, it opened but very few students came back because some migrated away with their mothers. But the teachers came back. (...) Education is very threatened. If there is no security, there is no education because no one will go to school. (D8)

While classroom are cancelled, the school is used as a shelter:

The conflict has had a big effect on this school. This place becomes a rescue center as children and women come to stay here when things are bad out there. Others run away and hide in the bushes, so you find children that have not slept or eaten. (D11)

Sometimes, because of the conflict and when people migrate, children might miss a whole term and then children have to catch up, which is very difficult. The same Samburu people restrict us from traveling far away with the children to study things. We have to be cautious. At one time we had 3 classes full of people that were fleeing the conflict. That was more than 100 people staying here. They come in the evening. They carry their own things, whatever they had at home, for the children, but the grown-ups may not even eat anything that night. When there is conflict, they rely on the same porridge. They just come seek refuge at night and then they go back in the morning. We have 71 kids in the nursery, which is way more than it should be. Some of them are too young to be taught. They just come for the food we serve. The conflict also affects the teachers. Some of us are not familiar with the conflict and are affected. And now when teachers are posted here, they refuse to come. (D11)

### 3.1.4.3.4. Village abandonment and migrations

Because of the conflict, Il Ngwesi people abandoned Nadung'Oro, the locality in the plateau, called "the forest" although it is a grassland surrounded by the Mukogodo forest. Almost no Il Ngwesi are living there today but the Yaaku, who live in the neighbouring Sieku locality, did not leave the plateau. Some Il Ngwesi moved to Lokusero B and Emurua, located just outside the forest (Figure 3), where they live in precarious conditions, hoping to move back to their village if peace returns. Other migrated to Chumvi or other places where they have land.

We migrated to Lokusero B area maybe two weeks ago. We migrated from Nadung'oro where we were initially living. We migrated to this area because of the insecurity issue that has become a very big problem in this area. I can't believe that the situation will be good again. The insecurity is caused by the Samburu, who have been raiding and killing innocent people from this area. The way the Samburu people are coming is really frustrating. I don't see myself going back to Nadung'oro because all the people are just going away. I cannot stay there alone, even if my husband wants that. (R2)

The only people who migrated away were the ones who bought some land somewhere. Just a few days ago, people left. They have started to migrate mostly because there was a man from a neighbouring home that was killed by the Samburu. The man was killed just a few months ago. (D3)

In the past, no intruders came. We are only now experiencing this, starting last year. It's the Samburu. People have left this place because of the fighting. I will not go. I will defend my land. I have nowhere else to go. The others have gone to Chumvi. I don't know if this migration will continue. (D2)

A Yaaku person in Sieku also reports outmigration due to fear, although we are not sure about whether she refers to Yaaku or Il Ngwesi migration, since the two communities are in close contact on the plateau:

Ever since I came here there has been raiding, but it has never been like this. Npeople are being killed, causing people to migrate. This year is when it has gotten really bad. People have been migrating out and back, to and from this area. When it gets too bad, people migrate, and when it calms, people come back, and some migrate out permanently. Some migrate to places in towns,



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and some migrate to where they have relatives, in other places. Some, maybe one or two, have private land elsewhere. But those are very few. (D8)

In Leparua as well, in Isiolo County, many people left, although young men seem to remain to defend their land:

The old people have migrated out of this area because of the insecurity. They are not here. They are in Isiolo, Leparua, or Ngarendare. The only people who stay here are those who can run away quickly. (I17)

These migrations are facilitated by the fact that Il Ngwesi people have been buying land outside the Group Ranch from a while:

Yes [the Mukogodo buy land outside their community]. They buy land in Sukuta, next to Chumvi, and in Lomuruti, which is the place where the county government wants to migrate. It is close to Nyahururu. (I14)

Yes, [people in our community buy land in Chumvi or in other places] since the lodge was constructed, because the population is rising. We buy land in Chumvi because it is near our land. Some people move and stay there. (I16)

### 3.1.4.4. *Interventions to solve the conflict*

#### 3.1.4.4.1. *Frustrations about insufficient government responses*

During the week we spent in Il Ngwesi, we felt that the community was frustrated about the fact that it did not receive significant support from the government to ensure security. They generally argued that meetings and police interventions were both useless:

We tried to call back the elders to make a plan. We had several meetings but they bore no fruit, so in the end, they even entered the core conservancy, in the cattle-free zone that is reserved for wildlife and tourist activities. We tried to use dialogue and called meetings. NRT helped us to call these meetings. The elders of the board were here during the meetings, but they bore no fruit. We tried another approach with security from the government, with the police, but it worsened the situation. They used force to remove these herds from the conservancy. The morans retaliated and ended up shooting the guys, until the police surrendered. They shot the headquarters of the conservancy. There were 20 policemen from the administrative police of the county. (I11)

The police officers are helpless because they are not well equipped. The government has failed. People have no license to have guns. The government is overwhelmed. (I4)

No, the government did not provide any support. It brought us to hospital, but still, we had to pay the hospital. The government is not good and does not help. (I12)

The county government has provided security, but it wasn't enough, though it did help make the area more peaceful. (D2)

The only thing that can maybe prevent the Samburu from coming and stealing and fighting is maybe if the government takes another step. I don't know why the government hasn't taken any action, but maybe it is turning a blind eye and just letting us fight and solve the problem ourselves. (D7)

A police officer also stated that resources provided by the government were insufficient. Priority was given to protecting the areas where white settlers had been killed or injured in Laikipia West:

Maybe the government is protecting the animals more than human beings. But when there was a conflict here, they brought additional police from Doldol. We had as many as 20 officers at this post, but they have been taken elsewhere in Laikipia West. They were brought to Sosian farm where the white settler was killed. I don't know if other people were killed there but a ranch owner was also injured: Kuki Gallmann. They moved the police officers there, and that's why we are very few officers around this place. They have been taken to Laikipia West. (I19)

Political interference would partly explain this situation:



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The MP does not offer any security. If the government tries to deploy people here, the MP stops that from happening. Once they tried to bring the security here but the MP came to take them back from Loiragai, so the security didn't even follow the cows. (D4)

Eventually, the government plans to distribute weapons to facilitate the organization of self-defence, rather than provide more direct support:

The government promised that it is going to employ people as guards. They will employ about 100 people as home guards, to work around the forest. Right now, these home guards are going around to check what is going on. They don't have the guns yet but they have the uniforms. They have not been paid yet but they expect to be paid at the end of July. (I5)

### 3.1.4.4.2. Support from conservancies and conservation NGOs

On the other hand, private conservancies provide security support. They substitute the role of the government:

The conservancies help us a lot because in cases of insecurity they provide soldiers, and in times of drought they provide grass. We don't have any problems with them; they even employ our people. (...) Borana and Lewa provide airplanes and the Samburu even shoot at the planes. (D4)

We see [Lewa and Borana] conservancies as our government, as they provide aerial surveillance when livestock is stolen. They provide security. (D7)

Lewa has been helping, bringing teachers and building classes for the kids and trying to provide security for them. They have been helping in case of any problems in the community. They even educate kids and helped us with the school for about half a term. (D10)

The conservancies even directly help the police logistically:

They [Lewa and Borana] have helped the communities a lot. They help the police. They help with transportation. Here, we don't have any vehicles. They give support to transport [as well as] personnel. Last year we had a vehicle, but it broke down. It is at the garage and we may have it [back] any time now. I have also been promised more personnel, maybe later this month (I19).

Conservation NGOs are also involved to facilitate peacemaking:

The elders here go to Samburu to meet the elders from over there, and it has been like a song: they have been discussing these things for a long time. NRT has been facilitating so much. They have 6 elders and 6 warriors from each community that go together to talk to Samburu and other communities to try to resolve the conflict, but nothing has come of it. (D7)

The CFA, on the other hand, does not seem to play a significant role in resolving the conflict:

The CFA has not yet been involved in the conflict in any way. The 4 Group Ranches have an equal share of the forest. (I11)

The CFA is helping in a way, because they are getting a few rangers that are now coming to support the other rangers that are here. But in terms of dialogue to solve the conflict, they are not helping. Not because they don't want to, but because they have no connections with the Samburu, so they don't start any dialogue with them. (D7)

### 3.1.4.4.3. Failed peacemaking efforts

Beyond these attempts to ensure security, multiple stakeholders collaborated to facilitate peacemaking negotiations. A "peace caravan" has been created:

Yes, we have had four meetings that were supported by "the Peace Caravan" led by Doctor Leleruk. Those are just the meetings supported by the Peace Caravan, without counting the meetings that have been conducted by the elders from both Il Ngwesi and Samburu communities. (R7)

Force cannot help anything. Only negotiation can help. (I19)

These initiatives are generally launched by local leaders and elders. They sometimes improved the situation but never for a long time.

