

Towards Peace and Sustainable Development in the North Rift Valley Region of Kenya

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Abstract

North Rift region is found the larger northern Kenya region. Most of the region is dry and is a home to pastoralist communities like the Pokot, Turkana and the Marakwet. Since the colonial era, the region has been marginalized by the successive governments. In fact, for the period that the British colonialists ruled Kenya, the northern frontier was closed to the general public. Pastoralists who live in this region depend mainly on scarce natural resources like pasture, water, natural vegetation and livestock. As such, there is pressure among the communities in terms of sharing thus leading to wars over boundaries, traditional migratory routes, and traditional grazing grounds. Northern Rift also has a very long boundary line with Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia-countries that have at one time or another been affected by internal strife in the last thirty years leading to proliferation of small arms into the region. The sub counties in the North Rift have been marginalized for a long time hence illiteracy rates are very high and transport and communication is very poor. Since no meaningful investment has been put in place, there are high rates of unemployment. The pastoralists are forced by circumstances to lead sedentary lives hence their livelihoods and their fragile environment have deteriorated greatly. It is against this background that this study aimed at establishing ways of sustaining peace and development in the North Rift region. The study adopted the use of primary and secondary data collection. Primary data collection methods included survey questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and participatory observation. The purposive sampling method was employed in determining key informant interview respondents and focus group discussion participants. However, for key informants, there was also a snow-balling sampling approach. In terms of analysis, this exercise incorporated elements of the Theory of Change-based evaluation approach. The evaluation exercise integrated conflict sensitive methodologies in the survey and analysis of findings. Hence, the inquiry included questions aimed at understanding contextual dynamics, as well as sets of questions seeking to measure the extent of realization of project goals. Since peace building programs are not insulated from conflict blindness, conflict sensitive lens specifically the Do No Harm/Local Capacities for Peace framework was used to examine the impact of the intervention on the conflict dynamics. The SPSS software was used to analyze quantitative data. It was established that conflict mitigating and peace initiatives that have been employed in the North Rift inter alia tracking and arresting of perpetrators of conflicts by the government, creation and activation of community security and vigilante groups, strengthening of elders courts to arbitrate over conflict cases, recovery of stolen animals, introduction of alternative livelihoods, use of traditional early warning systems, inter community peace dialogues, peace committees, and inter community common grazing patterns. Communities have collaborated with NGOs for peace initiatives, relief services and long term development initiatives aimed at sustainable alternative livelihoods. World Vision Kenya has been at the forefront in this regard through a five year peace project, meant to bring peace among the warring communities.

Key words: Pastoralists, early warning systems, peace building, do no harm, sustainable development

Background

North Rift region covers the larger northern Kenya region. Most of this region is largely arid and is home to pastoralist communities among them the Pokot, Turkana, Marakwet, Tugen, Samburu and Ilchamus. In the immediate post-independent Kenya, the government's policy of spurring development in the arable southern region

– by allocating resources to high potential areas that comprised less than 20% of the country – and to plough returns to arid and semi-arid areas naturally led to the marginalization of northern Kenya.¹

The pastoralists living in this region depend mainly on scarce natural resources including pasture, water, natural vegetation and livestock. Given this scenario, there is pressure among the communities in regards to access and control of resources. This eventually leads to disputes over water points, boundaries, traditional livestock migratory routes and grazing grounds, and economic centres like the Turkwell Gorge power plant. North Rift also has a very long and porous borderline with Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia – countries that have at one time or another been affected by internal strife in the last thirty years feeding the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and contributing to insecurity in the region.

The sub counties in the North Rift are characterized by high illiteracy rates, poor infrastructure (lack of transport and communication networks), and the absence of meaningful investment leading to high rates of unemployment especially among the youths. The communities have also often been faced with natural disasters including flooding and drought that periodically contribute to forced migration patterns, destruction of people's wealth (including livestock and property) as well as loss of lives. As a result of these disasters, the pastoralists are forced by circumstances to lead sedentary lives, with their livelihoods and their fragile environment deteriorating greatly².

