Human Security Assessment in Kenya

The Case of Isiolo, Lakipia, Nandi and Elgeyo Marakwet Counties (Note 1)

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Abstract

While human security concerns are critical in sub-Saharan Africa, initiatives to incorporate a human security orientation in development policies and planning are still rare. A human security approach to development requires the identification and integration of the needs of the vulnerable groups into development strategies of a country. A human security assessment is an effective tool for identifying threats to sustainable development and the factors that cause vulnerability of communities due to their geographic, demographic, and socio-cultural differences, and variations in the nature of institutions for development in their communities. This study presents the findings of a human security assessment conducted in four counties (Isiolo, Laikipia, Elgeyo Marakwet and Nandi) of Kenya. The assessment focuses on human security concerns arising from poverty, environmental degradation, political and human conflicts, health related problems, among others. Following an assessment and analysis of the human security threats in each of these counties, the study proposes intervention strategies that would reduce vulnerability and enhance human security among marginalized and disadvantaged groups in the target counties.

Keywords: development policy, human security, Kenya, sub-Saharan Africa

1. Introduction

The concept of human security is gaining traction due to the growing and unconventional security challenges in the world today. In the current global order, not only do old development challenges persist, but also new ones have emerged. Problems such as terrorism, ethnic conflicts and post-conflict stagnation, pollution, climate change, human & drug trafficking, transnational crime, Ebola and HIV/AIDS, inequality between and within nation states are increasingly becoming rampant. These challenges call for a fresh, comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approach that would address emerging threats to human development.

The human security concept is comprehensive and looks at ways of intervening to protect and safeguard human lives. It refers to actions that put people first and provides them with a sense of security in their homes, at their jobs, and in their communities. It encompasses the idea of liberty, specifically in its three pillars: "freedom from fear" (human rights) and "freedom from want" (basic human needs) and freedom to "live in dignity". The freedom from fear component focuses on protecting individuals from violent conflicts and from denial of civil liberties. It assures freedom of expression and belief. The freedom from want factor emphasizes satisfying people's basic needs, food, shelter and clothing. The freedom to live in dignity underscores the right of individuals and communities to a decent human life and greater commitment to justice and peace.

Human security is founded on the fundamental principle that violence, poverty and inequality are inseparable when it comes to explaining and addressing the root problem of insecurity, whether social or economic. Inequality is caused by the imbalanced economic progress and deprivation (Kumssa, Jones, & Williams, 2010). The threat to human security, especially in developing countries, is poverty, disease, and armed violence—what Amartya Sen (2003) has called the dark side of development. Human security covers both conflict and the

development aspects of peace and sustainable development. In this regard, the implementation of the human security agenda means offering people physical, economic, social and environment security in their homes, at their jobs and in their communities. Unfortunately, policymakers and planners can too easily lose sight of human security in their deliberations. Thus, while human security concerns are critical in Africa, initiatives to incorporate a human security orientation in development policies and strategies are still few (Kumssa, Jones, & Williams, 2010).

The main human security concerns include the protection of communities living in abject poverty, violent conflict; addressing the needs and rights of people on the move, environment related threats, diseases such as HIV/AIDS and Ebola, and post-conflict reconstruction. This institutional renovation includes ensuring socio-economic and environmental security and improving health conditions, in addition to developing the knowledge, skills, and values needed for human security. The principal aim is to create a global and local alliance that will give human security the highest priority in the development agenda.

The main objective of this paper is to investigate the various types of human security threats that affect individuals and communities who live in the four counties (Isiolo, Lakipia, Nandi and Elgeyo Markawet) of Kenya as shown in Figure 1. Following the human security assessment, the paper proposes intervention strategies for reducing vulnerability and increasing the human security of communities affected by various socioeconomic, political and environmental threats. This paper will fill the knowledge gap in the very important field and literature on human security issues and intervention strategies for addressing human security threats in Kenya that could be replicated in other African countries. Through the identification and discussion of various human security threats, this paper addresses the three pillars of human security: freedom from fear (conflict); freedom from want (creation of sustainable livelihoods) and freedom to live in dignity.
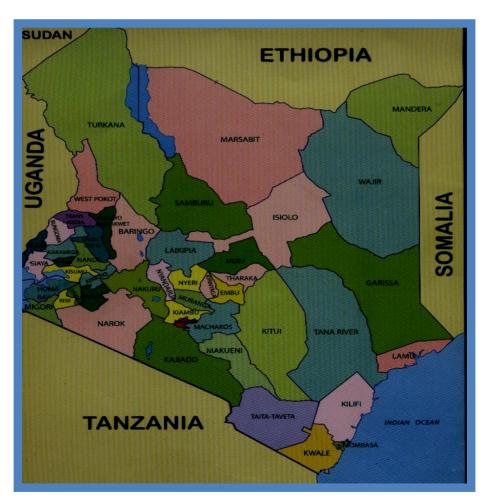