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We have had a lot of peace meetings and every time we go to meetings, the conflict stops for 2 or 3 days but then it starts all over again. (I17)

The livestock continued grazing, which resulted in closing the [Tassia] lodge [in Lekurruki conservancy]. They started to raid our livestock. We did not give up. We continued to have meetings and eventually managed to redress the situation, just through dialogues with elders. We brought elders from far away, not only from the communities in conflict. We brought Samburu from Archer's [Post] and from far away as mediators. The Samburu are divided into clans and we dealt with them separately until we managed to stop them. They agreed to remove their livestock from within the conservancy. They removed it from the core conservation area but the livestock is still in the other blocks. They removed it from the core area at the end of 2014 but the issue is still there. They still use force. It is not working well. During the rainy season, when it's raining, we try to conduct a joint meeting to create a task force to remove settlement from within the conservancy. We did this last year, in all places where there is livestock. (I11)

Whenever any people fight, they can always come together for dialogue and solve their problems. For the Samburu community, I think it is beyond all our efforts. There is no kind of meeting that we have not tried to solve this conflict but they failed. The Samburu always graze against our grazing laws, which causes the conflicts. We made some committees that made things flow for awhile, until our people were killed when they followed the cows stolen by the Samburu. This forced us to stop following our cows when they were stolen. We think that these people want to kill us. The leaders said that the thing that can stop this is the army operation. We thought that this too will affect us more, as it will affect the good and bad people all together (R7).

The low impact of these meetings may result from the fact that those who agree to attend are not those causing the most trouble:

There are people who come to peace meetings in attempts to solve the insecurity issues. But I don't believe these people will solve the issue. I think whenever people meet for peace, others meet to make plans to raid or kill people. (R6)

We have had many meetings in the community. The latest one was the Nesoit meeting at the boundary of Il Ngwesi and Lekurruki conservancies. The meeting was very successful, and we thought that we had solved the conflict. We even elected the conflict resolution committee. After we came back home, the rangers went to talk to some warriors who lived close to the lodge so that they would stop bringing cattle close to the lodge. The warriors were shown the grazing boundary. The warriors responded to the rangers that they are never going to stop bringing their cows close to the lodge. They said that as they did not come to the meeting, it was not their plan. We also met with some herders who were grazing their cows at Ormaroroi. They said that the meeting was very successful, but that it was done with good people, which is wrong. They suggested to us that we should have looked for the people who are causing the problem, do the meeting with them, and agree or disagree together. These bad people live in a place called Kipsing, in Isiolo County. These are the people who are forcefully grazing their livestock where they are told not to. They are also conducting raids on the Il Ngwesi livestock. (R1)

One informant made a clear distinction between Samburu people in general, and raiders, who are committing crimes and delicts even inside their own community:

The Samburu said to us that the people who are disturbing us are thieves who are also causing a lot of trouble in their county. They said that the same guys who are coming to raid the Il Ngwesi community also hijack cars on their roads [in Samburu County] and even kill people they steal from. (R7)

It seems that some good-will morans from both sides agree to attend peacemaking meetings. But in the Samburu case, these morans are considered traitors and their lives are threatened, which sabotages these peacemaking attempts:

We have had a lot of meetings with morans from both sides. We created committees involving morans. These committees tried to coordinate the peace and bring livestock back but in all cases the livestock was lost. It is only the guys from the Il Ngwesi side that brought the livestock back. It

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came to a point where the Samburu morans fought with other morans who were in the committee, from their own group. Yes, the Samburu fought against other Samburu. They have tried to look for them. If someone looks for you, you run away and disappear. [Because of that], the committee is paralyzed. This committee was started in March of this year. Maybe it just worked for 2 months. (I17)

In a few cases, the peacemaking meetings have involved high profile people from the county and even national government, in which case they may have had some impact:

We had meetings in the past but they did not bear any fruit. We talked to the Samburu and they still come and fight. But we need to keep on talking. We had around 10 meetings with different people, with elders coming from as far as Wamba, Maralal, Kipsing, and Isiolo. At the last meeting we had the interior minister: the Cabinet Secretary, Nigisery. He is a Maasai. It was last year. It was an emergency meeting for security. It was held on the Laikipia-Isiolo border, in a place called Darasha. It was attended by a former speaker of the National Assembly who is now chairman of one commission on reconciliation. His name is Ole Kaparo. He comes from Doldol. There was also the Governor of Isiolo and the Laikipia Governor. There were also morans and elders from the Laikipia side. They formed a peace committee on both sides, and a peace caravan. They went from one place to the other, talking to people. They were recently involved in peace meetings around this area. At least they had some impact to some extent, like bringing the morans together. They had been talking from some time now. At least there are some results because we have seen some people going back to their homes. But recently some Samburu morans came to steal in Nadung'Oro. Since the peace committee was formed, it's the only case I have seen of cattle thief. (I19)

In spite of these failed peacemaking and security interventions, there is still an expectation that only the government can solve the conflict. There is hope that some charismatic figure will emerge. The results of the election are awaited with worry and hope:

Nothing can stop the Samburu except the government, if they want. (D7)

We ask the government to make peace and to move the Samburu and Il Ngwesi back where they come from because the land will never be peaceful otherwise. (I12)

[The Samburu] need to have a leader like Sara Lekorere, who is an aspiring MP. She is Samburu but is not biased. Nkaiseri, who is the Minister of Security, comes from Narok and knows all about the conflict. He is a Maasai. Kaparo, the former speaker of the national assembly, is now a chairman in Ndikiri community. (...) These are the people we want to speak to. (I8)

### 3.1.4.4.4. End of drought

Independent of these efforts to achieve peace, natural factors may also influence the outcomes. Whether peace will be achieved in the end also depends on how much it will rain. For some, the conflict will cease when rain returns because all herders will be able to move back to their home then.

Yes, people will go back to their place when the rain will be there. (I19)

Maybe the rains [will stop the conflict] if these people are really looking for grass, because enough rain all over will bring them back to their lands or homes, far away from us. If they don't migrate to their areas and it rained, then they should be forced by government operations to migrate to their land. (R6)

The only option that I am left with is the rains. I think that the rain can stop all the fights more than anything else, if all this is caused by lack of grass (R7).

On the contrary, for others, the conflict will increase when it will rain, because herders will be less occupied with finding grass for their livestock. Encroachers will attempt to settle permanently on the land they invaded, and locals will be more committed to defending their land since they will understand the Samburu intend to settle permanently:

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When it will rain, it will become worse. Right now, everyone is running to have livestock get something to eat, but when it will rain, people will come back and there will be raiding. We will be more insecure. (I17)

### 3.1.4.5. *Looking ahead*

It seemed that the conflict was not about to end when we visited Il Ngwesi. Given the political dimension of the situation, people were waiting for the results of the next elections. Depending on whether MP Lempurkel and other Samburu leaders would be elected, Il Ngwesi people could feel confident or not about receiving government support and being able to stay on their land. Until the election was completed, or until the rain returned, the situation would remain the status quo:

The Il Ngwesi sat down and asked themselves what they could do. They decided they should wait until the election is over. If they get a good leader, the leader will help them to fight the Samburu. (I18)

When it rains, the government should come and check I.D., and tell people to go to where they come from. [The Samburu] will go but will still come back because they want to create conflict. They look down on us. We have lodges and they don't, and the environment here is nice. (I14)

Given the uncertainty about whether the Samburu will eventually leave, some Il Ngwesi people are ready to use weapons themselves unless the elections elect a new MP that will bring government support:

Right now, the Laikipians are trying to look for something to fight the Samburu back with, because we have tried to make peace and to ask politely. But it has not worked so now we are arranging ourselves, looking for weapons to fight them back. We are preparing ourselves. We are still preparing but we want to fight back after the election. The team that is organizing all this will go to the government and tell them they have not removed the Samburu people from our area. They will ask the government to remove the Samburu. If it will not, then the Laikipians will take action. The people leading them are the elders and the chiefs. They are the ones telling us that we should wait until we elect someone that will help us. Then they will go and ask this new MP if he has a solution and if he doesn't help, they will have to take matters into their own hands. (D3)

I will very quickly go back to Nadung'oro, but I don't think security will be restored [by the government] in this area. People are saying that after the elections the security will be restored but I know they are just lying to themselves. (...) It is when people start defending themselves against the Samburu that they will get the solution. It is not by running away. (R2)

Efforts by the morans to ensure security are expected to increase when the Il Ngwesi people will return to Nadung'Oro, when the rain will return:

People will migrate back to Nadung'oro. What will bring them back is the rain. When it will rain properly in the forest, there will be no good grass in other areas. People will definitively migrate back. I believe that people have migrated out of Nadung'oro because they had options. They had an option of migrating to Mount Kenya, and others migrated to Lenaisho, where everyone else is migrating too because it received good rains. When they will have no options left and if it rains properly in the Mukogodo Forest, they will migrate their livestock back into the Mukogodo Forest. They will make one big 'boma' and live there, providing security to their cows and to the area. Security will be restored in the area as the warriors [who will come back with the cows] will provide security. So [all] the people will migrate back. (R1)

## 4. Conclusion

The Mukogodo forest is a hotspot in Laikipia County given its forest cover and its cool and relatively rainy climate. Rainfed agriculture can be practiced there and the forest provides grazing resources to livestock year around, although not in great quantities. Long distance migration to Mount Kenya or the Aberdare range provides additional grazing resources during

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severe droughts. Il Ngwesi Group Ranch, and the neighbouring Lekurruki Group Ranch which we briefly visited, show an extremely complex situation with a severe conflict driven by multiple causes.

Hunting gathering groups, the Yaaku and possibly some Il Ngwesi, inhabited the area a long time ago but now seem to have adopted the livelihood strategies of their neighbours, combining farming and pastoralism, although some Yaaku still practice honey harvesting. The Yaaku seem to have been the first occupants but they were joined by Il Ngwesi who had to move away from their initial home in Meru County, apparently following white settlement there.