Conflict mitigation and peace initiatives that have been employed in the North Rift include tracking and arresting of perpetrators by the government, community policing, strengthening of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms through the elders courts, recovery of stolen animals, introduction of alternative livelihoods to reformed warriors, intensifying patrols by community youths and police reservists, use of traditional early warning systems, inter community peace dialogues, creation and strengthening of Sub county Peace Committees (SPCs), establishment of intercommunity pasture management committees, and integration of peace in sports and cultural festivals, among others.³

Communities collaborate with NGOs and provincial administration for peace interventions, relief/humanitarian services and long term development initiatives aimed at sustainable livelihoods and peace. Communities feel that this region has many peace building organizations however the conflicts still persist⁴. World Vision Kenya has been at the forefront of peace and development interventions through different peace projects including the cross border POKATUSA (Pokot/Karamoja/Turkana/Sabiny), MAPOTU (Marakwet/Pokot/Turkana) and currently NORIPP (North Rift Integrated Peace Project), which have over the years targeted Turkana, Ilchamus, Tugen, and Pokot communities in the North Rift.

World Vision Kenya has been implementing the North Rift Peace Project (NORIPP) since January 2009. This intervention's goal is to realise enhanced peaceful co-existence of warring communities in North Rift Valley of Kenya – specifically in Marigat, East Pokot, Turkana East, Turkana South, and Central Pokot sub counties. To achieve this, NORIPP employed strategies of civic education for civic action, advocacy, and livelihood support and diversification especially among reformed warriors.

Objectives of the Study

The projected outcomes of the study included:

- 1) Enhanced peaceful mindset, knowledge, and practice of conflict transformation among former combatants, peace committees and other stakeholders.
- 2) Enhanced engagement of community members with decision makers on policy issues regarding socio economic, legal and livelihood issues in the region.
- 3) Effective project management enhanced.

¹ Republic of Kenya, 1965: 'African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya', Page 46

² World Vision Kenya, *POKATUSA Peace Building Project Report of 2004 annual Report 2008*.

³ World Vision Kenya, *POKATUSA Peace Building Project Report of 2004*.

⁴ Comment from one of the participants in the stakeholder's validation of the evaluation report in Eldoret on 26th January 2012

Causes of Insecurity

The main sources of this insecurity and conflict are livestock raids, land and boundaries and pasture and water as shown in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Causes of Insecurity

Sources of Conflict	Percent
Livestock raids	33.3%
Land and boundaries	31.90%
Pasture and water scarcity	25.40%
Negative ethnicity	9.40%
Total	100.00%

Source: Evaluation Household Survey 2011.

The key driving factors of conflict in this context are therefore prioritized as cattle raids, land ownership and boundary disputes and struggle for control and access to pasture and water leading to interethnic revenge/retaliatory attacks. SALW proliferation also plays a major role in complicating and prolonging the conflicts⁵. The structural factors of conflict can be looked at from identity, geo-political, economic and social dimensions. In the recent years, a trend of expansionism is strongly perceived to be promoted by ethnic groups whose agenda is alleged to be the taking over of other communities' ancestral land through displacements; this ideology is worsened by the introduction of devolved governance structures and the creation of new administrative borders (whose boundaries are perceived to have been unduly influenced by the Politicians) as per the new Constitution of Kenya, promulgated in August 2010.

Methodology

The study adopted the use of primary and secondary data collection. For secondary data, the baseline survey study together with other program documents including the project proposal, the log frame diagram, activity reports, mid-term reviews, and progress reports among others were analyzed.

Primary data collection methods included survey questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and participatory observation. Emic (insider) and etic (outsider) perspectives were sought during the evaluation. For the etic perspectives, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted targeting local village elders; women; youth; District Peace Committee members, former combatants; religious leaders; local government officers and credible NGOs and CBOs already working on peace building and reconciliation in the targeted communities. Emic views were sought from World Vision staff in the five IPAs.

The purposive sampling method was employed in determining key informant interview respondents and focus group discussion participants. However, for key informants, there was also a snow-balling sampling approach.