Today, Yaaku and Il Ngwesi communities share the Mukogodo landscape, each having its own Group Ranch. Both are under strong pressure from Samburu herders who invade the land to find grazing resources for their livestock. The invasion is motivated by the search for dry season grazing land and is backed by political elites, mainly Samburu Member of Parliament Thomas Lempurkel, who seems to provide weapons, protection and information. Beyond the search for grazing land, the political agenda of these elites and Samburu herders may be to appropriate land in community and private conservancies and settler ranches in order to establish permanent homes there.

The Yaaku Group Ranch, Lekurruki, was invaded first, and the Yaaku have already surrendered to the Samburu, although not all of them. Some Yaaku collaborate with the Samburu, providing them with a base from which they invaded Il Ngwesi Group Ranch. The Il Ngwesi people are still resisting, even though they had to abandon their main settlement on the plateau surrounded by the Mukogodo forest. The Yaaku are still present in this area and now share the pastures with the Samburu. The Il Ngwesi have an exit strategy which they developed before the Samburu invasion. Their Group Ranch may not be large enough to sustain their livelihood so they acquired some land elsewhere. Many have a relatively high level of education which gives them access to a variety of jobs in neighbouring ranches or in towns. Some buy private land which they farm in neighbouring localities, which may have been the cause of a deadly conflict that took place with Kikuyu farmers about 20 years ago. But the Il Ngwesi will defend their land. They manage a community conservancy that provides them with significant income, in part invested to buy land. They will not easily abandon this asset to Samburu invaders and some plan to organize themselves to resist the invasion militarily.

The government sent a police team that is still present but lacks personnel and resources to act appropriately. Neighbouring private conservancies, Lewa and Borana, also provide important support in resisting the invasion. Their rangers are involved on the ground and track cattle raiders. They also support the police logistically by providing vehicles and occasionally conducting aerial survey. Their rangers are well organized and equipped, which dissuades the invaders. On the other hand, Olenaisho, a private ranch that has no conservancy, has already been invaded by Samburu people, which opened the way to other groups that followed.

There is discussion about whether the conflict will stop when the rains return, and after the next election, if Thomas Lempurkel is not re-elected. While not making a prediction, we believe that this conflict will continue in the very long term and will not find solution as long as the stark contrast between large estates well endowed in grass and owned by rich settlers and pastoralist communities impoverished by population growth, climate change, and land dispossession continues to exist. We plan to conduct more research to investigate what alternatives are available to Samburu communities apart from invading land in Laikipia plateau. More research is needed also to investigate possible linkages between the conflict, the creation of conservancies in Samburu County, and the infrastructure megaprojects of Northern Kenya.

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## Appendix 1: Future research

In the future, we plan to conduct research in the localities from which the Samburu that invaded Il Ngwesi originate, to have their view of the conflict. These localities seem to be mainly Oldonyiro and Sirkong in Isiolo County, and Wamba and Maralal in Samburu County. Below are a set of questions for these future interviews.

1. On Laikipia plateau, people talk a lot about the migration of livestock coming from Samburu land to graze on private ranches, conservancies, and even on community land in Mukogodo for instance. We came here to have the Samburu perspective on these events. Could you tell us the story of these migrations? More specifically, you can tell us:
  - a. When did the migration to Laikipia start? When did it happen for the first time?
  - b. Why did people migrate? Did the reason change over time? Was it the same at the beginning?
  - c. In previous years when they did not go to Laikipia, where did the livestock migrate to?
  - d. Why did it change? Why did livestock start to move to Laikipia?
  - e. What are the various options that herders consider before making their decision to migrate when there is a big drought?
  - f. What are the respective advantages and disadvantages of these options?
  - g. What else? What else? What else...
  - h. What type of herder migrates to Laikipia? Those with little or lots of livestock? Where do the others go?
  - i. Do the herders that migrate to Laikipia have a particular profile? Do they have political connections? Are they rich? Are they more educated? Why? Is it an advantage to be rich, politically connected, or educated, to migrate to Laikipia? Explain why.
  - j. How do herders arrange to migrate?
    - i. Do they group their herds?
    - ii. Do they each go their own way?
    - iii. Do they scout before going?
  - k. What is your view on the conflict? What good and bad will it bring? What else? What else? What else...
  - l. Would you say it's a conflict over grass or a conflict over land? Or over something else? Explain.
  - m. When it rains, will the conflict cease? Why? Explain.
  - n. Could you give us details about the loss of life during this conflict?
    - i. How many people died?
    - ii. Who are they?
    - iii. Under which circumstance did they die?
    - iv. How could the death have been avoided?
    - v. What did the government do about this?
    - vi. What did the community of the victim do about this?
    - vii. What did the community of the offender do about this?
    - viii. Did any other organizations do anything about this?
  - o. Could you give us details about peace negotiations taking place in relation to this conflict?

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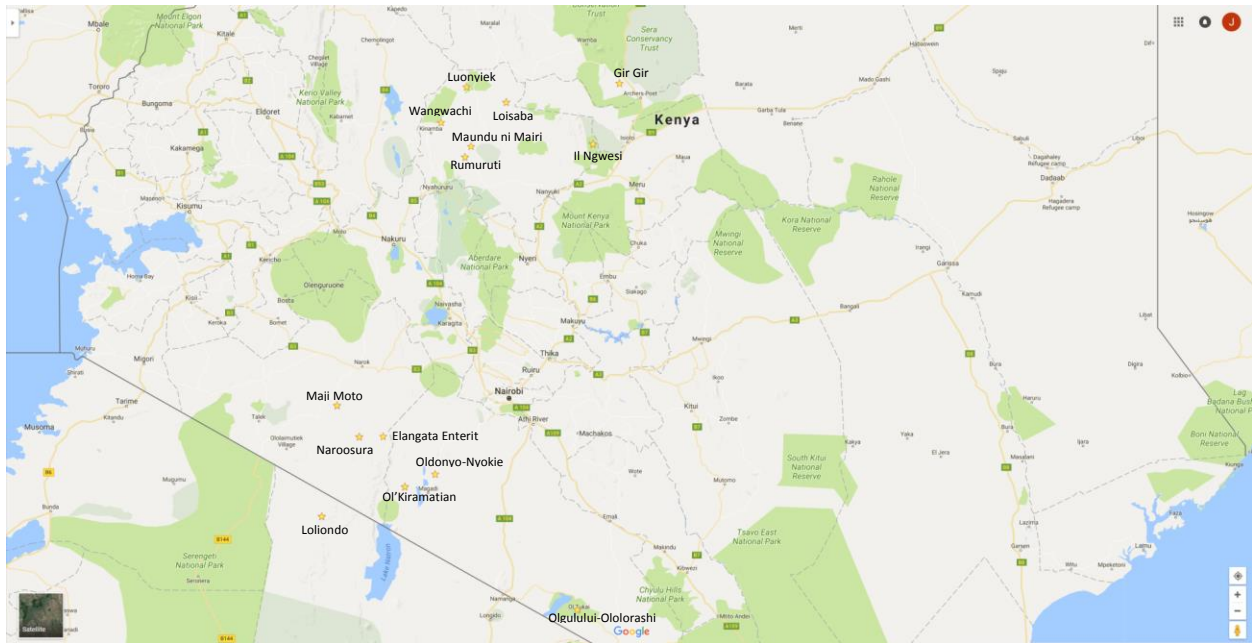
- i. Who was involved? What organizations? What key persons?
    - ii. Who had the most influence in the negotiation? Why?
    - iii. What were the arguments discussed by the various parties?
    - iv. What decisions were taken?
    - v. Where the decisions implemented? Why or why not?
    - vi. Did it get any better after that? Why?
  - p. What role do private ranches and private conservancies play in the conflict? What is their position? What do you think of that position?
  - q. What role do community conservancies play in the conflict? What is their position? What do you think of that position?
  - r. What role does NRT play in the conflict? What is their position? What do you think of that position?
  - s. Do you think that all Samburu herders that go to Laikipia go there with the same motivation? Explain the different motivations.
  - t. Are there divisions or disagreement between Samburu people regarding whether they should migrate to Laikipia? What are the arguments of those who say yes or no to this migration? What else? What else? What else...
  - u. Some people say that the conflict is political. Do you agree? Explain your position.
  - v. How do you think the conflict will evolve? What are the possible scenario? Explain.
  - w. What should be done, overall, to stop the conflict? What is the key thing that should be done?
2. What are the rules regarding grazing in conservancies?
- a. What are the conservancies where people from your community can send their livestock?
  - b. What are the rules for accessing pastures in that conservancy?
    - i. When can pastures be accessed?
    - ii. By whom?
    - iii. Are there limits to the number of livestock?
    - iv. Can cattle and shoat and camels go?
    - v. Are there any conflicts between herders in the conservancy?
    - vi. Do some herders violate the rules?
    - vii. Were pastures in that place accessible before the conservancy was created?
    - viii. During what period?
    - ix. By whom?
    - x. Why did the access period and rules about who can access change since the conservancy was created?
    - xi. Who established the old rules?
    - xii. Who established the new rules?
    - xiii. Who was involved in discussing the new rules at the time they were established?
    - xiv. What were the different approaches discussed? Did some stakeholders propose different new rules? Why?



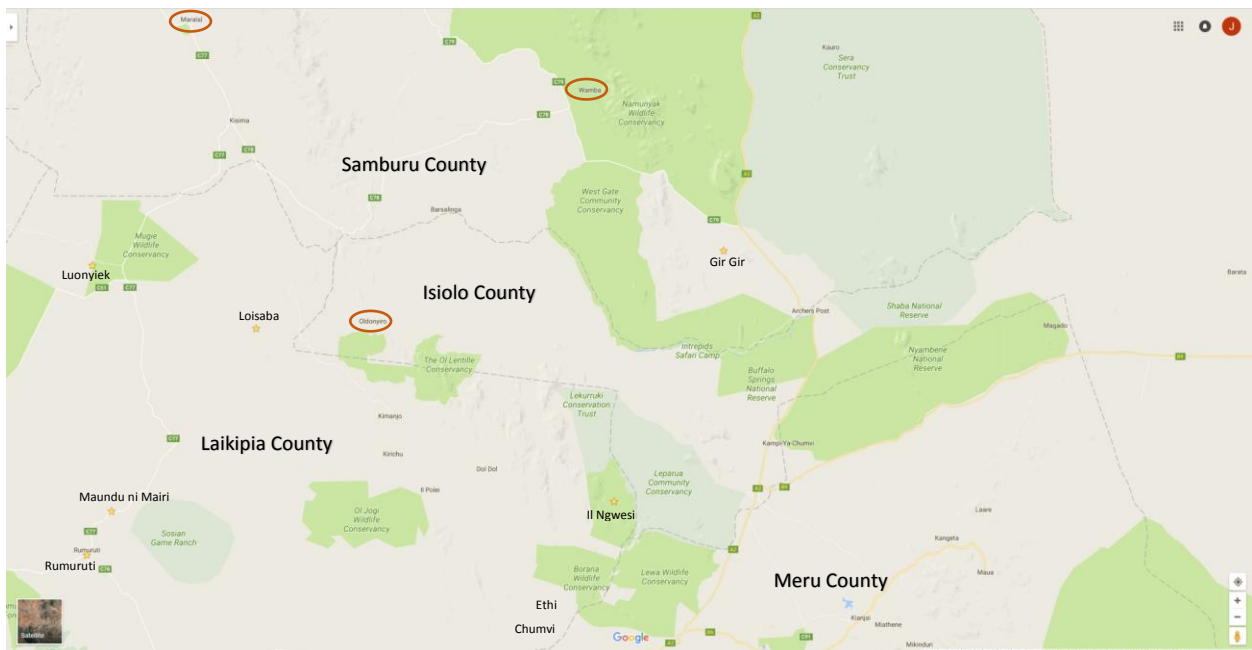
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- xv. Would migration to Laikipia still take place if the rules for accessing these pastures in what are now conservancies in Samburu land were the same as they were before?
  - xvi. Do you think that if the current rules were changed, conflicts would decrease and migration to Laikipia could diminish? What should be the new rules?
  - c. Did the creation of Group Ranches and conservancies impact the relationship between Samburu and other tribes? Or between different Samburu groups? Explain.
3. We are going to ask a few questions about holistic management.
- a. Do you practice holistic management in your community?
  - b. Since when have you been practicing it?
  - c. Where do you practice it?
  - d. Why do you practice it?
  - e. Who brought that idea here?
  - f. Was the idea easily adopted? What kind of people embraced it? What kind of people rejected it?
  - g. Why did some people embrace the idea?
  - h. Why did some people reject the idea?
  - i. What are the advantages of holistic management? List all advantages and explain. What else? What else...
  - j. What are the disadvantages of holistic management? List all disadvantages and explain. What else? What else...
  - k. Has the pasture improved since holistic management is practiced?
  - l. Is holistic management spreading to other communities? Why?
  - m. Do you receive financial and technical support to implement holistic management?
  - n. Who provides this support?
  - o. How is your relationship with that organization?
  - p. Are you satisfied with their approach? Why?
  - q. If there was no holistic management, would there be less or more conflict for grazing? Less or more migration to Laikipia? Explain why.

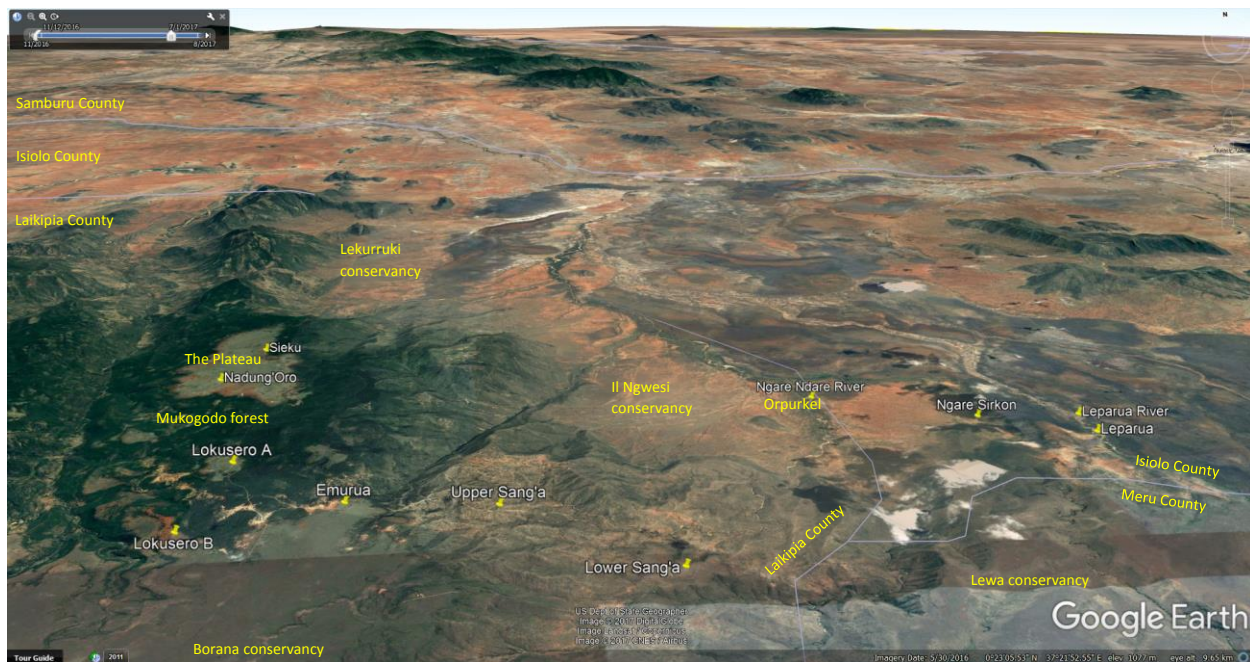
## Appendix 2: Figures



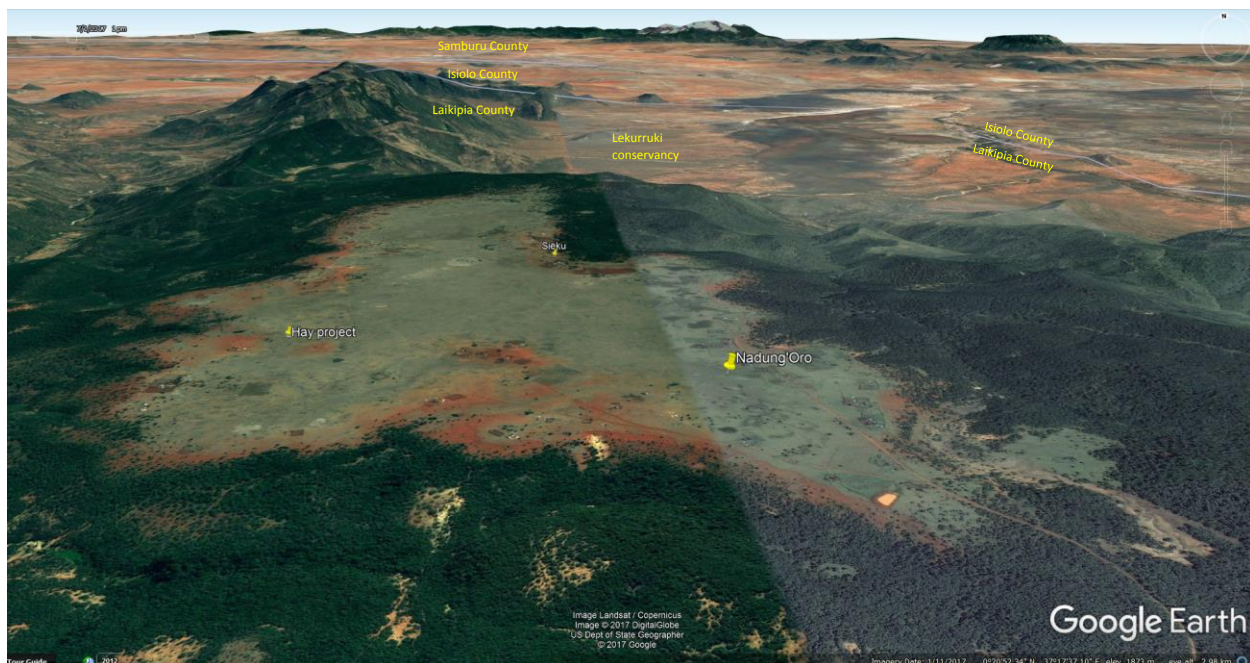
**Figure 1: Location of study site.** Other localities visited for research scoping studies are indicated with a star. Source: Google Maps.



**Figure 2: Surroundings of the study site.** Localities visited during other research scoping studies are indicated with a star. Ethi and Chumvi, at the bottom, are localities where Il Ngwesi people buy land to practice farming. Circled in red are the localities from which Samburu encroachers are coming. Source: Google Maps.