In terms of analysis, this exercise incorporated elements of the Theory of Change-based evaluation approach. This approach takes into account the short term outcomes based on the project reviews to show that changes have occurred and helps to measure parts of the assumed causal chain and thus, anticipate some clues as to what is going well in the program and what is not going so well. Secondly, it helps to explain why and how a program has been able to have the effect that it proposed. The evaluation exercise integrated conflict sensitive methodologies in the survey and analysis of findings. Hence, the inquiry included questions aimed at understanding contextual dynamics, as well as sets of questions seeking to measure the extent of realization of project goals.

⁵ World Vision Survey Report, 2004

Since peace building programs are not insulated from conflict blindness, conflict sensitive lens specifically the Do No Harm/Local Capacities for Peace framework was used to examine the impact of the intervention on the conflict dynamics. Sex-disaggregated data and attention to gender relations was incorporated in all relevant areas and aspects during the exercise. The roles of women, youth, elders and other groups in promoting peace and/or destructive conflicts were examined.

The SPSS software was used to analyze quantitative data, and tabulations from these used in examining the realization of project indicators. Where indicators were of a qualitative nature, information derived from FGDs and key informant interviews was used in the analysis.

Findings

North Rift – specifically areas of NORIPP’s focus – remains vulnerable to cattle raids, boundary conflicts and highway banditry. Conflicts in North Rift are inter-connected and inter-meshed – the same communities can be locked in different conflicts in different areas. For instance, the Turkana in Turkana East district are in conflict with the Pokot mainly from East Pokot sub county. But it is the same case for both groups in Turkana South and Central Pokot sub counties. Further, aided by their pastoralist lifestyles, members of these communities can be engaged in conflicts in sites far away from their homelands – one reason for mutual accusations of expansionism (as groups fight for territory and resources).

While quantitative data shows that 54.2% of all respondents felt inter-group relations were peaceful and cooperative (see table below), this finding is contradicted by the incidence of recent raids and boundary conflicts in places like Turkana South and Turkana East.

Table 1.2 Description of inter-group relations

Respondent's Sub County	Description of inter-group relations			
	Peaceful and cooperative	Separate and Isolated	Mistrustful and conflicting	Total
Turkana East	10.2%	4.3%	4.9%	19.45
Turkana South	7.0%	11.0%	4.1%	22.1%
Central Pokot	18.4%	1.0%	8%	20.2%
East Pokot	10.2%	5.5%	3.3%	19.0%
Marigat	8.4%	5.9%	5.1%	19.4%
Total	54.2%	27.6%	18.2%	100.00%

Source: Evaluation Household Survey 2011.

Livestock Raids

Key informants interviewed observed that the months of July and August were most insecure in Turkana South and Turkana East, much as there have been frequent violent incidents through most of the last half of 2011. Household responses confirm the present threat of livestock raids, with 55.3% of all those surveyed holding that the trend has increased.

Table 1.3 Frequency of livestock raids

Livestock raids

Sub County	Increased	Same	Reduced	Total
East Pokot	74.50%	6.90%	18.60%	100.00%
Turkana East	68.00%	7.00%	25.00%	100.00%
Central Pokot	56.40%	34.70%	8.90%	100.00%
Turkana South	50.40%	8.80%	40.70%	100.00%
Marigat	26.00%	17.70%	56.30%	100.00%
Total	55.30%	14.80%	29.90%	100.00%

Source: Evaluation Household Survey 2011.

However, it is only household respondents in Marigat that held contrary view – 56.3% of respondents in Marigat held that livestock raids have reduced. This could be explained by the fact that a significant proportion of residents in Marigat have diversified their livelihoods, and hence livestock raids are not a priority concern. But in all of the other areas (East Pokot, Turkana East, Central Pokot and Turkana South) most of the respondents felt that the trend had increased.

Border Disputes

“Sometimes raids are executed to implicitly claim territory and delimit boundaries,” observed a key informant.⁶ The creation of counties under the new constitution has triggered the escalation of boundary disputes. The impending review of boundaries by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) could worsen the situation.

There has been an increase in tensions that have sometimes turned violent, in boundary-related disputes between the Pokot and Turkana. In the case of Turkana East and East Pokot, such disputes have contributed to deployment of two chiefs – a Pokot and a Turkana – in Silale with each serving their respective community.