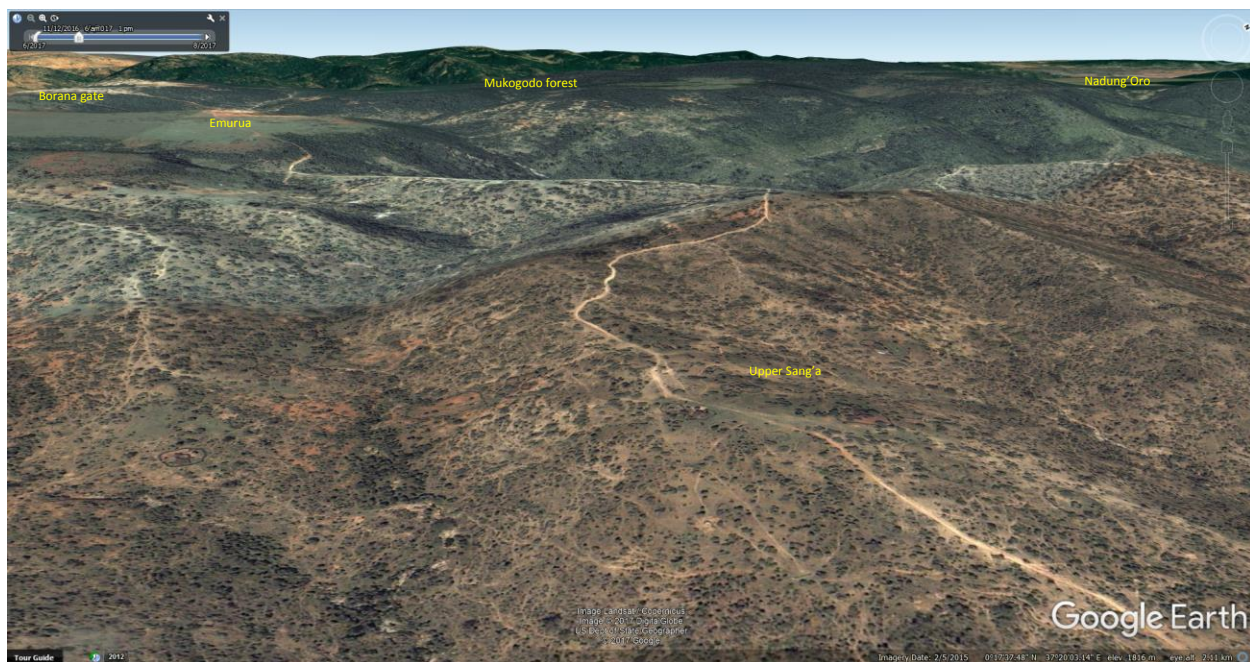


**Figure 3: Overview of Il Ngwesi Group Ranch showing localities visited.** The “plateau” is the clearing in the middle of Mukogodo Forest. It is shared between Il Ngwesi and Yaaku communities (Nadung’Oro and Sieku respectively). Source: Google Earth.



**Figure 4: The “forest” (the plateau surrounded by Mukogodo Forest.** The square fenced plots are cultivated in maize and beans. Nadung’Oro is occupied by Il Ngwesi people, while Yaaku people live in Sieku. Today, Il Ngwesi people, except for a very few, evacuated the land because of Samburu raids, while Yaaku people still occupy the land. Source: Google Earth.





**Figure 5: Upper Sang'a.** Source: Google Earth.



**Figure 6: The Ngaren Ndare River and Il Ngwesi conservancy.** The Ngaren Ndare River is the border between Isiolo and Laikipia County. Il Ngwesi is on the Laikipia side, but people from Il Ngwesi Group Ranch were relocated to the Isiolo side of the conservancy, in Isiolo County, when it was created. A few settlements are visible. The conservancy is grazed by livestock from Il Ngwesi, Somali, and Borana people during the dry season. Source: Google Earth.

## Appendix 3: List of interviews

### Interviews conducted by Jacques Pollini in 2016

Ia19: Leader from a Community Based Organization in Il Ngwesi, in Nadung'Oro (Il Ngwesi community).

Ia20: Rangeland manager from Il Ngwesi, in Nadung'Oro (Il Ngwesi community).

Ia21: IMPACT team.

### Interview conducted by the IMPACT team

Ia22: Group of men in Il Ngwesi Group ranch

### Interviews conducted by Jacques Pollini in 2017

I1: Information collected by the IMPACT team from various sources.

I2: Man involved in the hay project, in Nadung'Oro (Il Ngwesi community).

I3: Member of the Group Ranch Committee plus same man as in I1, in Nadung'Oro (Il Ngwesi community).

I4: Man working for the Mukogodo forest CFA, in Nadung'Oro (Il Ngwesi community).

I5: Old man who moved from Nadung'Oro to Lokusero B following the Samburu invasion (Il Ngwesi community).

I7: Woman in Emurua, wife of a local leader (Il Ngwesi community).

I8: Old man in Emurua (Il Ngwesi community).

I9: Old man in Upper Sang'a (Il Ngwesi community).

I10: Woman in Lowe Sang'a (Il Ngwesi community), and a man who sometimes intervenes.

I11: Member of the Grazing Committee in Sieku (Yaaku community).

I12: Elder in Sieku (Yaaku community).

I13: Man injured by the Samburu, in Sieku (Yaaku community).

I14: Man in Sieku (Yaaku community).

I15: Leader of a women's association in Sieku (Yaaku community).

I16: Group of people in a cultural boma from the Il Ngwesi community, in Orpurkel, on the border between Isiolo County and Il Ngwesi conservancy (Il Ngwesi community).

I17: Young man from the Il Ngwesi community in Leparua (Isiolo County).

I18: Employee of the school in Enkare Oo Sirkon (Isiolo County).

I19: Policeman at the police post, on the gate between Il Ngwesi group Ranch and Borana conservancy.

### Interviews conducted by David Barmes in 2017.

D1: Middle aged to elderly man, previously member of the [Group ranch?] management committee (Il Ngwesi community).

D2: Middle aged man from Lokusero B (Il Ngwesi community).

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- D3: Elderly man from Emurua (Il Ngwesi community).
- D4: Group of women with one man in Upper Sang'a (Il Ngwesi community).
- D5: Young to middle aged women in Lower Sang'a (Il Ngwesi community).
- D6: Elderly man in Lower Sang'a, in the same boma as for D5 (Il Ngwesi community).
- D7: Middle aged man in Sieku (Yaaku community).
- D8: Middle aged woman in Sieku (Yaaku community).
- D9: Young man in cultural boma close to Il Ngwesi conservancy, in Orpurkel (Il Ngwesi community).
- D10: Two women in Enkare Oo Sirkon (Isiolo County).
- D11: Teacher in the Enkare Oo Sirkon primary school (Isiolo County).

### Interviews conducted by Ramson Karmushu in 2017

- R1: Man from the Il Ngwesi community.
- R2: People from Lokusero B (Il Ngwesi community).
- R3: Old man in Emurua (Il Ngwesi community).
- R4: Old woman in Upper Sang'a (Il Ngwesi community).
- R5: Old woman in Sang'a (Il Ngwesi community).
- R6: Woman in the cultural boma in Orpurkel, close to the Il Ngwesi conservancy (Il Ngwesi community).
- R7: People in Enkare Oo Sirkon (Isiolo County).



## Appendix 4: Additional interviews conducted in Samburu communities and in Nanyuki

After completion of field work in Mukogodo Forest, one team member (Ramson Karmushu from IMPACT) conducted additional field work in Samburu County, in areas from where some of the Samburu intruders may come from, to understand the logic of these intrusions from the perspective of Samburu people. Another team member (David Barmes) interviewed higher profile informants in Nanyuki to obtain a broader and more external perspective on the conflict. We present here the results from these interviews. We did not integrate this information to this body of the report because it is quite scant (only 6 interviews). More investigation is required to draft the “view of the Samburu” and more high profile informants need to be interviewed to draw a broader picture of the conflict. We plan to conduct more research scoping trips in the Samburu communities from where invaders originate and will use the field note below to prepare these trips.

### Interviews conducted by Ramson Karmushu in Samburu communities.

#### R8 - Interview of a middle-aged man in Kipsing

I migrated here a very long time ago. When the age-set called Rmeoli were being circumcised, I was just living at the foot of that small hill that you can see from here. At that time I only had one child. That is when father Riwa came to Kipsing to do some projects; I was living in this place. I even worked with Father Riwa when he was building the boarding school for the ladies. At that time I could hold the compressor to drill the blocks using one hand. At that time I had a lot of energy and very strong muscles, not like how I am today. That was around the 1980s. That was even when that Kipsing bridge was constructed.

Q: What are the sources of livelihoods for the community in Kipsing’?

People here depend on keeping livestock. We have been livestock keepers since the past until now. We have entirely depended of them. We have also depended on some manual work that we used to get from the projects that Father Riwa use to do in the community. Those are some of the activities that we use to do to win the bread for the day. That was also the same time that Father Riwa gave poor members of the community here 40 goats (39 goats and a buck), a donkey, a rope and a sack to be used as a bag. He also gave out a 20-litre water container; the donkey and the rope were also given to everyone together with the livestock to prevent one from selling the livestock. The donkey would be used to fetch water from the river and to carry the commodities during migration as well as from the shopping centers. He also provided medicine for the livestock. All these items were given at the same time, together with the livestock, even the medicine, all at once, just given once and for all. That is how many people improved their living standards and lived a better life in the community. Those who did not succeed in becoming rich from those goats were maybe not meant by God to live a better living. Those who succeeded in becoming rich still have livestock today, those that were given out by Father Riwa. By then, this dry bed Kipsing’ was a permanent river. It flowed all the time. Some distance from here to close to the center, there used to be a spring where water used to flow out and run down the river. Father Riwa blocked the water from the spring from both sides (up the spring and below). He protected it, and when Riwa went away, we cried. People were also living close to the Lengala Hill and he also constructed the same one like the one upstream there.

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Q: Were there any conservation projects and/or the conservancies at that time? When did they start?

There was nothing like conservation and the conservancies at that time. People used to live freely everywhere in this land. One thing that I can say, people used to stay united everywhere. We all practiced livestock rearing and nothing more. But we really stayed united and at peace with everyone. Like I can tell you that there was a day one man was shot dead and the other one from Leparua was injured. We all left from here and we went all the way to Leparua across the whole of this land eating goats provided by the communities along the way. We were all united, we stayed together as one without having any issues. The hatred that brought the insecurity was just recent. So recent, and I still believe that the thing that brought about fighting is the gun. When the community started owning illegal guns, these young warriors started killing people, saying that there are no taboos when one kills a person using a gun. They think that it is not the person using the gun that killed the person but the gun and the bullet. This is because one needs to fire and kill the other person at a distance.

See that we as Samburu are spread to all that area, for example, the Letimorit family is found at Leparua, and that family and many others are Samburu. I think I can dare say that the last age-set, Rmepuakiti, are the ones that brought all this insecurity. Our age-set, Rkuroro, and the one that followed us, Rmeoli, never fought; we stayed together grazing all over this land without any issues. For example, I am known in this area as a Dorobo from Lanat, and the people from Laikipia are known to be Dorobo; we are all one Maa community. How can we again fight? How can one dare tear his brother's stomach to spread his intestines out and leave him there to feed the hyenas? That never happened and that is why I can say that it is this last age-set, Rmepuakiti, that made this happen. We did not even fight the other tribes, then how can we, as the people who speak the same language and who have the same mark as the Maa, fight with them? It is this generation that made this happen. I can repeat saying that you just believed that this gun has no taboos when one kills a person using it. Traditionally, there is no way for one person to just kill another person. You will remain unclean and unwanted in the community. One therefore has to be cleansed for him or her to fit into any other activity in the community. It is so different and difficult since the community got access to the illegal guns. People are just killing others anyhow and nothing is taken seriously.

The Maa also said, assist one that is being drunked but not one that is being affected by the sweet fruits of life (his/her wealth). Listen, we came to believe that education is the best thing that one can ever have and that is all are up for. Everyone one wants his or her kids to learn. People also say that people from town or who wear urban clothing know nothing about the community or the culture, but I can see that it is the education that we are running into that is bringing all these problems. Most of the local community members now blame the education as a bad disease that is coming to affect all. It is a disease because these civilized people just hate one another. This is because of politics and political positions that everyone wants to hold. People in the past used to share resources like food together, for example you and I go to town to buy food, and we live in a big family with many households, the men that went to buy food for their families asks their wives to share the food among the other households in that home (the households that have not gone shopping). That is what they also do when they go shopping and we do not.

Q: Where does the livestock in this community migrate to during dry periods? Are there any challenges that they face during the migration?

First, the community here faces a big challenge of longer droughts than before. We migrate to different places like towards the Borana community at the other end of Isiolo County,

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we also migrate to the Wamba and Kirisia hills near Maralal in Samburu County, and nowadays, we do often migrate to Laikipia. We do face many challenges while migrating to those places, and the biggest challenge that we have been facing recently is the tribal clashes with the other communities such as the Borana, Turkana, and the Il Ngwesi community in Laikipia (Ltorobo)

Q: I have heard that there are places that people are practicing holistic grazing management; are you doing holistic grazing here?

We are not practicing holistic grazing here. Do you know why? I will tell you now. The reason is, we were not able to come together as a community and set the grazing rules. No one controls the herds and they just graze on the land in any way. Everyone can then migrate and live where they want and graze the livestock wherever they want; there is a lot of individualism. We end up not utilizing the grass but destroying it with the livestock stepping on it. As well, we do not have a good settlement pattern; if, for example, I migrate to that hill, someone else will just come, go past me and settle ahead of me so that he can cover a large grazing area than me. We should have a plan for settlement so that we can be able to control the grazing of the livestock. The other thing, “when have you ever heard of shoats living on that hill? Lekurruki?” (pointing at Lekurruki hill/mountain). Those hills were known to be best for the cows. Now, the shoats live there permanently, and the cows are left out. The cows used to migrate to that hill during the dry periods only and not even all the time. Today it is the camel and the shoats that live there, and the cows that are meant to graze on those hills during the droughts are left out. What about the cows? The cows are forced to go graze by force in someone’s grazing area who knows how to practice holistic grazing in his land. The illegal grazing, that is where you will be fought, and you will be told that we do not need this. So, the way forward with the community here is to teach them on their unity and their settlement and to empower them on holistic grazing. They should be taught to leave some areas as grazing banks for the dry periods. They should be taught to control the grazing because of the cows. It is the cows that will migrate to such far distances and will meet with other communities which will cause fighting, as people will be grazing by force on other people’s lands, which is not right.

Q: Do you try to graze your livestock in other conservancies that practice holistic grazing management? If yes, which ones and what is their response?

When they graze there, they also allow us to. The first one is the Samburu National Reserve. That is a very old conservancy; when the droughts come, the conservancy management makes a deal with the community and allows them to graze. There are a lot of carnivores like lions that can kill the livestock and even the people. You are not allowed to kill those carnivores and you will also graze in style. Remember that it is a conservancy and there are a lot of tourists. Therefore no one is allowed to graze close to the road; you hide your livestock from being seen by the tourists. This is because the tourists bring benefits to the park and the community as well. You are also not allowed to disturb or kill the wild animals in the park. The community will also be told that they will steal the grass and not to graze by force. It is never good to do something forcefully; dialogue is good and the best way to go. We also have been migrating to Laikipia, even a very long time ago, and they were allowing us to graze until recently, when these young warriors started going to Laikipia with another intention of chasing the Laikipia communities away so that they can settle on their land. They are just trying to hide that they want a place to graze, but the fact remains that they want to settle on their land. We migrated to Laikipia in our age-set too, Rkiroro and Rmeoli; it is the last age-set, Rmepuakiti, that started fighting with our brothers with whom we had been staying together.

### R9 - Warrior's interview in Kipsing

Q: What is the history of Kipsing' and how do you make your livelihood? What are the roles of the warriors in the community?

We were born here and have lived the whole of our lives here, although we have migrated out of the community with the livestock at different times. The community here depends entirely on livestock. There are a few people in this area who are employed and that is where they get their livelihoods from, but everyone in this community, whether employed or not, has livestock. We all then depend on livestock. No one is practicing farming here. While we were growing up, we were told that schools are good, but we did not go to school. In our family, some of my brothers and sisters have gone to school while some of us were left to take care of the livestock. People were taking more girls to school while we were young, although nowadays, both boys and girls are going to school. We could not all go to school because no one would take care of the livestock.

I went to school myself, but at some point, when my family migrated away and no one could take care of our livestock, I just decided to drop out. Some of the people I was with in the school are now working in different places.

We migrated the livestock to different places while growing up. We have even gone all the way to Kirisia Hills near Maralal, we have migrated to Sarara (Namunyak) Hills, (Wamba Hills) and towards Koom, near Merti and Laikipia as well.

Every person in the community has a different role. The old and middle-aged men in the community guide the community and handle any matters relating to other communities. They also discipline any wrong-doers in the community. For the women, they always stay at home and take care of the children at home. They are also responsible for building housing for the family, but the fences are constructed by the men, both warriors and the middle-aged men. The work of the warriors is to protect the community and also go ahead of the herds while grazing. The work of grazing is for the boys. But the shoats can be taken care off by young boys and girls in the community, together with women at home when the warriors are away with the cattle.

Q: What is concentrating people in Laikipia? Is that what has caused fighting with the communities in Laikipia?

There was a lot of grass in the past, unlike today. Even though there was nothing to do with the conservancies in the past, people used to migrate to Laikipia even before. In the beginning of conservancies, people in Laikipia started restricting the herds from Isiolo and Samburu from grazing in the conservancies in Laikipia. That then caused fighting because we saw it was impossible to block our cattle and allow the cattle in Laikipia to graze. We grew up knowing that the grass belongs to the cows and anyone blocking the cows from grazing should be dealt with. There are also other conservancies in Isiolo and Samburu which are still protected by the rangers, and when it gets dry and there is nothing more to graze on outside the ranch, they always allow us to access the conservancies and the parks for grass. But there is no grass in these conservancies in Samburu. The communities here in Isiolo and Samburu are not practicing holistic grazing. One can migrate and live anywhere during the rainy season as well as the dry periods. What caused the fighting more is the NRT and the conservancy rangers who killed a lot of warriors in Il Ngwesi conservancy. Nothing was done about that, and other people from the Samburu community, especially the warriors, who were pained by this started to revenge it by raiding their livestock and killing people.

Q: Why are the people fighting in Laikipia? What do you think is the cause of the fighting?