There is even conflict over the naming of areas, since this is equally a pointer to which community claims the area. For example, Lochakula is also called Akula, or Akulal. Lochakula, Napeitom, Silale and Kapedo are hotspots of boundary disputes between the Turkana and Pokot.

Besides fighting to control contested areas, rival communities have new settlements in these places – a move aimed at justifying their claims for the territories. The implication of such moves is that should boundaries be demarcated there will be risks of displacements of households perceived to have encroached on this land.

These disputes have affected livelihoods in hotspot areas. “Communities cannot rear livestock in Napeitom,” observed one respondent.⁷ The same sentiments were echoed in Mukutani, the Ilchamus feel that the cattle raids were just to cover up the real intention of their forcibly displacement and relocation to allow the Pokot expand their territory. The dispute over the actual border still rages on.

Small Arms Problem

The prevalence of guns and ammunition in the North Rift is blamed for the incidence and lethality of violent conflict. Raids are conducted with the aid of guns, and some of these involve gun fights that last an hour or more. The usage of guns and accessibility of ammunition exposes the weak security architecture necessary for curbing such proliferation and use.

⁶ Key informant interview on 6th December 2011 in Lokori

⁷ Key informant interview on 6th December 2011 in Lokori

As a matter of fact, the ease in procuring ammo determines a group's military capabilities over a rival group. "The Turkana currently appear more vulnerable to attacks from the Pokot due to a shortage of ammunition on the Turkana side," explained one respondent.⁸

The arms problem also manifests as a gun culture issue – communities' belief in gun ownership to protect their lives and livelihoods. But ironically, it is ownership that feeds gun violence. Over-exposure to the gun has militarised the communities to some extent. For instance, raiders have grown so experienced in handling the gun to the point that they are reputed for their precision in shooting and organisation during raids. "The raiders organise themselves like an army – and organise waves of attacks that eventually weaken the targeted community," said a key informant.⁹

Even the introduction of the Kenya Police Reserves (KPRs), in the government effort to enhance local security and dissuade communities from illegal gun ownership, has inadvertently contributed to the very insecurity they needed to address. KPRs have sometimes contributed to revenge raids when their own communities are attacked.

Politicisation of Identity and Fragmentation

The intense identity-based conflicts in the North Rift are accelerated by politics. Political goals of controlling territory, dominance, and resource governance have underpinned conflicts among the Pokot, Turkana and other groups.

Multiple sources were consistent in reiterating the suspicion that political leaders are among those involved in conflict – by inciting and facilitating access to arms and ammunition for communities (especially warriors). That boundary and resource management issues are also political in nature re-emphasises this link. The forthcoming elections and the introduction of devolved structures under the new constitution have intensified identity-based competitions.

With identity consciousness, there is a lower level of fragmentation along clan lines that is suspected to be occurring in Turkana East and Turkana South (especially since 2011). These sub-ethnic divisions are believed to be possibly feeding new forms of clan-based raids (with perpetrators following paths used by rival communities, in order to mislead victims about who was behind the raid). This is also partly because raiding the Pokot has become difficult and costly.¹⁰

Resource-Based Conflicts

Past conflicts over territory, water and pasture constitute part of the resource conflicts experienced in the North Rift. However, there are more current and more lethal conflicts over resource control and governance that will determine the future stability of post-2012 county governments in the North Rift.

There is a current conflict over whose territory the Turkwell geo-thermal power generation plant falls in. The Turkana and Pokot have varying claims, with the latter explaining that there exist delimiting beacons on the hills beyond the Turkwell hills, while the Pokot dispute this, instead claiming more land that extends in to areas occupied by the Turkana. This disputed area, referred to as the Turkwell corridor, covers the Lochakula-Kainuk-Juluk-Naro Moru stretch.

Beyond interest in the potential gain – in employment and revenue collections – that might accrue to new county governments controlling power generation facilities, the North Rift has locations with the potential of having profitable gold mines and oil. The prospecting for oil, on-going small-scale gold mining and the creation of counties are converging to feed a stronger need to control disputed territories.