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The conservancies in Laikipia allow the cattle in Laikipia to graze and block the cattle from the Samburu community, saying that those cows belong to the Samburu. That created a big problem and caused the people to disagree. That created the fighting problem and caused the people to start shooting the people whenever they come across them, like the way we hunt gazelles.

I think the main cause of the fighting in Laikipia is due to the grass. People in Isiolo and Samburu have migrated into Laikipia in search of pasture, and if you try look at it carefully, you will see that all the people fighting are only fighting where there enough grass for the cattle but someone is preventing the cows from grazing. Yes, there are other minor cases where people have different kinds of conflicts. I think if one looks at the conflicts, they are still related to the grass conflict in a way. Just look at the raids in Laikipia; no one had ever done the raids before until after the fighting with the Samburu at Il Ngwesi Lodge. So that is the cause. The grass is the cause of fighting with the people in Laikipia. I just think that for the people to come back together will be when the people come together for dialogue and accept the wrongs that they have done and then agree to move on together using the grass they have together. That is just one way. The other solution is if it rains throughout the whole of these areas until there are no more droughts because that will bring the people back to their homes.

### R10 - Mpus-kutuk ranger interview

Q: When did conservation start in this area? What are the advantages and disadvantages of conservation in this area?

I am not among the team of people or rangers that started conservation or our conservancy in this area. I came into conservation not long ago. It has been two years since I started working as a conservancy ranger. There are a lot of advantages that came with conservation. One, conservation has been a source of employment to the members of the community. It has brought employment home and both hardworking and lazy people in the community are benefiting from it. The other advantage that conservation has brought is holistic grazing. Since the beginning of conservation, people have been practicing holistic grazing where the community preserves some parts of their lands as grass banks for the dry seasons. That has kept us going for months even after the whole land is dry, unlike in the past where we just grazed everywhere and finished all grass at the same time, and we were left with no options.

Some of the disadvantages that came with conservation are, one, conservation brought about conflicts between the people working in the conservancies and the public outside the conservancy. See, for instance, the grass that we are trying to conserve; we are only doing that for the benefit of the people out there in the community, but they try to graze by force, even fighting with the rangers. They tell us that that grass is not for the wildlife, and we must graze on them because they belong to the cows. They fail to understand that they will still have the grass during the dry periods. The other thing, still on holistic grazing, is that it has brought about conflicts among different communities. For example, the conflict between the Samburu and the people of Laikipia; there is a good practice of holistic grazing in Laikipia, which attracted cattle from Samburu. After the resistance from the community in Laikipia preventing the cows from accessing the grass, it caused the fighting that is now being experienced in some parts of Laikipia.

The other disadvantage that conservation has brought to this area is a really hard time for the rangers. This is due to the raids that are happening in Laikipia; when the cows are brought to cross our conservancies, we are the ones to go and recover them. It becomes very hard to recover them because the warriors that go on the raids have got guns, and we

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do also have guns. This will always cause fighting between the rangers and the warriors, which sometimes causes deaths or injuries. Because we are the people from the same community, you may find that you have even killed your own brother or a close relative in the crossfire of bullets. The work to recover the stolen livestock used to be known to be work for the police, but since we received the guns, the police have withdrawn and leave that work for us. It is even creating a big gap between the community and the workers of the conservancy.

Q: Is conservation contributing to the conflicts in the conservancies here in Isiolo and in Laikipia?

First, you need to understand that it is not the conservancies alone that are causing the conflicts. I can say that the main source of conflicts is the drought. I say that because I have not seen people fighting in the conservancies over the grass when it is green on the land. Warriors don't go for others when the land is green. I would ask you this simple question, whose livestock are invading the ranches in Laikipia? Is it not the cows from all over? The cattle from Laikipia, Isiolo, and Samburu are now invading the ranches in Laikipia because it is a drought. There is no other place that is left with grass except for Laikipia ranches. That is why all the cause [is drought]. What about when it rains, do people always go to invade the ranches? No, because the grass and the rains take everyone back to their homes. No one will even be close to anyone else. The problem is therefore the droughts because people don't fight while it is green. Even here where we are, it is a conservancy. When it has rained and everywhere has grass, no one is allowed to graze here, and it will be against the grazing laws to graze here. If you are found grazing here when the other land has grass and everyone else is outside of this place, you will be fined if found grazing shoats or cows in the conservancy. The fine will be a whole goat taken away, and it will not be any goat, but a big castrated male goat that one treasures. It will just be slaughtered by the people in the community and you will not be able to do anything. That will always happen until no one dares to graze against the laws. In the conservancy, we do have different grazing zones. We have the normal grazing zones and we also have the buffer zone that is accessed last by the community. That way, we also consider the wild animals. When it is also dry in other areas, people can migrate to the areas with grass and request to graze. Our last grass, we grazed by the cattle from Maralal because it was dry in their areas, and there was grass here. That is the same case with the grass in Lekurruki conservancy; when it is dry here in Isiolo, we will go and have their grass. We allow people from other areas to graze in our land because we understand that they migrate to our land because of the drought problem that they are facing in their area, which has caused them to run away. You know grass is like a ready food, and when one is hungry, they just have it. Failure to do that and one can even die. People therefore fight for grass, saying that the grass belongs to the cows without even considering the consequences that one faced to leave that grass for the dry periods. At times, the warriors don't even fight; the people who fight are the conservancy men and the warriors who are looking after the livestock, trying to control the cattle. When it comes to the real fighting, it will be the rangers of the conservancy that is being invaded and the warriors who are looking after the cattle. When it rains, the warriors always have got no problem, and they migrate away to their homes.

In the past when there was nothing like the conservancies, there was nothing like the lodges. All these lodges that you can see around this place were all settlements for the communities, but they migrated away to make room for conservation. When it gets dry and there is no grass where the community migrated to, they will come back to these places and request grass, as they know every part of this land and all the places that the grass will last. It can cause a conflict if they can be told that they cannot graze in this area even when there are lodges and tourist camps. They know they have been grazing in these

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areas before, and they think that it should be the same even when the land is being used as a conservancy or a buffer zone for the lodge.

Q: Are there any threats to wildlife that you are facing in conservation in relation to the pastoralists or livestock?

For sure there are not, because the community just comes for grass. They don't disturb the wildlife in any way because they don't kill or even injure them. They are only looking for grass as they pass by to access areas with greener pastures. Cattle from other communities that access grass from other conservancies always follow the grazing rules in the community they migrate to. At some point when they migrate in large numbers, no one can control them, they just graze, and that way they will have disrupted all the grazing plans of the whole community.

### R11 - Oldonyiro ranger

Q: What is the history of conservation in Oldonyiro and the history of this place?

I was born and raised around this place, although we have been migrating from place to place out to look for pasture and water during the dry seasons. We always migrate to places like, for example, towards Wamba Hills, Maralal Hills, Isiolo most frequently, Laikipia, and one time towards Mount Kenya, where we lost a lot of livestock. During that drought of 2000, some of the people came back without livestock. Since then, we have never migrated back to Mount Kenya. The furthest we therefore migrate nowadays is only to Laikipia and back. We face many challenges during our migration. The biggest challenge nowadays is the tribal conflicts and clashes that are causing a lot of loss of life.

About conservation, I was one of the people who started conservation in this area. I have been working in the conservancy for about ten years now. I started the work when I was still a warrior, when I did not even have a single child. I can therefore say that conservation has brought a lot of advantages in this area. The one thing that we say is that the conservancy has brought back the grass for dry season grazing. Since conservation started, people started controlling the grazing in those areas where there is conservation during the rainy season, and when it gets dry, there will still be a lot of grass in those areas. It also gave a room at the conservancy to the community to manage themselves, and so it opened up opportunities for the community involved. You find that the board chair is one of the local men in the community and any other person in the community. The conservation work doesn't want to know if anyone is educated or not. Anyone can work in conservation. All the board members, the grazing committee, the manager, and the rangers in the conservancy are all from the local community members, whether one is educated or not. Anyone can therefore enjoy the fruits of conservation through working for them. It also does not restrict anyone in terms of age. Whether one is old or not, anyone can enjoy being part of the conservation.

When we first came in as the rangers of the conservancy, we did not have the fire arms that we have today. We only had the 'Rungus', the GPRSs, and the radio. While doing the patrols in the area, one could record the GPRS co-ordinates of anything that has happened and communicate with the NRT headquarters on what has happened; for example, you could find a poached elephant or any other animal. The work was also simple, if I may say, as we just loitered in the community trying to get information on how the community is staying. People were staying in a respectful manner, and there were no raids from the other Maa communities like there are today. There was also no invasion of other conservancies like what has been happening in the Il Ngwesi and Lekurruki conservancies in Laikipia. Even in the private ranches, there were no invasions. No one can tell what has gone wrong, but maybe [it's related to] the droughts that have become so frequent. It



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went on the same way until the government issued the firearms to the community rangers. After we were given the guns, our work became more than what we usually do. We started following the stolen livestock, trying to recover them, and not only from our community, but from all over. All the cows that came across this side of Isiolo, we were responsible for finding hard to recover them. These guns made us to be working for two positions, as government servants and for the community in the conservancy. We became responsible to both the government and also to the donors who provided the funds to employ the rangers. But I could generally say that we tried to become peace ambassadors, but the problem was these gun that we have and that those warriors who go for raids also have firearms. We end up fighting whenever we came across one another.

Q: How do you describe the rangers' work? Is it a very hard job compared to what you do now that you say you work both for the government and the community?