Implications of the Findings

Key informant interviews and focus group discussions underscored the fact that presently raids are much smaller – planned by few people (either warriors acting on their own, or with the blessing of diviners) or criminals in the

⁸ Key informant interview in on 26th December in Lodwar

⁹ Key informant interview on 6th December 2011 in Lokori

¹⁰ Key informant interviews in Lokori and Lokichar on 6th – 7th December 2011

communities. As a result, by analysing the respondents' discourse, there is a clear distinction between what is referred to as "mass raids" or "cattle-rustling" and "minor raids" or "isolated cattle theft."

At the moment, community members feel there is a higher incidence of isolated cattle theft, while bigger raids are ebbing.¹¹ This means that raids are decreasing in severity and involve fewer raiders, "but they are just as frequent."¹²

The readily available market for stolen livestock has made the raids and theft lucrative. Some criminal elements are said to be perfecting the art as a source of livelihood. The perception that the Ilchamus IDPs are engaged in livestock theft from the host communities (also Ilchamus) who welcomed them has led to the push by some community members to have the IDPs relocated if not resettled back to their homes. Such an attempt was made to return IDPs to Tangelbei division but the repatriated families came back to Marigat town in less than two days rendering the efforts futile.¹³

NORIPP has therefore made some gains in contributing towards curbing raids through peace ventures). However, one observation that should inform future post-mediation initiatives was that sometimes raids are conducted when there is a pervading feeling of calm resulting from local peace pacts. In this eventuality, there is a strong incentive for counter-raids.

Boundary disputes are viewed to be worse than before. It is thought they will further degenerate in this election year, due to the heightened politicking.¹⁴ Some raids are currently serving the purpose of displacing groups from disputed territory. Similarly, new settlements in some places are meant to stamp groups' claims for land as well as create a buffer for community security. Isolated incidents of boundary-related gun-violence have resulted in several deaths and injuries.¹⁵

The magnitude of border disputes – in terms of the passions it elicits; range of actors it attracts, including politicians and a multitude of community representatives; and the historicity of the problem – has implications on the nature of interventions to address it. NORIPP's approach, much as it efficiently engages relevant government departments (e.g. provincial administration and police), community representatives and civil society, does not adequately engage relevant strategies and actors to address the issue.

The implication for NORIPP is that engaging at the national level and bridging this with local initiatives would emphasise the urgency of permanently addressing boundary delimitation issues. To this end, relevant institutions, such as the Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission (IEBC) and relevant political actors would need to be brought on board. The efforts being undertaken by the Nairobi office to engage the IEBC needs to be seen to be translated on the ground.

To realise the project goal of enhanced peaceful coexistence, there is a three-pronged strategy:

First, NORIPP targeted stakeholders including formers combatants and peace committees, among others, to enhance a "peaceful mindset, knowledge and practice of conflict transformation." There have been several outcomes of these initiatives.

- 1) Strengthened local capacities for peace. The existing elders committees, youth groups, women groups, and local civil society actors are better inter-linked in the North Rift, and this has enhanced conflict early warning, and some level of a coordinated response to conflict. This phenomenon is reinforced by some respondents in Marigat IPA (the GSU Camp) who applauded the efforts by anonymous community tips and warnings of intended raids by different actors in the area, which has led to several aborted raids and/or recovery of stolen animals.¹⁶
- 2) Improved appreciation for the need for an all-inclusive, multi-stakeholder approach to peace-building. It is observable that various actors and community members are aware of the importance of the youth, women, elders, opinion leaders and state and non-state actors in conflict transformation initiatives.

¹¹ Key informant interviews in Lokori, Lokichar, Kainuk and Marich, between 6th and 10th December 2011

¹² Key informant interview in Lokori on 6th December 2011

¹³ Key informant interview in Marigat and Kolowa on 7th and 14th December 2011

¹⁴ Key informant interviews in Lokori and Kainuk between 6th and 10th December 2011

¹⁵ Around the 7th or 8th December there were night shootings in the disputed Turkwell area, leading to the death of one and injury of one.