The rangers' work is just like any other work. I don't think I would say that it is very hard compared to any other work. I find that all the work is hard. Even the people in the offices sitting on the rotating chairs the whole day will still say they are tired from the work they have done, and you can see they are exhausted. I think we sometimes even go for days without any tough work or even without doing anything, except at times when there is extra work from somewhere else, for example the raids and so on. So, I even wonder if the people in the offices complain that their work is hard, I wonder then about the rangers having the heavy guns, bullets, the whole day with heavy jackets and boots and things like food and water sometimes. It is hard, yes, but we still find it doable. As well, we are always ready for the work, mostly now that we have the firearms, because when an enemy comes across, you either kill or get killed.

There are also other things that conservation has brought like the school bursaries and transport using the conservancy cars and also assisting the old members of the conservancy that are not able to provide for themselves. Sometimes the community gives them food, medicine, or even money just to support them. This is an added advantage, and that is why you have seen people resist their conservancy being destroyed. That is why you have heard that so many people have lost their lives in the conservancies. People are trying to defend what belongs to them and what provides for the food on their tables all the time. I think you have heard of the many warriors who lost their lives in the Il Ngwesi conservancy; it is not that they just want to kill people, but it is just because they want to defend their conservancy.

Q: Do you think that is the main cause of conflict between the Il Ngwesi and the Samburu, or what are other possible challenges that brought about the fighting?

I think the main cause of the conflict between the Il Ngwesi community and the Samburu is the frequent droughts. When the two communities began fighting one another, it was very dry, and there were so many cattle that had gone towards the Il Ngwesi in search of grass because there was no grass in the whole of northern Kenya. During the defense of the Il Ngwesi conservation area from the intruding community from Isiolo and Samburu, people fought. That fight that claimed many lives is often blamed as the cause of the main disagreement between the Il Ngwesi and the Samburu communities but I think the droughts are the main cause. There are other places where the communities fought with rangers during the dry seasons, but only due to droughts. The main reason why the conflict has not ended between the Il Ngwesi and the Samburu is that there are no lasting solutions that have been put in place. I think the main way to get a lasting solution is for the two communities to come together in dialogue, agree that the mistakes have happened, and find the solutions. There is nothing big that has happened that has never been seen, the first person that I know who died was in Sarara (Namunyak conservancy).

## Interviews conducted by David Barmes in Nanyuki

### D12: A former employee on Finafran ranch

The problem started in 2004, when they said that the land agreement between the British and Maasai was over – they were talking of period of 100 years – there were some problems at that time – a ranch called Loisaba experienced some problems of being invaded. From that time since 2004, it started invasion of grazing especially when it is dry – so the ranchers came up with the label illegal grazers – until now when it exploded now. There was no particularly tribe invading Loisaba. The communities get ideas from some NGOs. NGOs question the status quo on land – what benefit for the communities. So people are using historical land injustices to re-claim land. The word Laikipia is a Maa name, but Laikipia is divided between Masai, Samburu, and the Laikipia Masai, who are now very few. So the Samburu have told their people to populate the Maasai areas.

In the Mukogodo area it has been going on for a while. The Samburus never trusted the Laikipia Maasai. Among the two communities there is some grudge. The grudge seems to have started because of what you would call animal clustering between the two. Because the Samburus will come raid livestock from the Laikipia Maasai, so they go and try to reclaim it, but nowadays firearms are being used, it's no longer spears and bows and arrows. When one person is shot dead, things escalate. Also the Samburus who live in Kipsing, they often have conflict with the Il Ngwesi who try to defend themselves. Everybody now is trying to get firearms, they are all over now. Also with the issues about the land, politics is another influence, because maybe they will use a member of parliament to defend them. But the defending becomes tribal war.

Things started as of the year 2000 with firearms being introduced. Also I would add exposure to the outside world. Not everybody will stick to one point now. People are educated, they get ideas, they try to figure out their communities' problems. So exposure gets people asking questions about injustices in their communities. Those that are exposed get an understanding of human rights, and those who are not educated are being used – people tell them don't accept the situation and listen to what I'm saying. NGOs always oppose the government so they also influence by raising awareness on human rights. As people become more enlightened they start to question the status quo.

It's not only one politician involved – it is the majority of major politicians from the neighboring counties – because of they have cattle but no grazing, they will use the situation to get grazing for their cattle. They have a way with guns. Sometime back in the year 2006 and until 2010 when the Samburus and Pokots were heavily fighting each other it was well known who was selling the firearms. Young guys in Manyattas now demand firearms. And they want firearms that are resistant and good quality, heavier caliber. They get advice from people in army and police on which firearms are good. The ammunition is supplied from within. They have access to this.

A police man might go out on duty and say he has used 40 rounds, but actually only used 4 and then he can sell the rest. Also, when the British army goes on training out in the bush, the young morans come and shoot at the guards and scare them off (they are in a foreign country they know that if they shoot it will cause problems) so the morans are able to steal much ammunition. Once when there was heavy gun fire exchange in Finafran, I picked up the cartridges and traced them back to the British army using the code on the cartridge. They have a training field in Samburu near Archer's Post, so that is where these morans take advantage, they come in big numbers. This stealing has been happening since 2011. There was an incident of a British officer that shot morans, and it caused mayhem between the British and the

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Samburu community. Between the year 2000 and 2002 the Samburus were very heavily compensated for land mine explosions that were left on the training grounds. Since that time there have been many issues between the Samburu and the British. Then the Samburu wanted to be compensated for rape, but that didn't work, so now the land issue has come up. The word indigenous has caused some tensions.

My conclusion about land issues, it is important for the communities that call themselves pastoralists, that there is the Kenya meat factory (or something) that is just in name that it not even helping anyone at all. They should have come up with cattle buying quarters. They don't get good sales market. If Kenya meat commission can come up with a strategy of buying cattle at certain times of the year in certain areas. This would minimize the conflicts. And when we buy the meat we buy directly from the owners. Middle men cause trouble.

Transitioning to ranching would create problems with governance. Each clan is claiming boundaries. There should be a limited number of cattle, land is becoming scarce, the population is increasing. The whole conservancies issue is becoming very complicated. They also create conflict, so you have to bribe the rangers.

Back in 2015, some guys from Samburu were killed in Il Ngwesi, and the Samburus pledged that they would not stop fighting. With all these conservancies popping up, where are people going to graze?? The ranchers pay a lot of tax. The way the local ranchers try to address some problems without involving community administration is also a problem. The ranches that don't support any community projects are the ones that are most heavily invaded. An example of Laikipia Nature Conservancy: she'll go straight to whoever is in charge of the security docket – so instead of solving bottom up (from grassroots), she tries to solve it top down bringing the force down. Corruption. The ranchers often try to tackle problems at the higher level, not the grassroots, so communities get offended. One article asks why some ranchers employ people from certain communities. Samburu Buru is one example of a ranch that was heavily invaded. They guy who was running the place was actually taking cattle from the grazers and selling them – so a grudge had built there.

Of late, there is this Ogiki, a community that is living past Nakuru and are claiming to be the indigenous owners of the Mao forest. Recently they acquired something that allowed them to live in the forest and protect it. So their grievances were heard, and now others are saying why have our historical land injustices not been heard. Everywhere now in Kenya, energy companies are causing problems, coal, oil.

### D13: A leader of the Laikipia Wildlife Forum

Holistic Management is one of a series of tools. It is largely a land use tool, which uses livestock for rangelands rehabilitation. If the Samburu were better at this they wouldn't come here, but they haven't been successful and greater numbers are coming here. HM is quite easy to sell to pastoralists. It has been a bit of a magnet drawing in other people. It is a great approach to land management

The pastoralist tradition has always been centered on negotiating access – there is a traditional aspect to be addressed here with growing populations and livestock numbers, the system is beginning to breakdown – there is a breakdown in pastoralist tradition towards private ranching

There are guns everywhere. There are wars in surrounding countries, and so the traditional interaction of conflict is aggravated by weapons. There is a sort of gang mentality

Overwhelming issue for Mukogodo is you overlay the history with these three new institutions:

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- 1960s – Group Ranch was introduced
- Community Forest Association given roles and responsibilities of managing the forest without being given any rights. And then you have user groups (very specialized interest groups) wanting to operate under all these different rules. This confusion makes Mukogodo very susceptible to people coming in

Community land act will force [?] to re-register – private land conservancies taking an interest in neighboring lands – NRT have moved into landscape with new model – they can give you identity, security, and organization – help use the model to drive economic growth based on tourism and livestock, but they haven't yet been able to help communities grow grass and raise livestock – creating conservancies hasn't alleviated land pressures

3 perspectives on politics of pastoralism:

1. Many armed forces people are pastoralists – so the armed forces people invest their army gains in livestock which they graze for free – cattle barons – keeping vast herds on land they don't have to own with minimal inputs – these wealthy pastoralists are abusing the system – so let's get these lands registered
2. Secondly, FAO is starting another project, helping develop improved land management and enterprise development in Mukogodo (Laikipia more broadly) – only way to really resolve is to give these Group Ranches the mandate to establish how they form rules and how they keep out others – continued support on achieving this – negotiating access needs to be secured under the law
3. Borana has started a scheme with Il Ngwesi to improve livestock management – fattening and trading

We've just formed a consortium to address some issues in surrounding communities – whole effort is focused on next CIDP

What alternative livelihood system are you offering to people in this area – is we get water then you can have all sorts of farming.