¹⁶ Key informant interviews on 7th December 2011

- 3) Increased acceptance of the need for coexistence and rising rejection of the culture of violence. Dissuading warriors from raids through supporting them in livelihood diversification has helped realise this change. Also, dialogue forums, sports tournaments and celebration of cultural diversity (e.g. through music festivals), has nurtured some level of tolerance.

Secondly, NORIPP had an advocacy strategy that aimed at enhancing communities' engagement with their political leaders. In order to achieve this, several activities were realised:

- 1) In 2011, World Vision stated that 200 community-based organisations (CBOs) had gained the capacity to engage with policy makers, while children in East Africa were facilitated to come up with the "Lukenya Peace Declaration."
- 2) In 2010, NORIPP supported the special category in Kenya National Music Festivals with the theme "Dwelling together in peace, unity and liberty" which saw schools from the region taking part in the music and promoting peace messages at the same time.
- 3) Between 2009 and 2011, NORIPP supported the commemoration of the International Peace Day, held peace forums that involved state and non-state actors (specifically civil society), and strengthened networking with major advocacy programs, such as the Action Aid-led Karamoja Peace and Development Cluster
- 4) A media strategy that included radio outreach programs and dissemination of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials was implemented in the project period. This strategy also included the distribution of radios to sets of reformed warriors to be listening to the sponsored peace programmes and giving feedback as well as raising issues for discussions that they feel is important to the harmonious cohabitation of the communities.

At the community level, advocacy initiatives have resulted in greater awareness on the ills of illicit arms possession and intensified action-oriented interactions among communities, law enforcers, civil society and political leaders. At the national level, World Vision Kenya has engaged in policy dialogue forums aimed at enriching the Kenya government's peace policy. This has especially been fruitful at the Office of the President's National Steering Committee on Peace building and Conflict Management (NSC), where World Vision is represented as part of the government-civil society partnership. The peace policy is currently being finalised and aims at providing a framework for coordination of peace building in the country.

Thirdly, NORIPP sought to enhance project management through enhancing staff's capacity to handle programmatic and financial aspects of the peace project, specialised staff training in thematic areas of focus for NORIPP (advocacy and peace building) and monitoring and evaluation.

This strategy dealt with the silo approach and brought to live the reality of the integrated approach to peace building. In discussions with staff from different departments including finance, HIV/AIDS, Education, Girl child and Alternative rites of passage, food for asset among others, it was clear that the conflict component was well understood and special support was sort from the Peace Coordinators to help diffuse program related tensions with the communities.

Thus, the mutation of conflict to different forms (e.g. potential rise in intra-ethnic conflict, boundary disputes, resource-based conflicts and frequency of smaller scale raids) provides a good basis to examine the adaptability of the project, and tactfulness of its staff in continually seeking to realise the core aims of the intervention. It is useful to emphasise the need to implement activities as a continual process, rather than as isolated events. Part of this discourse shall be more deeply explored in the next chapter.

Lastly, when asked to state the kind of changes NORIPP had brought about in the region, households had positive responses. 24% observed that more youth are involved in peace activities; 23.2% stated that there had been increased co-existence; while 18.9% cited reformation of many warriors. Also, 18% acknowledged training of DPCs and community members and 15.9% talked of less cattle raids.

Overall, local actors interviewed – including DPC members, provincial administration and members of civil society – demonstrated keen interest in sustaining peace-building efforts in the North Rift. Thus, this underscores the need to further strengthen the local peace infrastructure, but at the same time including other critical actors (e.g. politicians)

in order to guarantee more gains. The dynamism of conflict in North Rift calls for adaptability of peace actors to consistently update the conflict analysis and generate new solutions to emerging challenges.

Despite the many peace initiatives, there is general pessimism in respondents' views on progress made towards coexistence in several aspects (in the past three years). Hence, while on one hand it is widely acknowledged that there are many peace initiatives, on the other, it is still felt that realisation of co-existence is some distance away. Qualitative information is thus useful in helping to systematically examine progress made.

Peaceful Mindset, Knowledge and Practice

Broadly, the components of this pillar of the intervention included capacity building for youth, CBOs, FBOs, DPCs, women forums, and elders' forums, Youth sensitization and engagement through sports and cultural activities. It also included dialogue forums and peace awareness and providing ex-combatants with alternatives to violence

Capacity Building

NORIPP focused on enhancing peace literacy and skills development in peace building among the youth, faith-based organisations (FBOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), DPCs, women forums and elders' forums. In this way, World Vision balanced between cooperating with the government and working directly with local civil society actors and the community.

NORIPP has worked to build the capacities of peace committees, and has also facilitated some of their activities. There is demonstrable peace literacy among members of peace committees, and this has contributed to the existence of local peace infrastructure that is a convergence point of government, civil society organisations and the community. However, the persistence of conflict despite these local initiatives is feeding disillusionment among some DPC members. "We thought implementing joint peace initiatives would bring peace, but mistrust between the rival groups in this area persists," observed a DPC official.¹⁷

NORIPP's work with community leaders, such as kraal leaders, is one innovative approach to enhancing peace at the household level. Through this approach, the capacity for early warning is enhanced. Also, considering the elders' and women's proximity to communities/households, local peace building, as well as community sensitization on peace is more effective.

Youth Sensitization and Dialogue Forums

NORIPP has raised awareness on peace through use of inter-community sports tournaments and cultural activities. This was informed by the connecting power of sports and cultural celebrations. The strong point of this approach was in increasing inter-group contact and interaction. For so long as such contact was achieved and it was peaceful, there was a general confidence about the effectiveness of such events.

Alternatives to Conflict

One of NORIPP's strongest components is their engagement with ex-combatants to provide them alternatives to violence. Alternative livelihood programmes were initiated and actually benefited the community members. Warriors who shunned violence were assisted to engage in income generating activities (IGAs), which included engagement in livestock trade, agricultural activities for household and for sale and development of small business enterprises.

Advocacy

The advocacy strategy entailed several approaches namely building the capacity of community members and civil society actors in peace advocacy, arts-based peace building through support for music festivals and theatre. It also involved civic education, peace conferences and outreach and awareness raising through media (radio, newsletters and other IEC materials)

¹⁷ Key informant interview in Lokichar on 7th December 2011

A lot of advocacy related work has entailed capacity building, participation in thematic forums (e.g. international day of peace and international women's day) and facilitation of civil society actors to engage with political leaders and government. Elements of NORIPP's media strategy have been effective bases for advocating for solutions to the region's security problems. For instance, their strategic engagement with the media has helped ensure continued focus on the region. In recent press coverage of a raid on 14th December 2011 in Emeyan, the Nation Media Group relied on communication from World Vision staff.

Conclusion and Recommendations

NORIPP has helped to introduce the alternative livelihoods component through which reformed warriors were supported to develop income generating activities. Dialogical approaches (e.g. dialogue forums and advocacy) were implemented. The project also spread to unreached areas (at the grassroots level) and local capacities for peace (peace committees, elders' committees, CBOs, etc) were further improved. However, the persistence of conflict in the North Rift, in part due to its cyclical nature and mutation of conflict but also because of unaddressed structural and proximate causes of conflict poses a challenge worth surmounting.

It is necessary for World Vision to programmatically sharpen their peace intervention for greater impact.

Some recommendations of a programmatic dimension were suggested First and foremost, World Vision is already involved in supporting the formation of peace clubs in selected schools and it is with this in mind that schools be used as entry points to promote coexistence and the culture of peace hence the need to empower youth and strengthen peace clubs in schools. Also, there is the need to strongly advocate for peaceful mindset among communities and involve the provincial administration much more than has been done. The sentiments from the respective persons interviewed showed that there is need for more transparent communication and engagement of the administration in a structured manner. Alternative livelihood programmes and staffing should be gender sensitive. We observed that the peace coordinators on the ground are mainly males. In fact, the projects should be group based as opposed to being individual based.

Further, sport and cultural events should be held annually with proper coordination and organization.

Besides, the political class need to be engaged in working for change. They appear to be an impediment to peace initiatives. The peace committees should be reviewed in terms of membership and the role of elders in the peace initiative should be reviewed since they are often viewed as partisan.

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