Figure 1. The 47 counties of Kenya

Source: http://gabriellubale.com/an-introduction-to-the-county-governments-of-kenya

1.1 Conceptualizing Human Security

The concept of human security is still evolving, and there is no universally agreed definition of the term. Different scholars, policymakers and academicians have defined the term differently; as a new theory or concept, as a starting point for analysis, a world view, a political agenda, or as a policy framework (Tadjbakhsh, 2005). Although there is no agreement on the exact definition of the concept, there is consensus among the proponents of this approach that attention should be shifted from a state-centred to a people-centred approach to security (Tadjbakhsh, 2005).

The Commission on Human Security (CHS), in its final report, *Human Security Now*, defines human security as a strategy:

"To protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhances human freedoms and human fulfilment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms, freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity" (CHS, 2003, p. 4).

According to the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, human security:

"Encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care, ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her potential. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. Freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of future generation to inherit a healthy natural environment—these are the interrelated building blocks of human and therefore national security" (Annan, 2000, p. 1).

Promoting human security entails the ability to withstand the very threats to which the former Secretary General as well as CHS so forcefully draw attention to so as to achieve sustainable peace and development through multi-dimensional strategies. As mentioned above, the concept of human security is still evolving, and there is still discussion among scholars and policymakers as to what precisely the concept means and what it includes. It was the United Nations Development Program (Note 2) (UNDP, 1994) which for the first time, gave a holistic definition of the concept and articulated its essential elements. According to this Report, human security encompasses economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security.

• *Economic security*: assures basic income; access to employment and resources.

• *Food security*: physical and economic access to food for all people at all times. Hundreds of millions of people in the world remain hungry either through local unavailability of food or, more often, through lack of entitlements or resources to purchase food.

• *Health security*: access to medical treatment and improved health conditions. Poor people in general have less health security, and in developing countries the major causes of death are infectious and parasitic diseases.

• *Environmental security*: living in a healthy physical environment that is spared from desertification, deforestation and other environmental threats that endanger people's survival.

• *Personal security*: individual security from physical violence. Threats can take several forms; for example, threats from the State, foreign states, other groups of people (ethnic tension), individuals or gangs; threats directed against women or children based on their vulnerability and dependence; threats to self (e.g., suicide, drug use, etc.).

• *Community security*: most people derive their security from membership of a social group (family, community, organization, political grouping, ethnic group, etc.). Tensions often arise between these groups due to competition over limited access to opportunities and resources.

• *Political security*: living in a society that guarantees basic human rights and freedom of expression (Hussein, Gnisci, & Wanjiru, 2004).

These elements of human security are interrelated and complementary. For example, if the threat to political security is not controlled, it will have ramifications for the other elements of human security. That is why promoting human security entails protecting people from the threats that arise from such problems as disease, hunger, unemployment, poverty, crime, social and political conflicts, political repression and environmental degradation.

As a comprehensive people-centred concept, human security focuses on the welfare of human beings and their communities rather than the security of the state. Human security addresses the protection of people from critical and pervasive threats to their lives, livelihoods, and dignity, including the downside risks of development. Human security covers both conflict and development aspects of peace and sustainable development. Shin-wha Lee (2004) notes that addressing human security requires that we take a comprehensive view of all threats to human survival and dignity, with special emphasis on promoting human rights, social development, and environmentally sound and sustainable development, as well as eliminating violence, social strife, terrorism, state atrocities, genocide and discrimination of all kinds.

In the past, security meant the defence of nation-states and their territory from external aggression or protecting the national security of a particular country. This is however a narrow definition of the concept, which focuses on the security of a nation-state rather the welfare of an individual or a community. While the security of a nation-state is important to ensure the well-being of the citizens of that country, it is not a sufficient condition to protect individuals and the community as a whole from the human insecurity that arises from poverty, environmental degradation, unemployment, lack of human rights, and unequal access to basic human needs. The current understanding of security goes beyond the national security issues and focuses on human security, with an emphasis on the individual's welfare and people's security (UNDP, 1994). According to UNDP (1994), if peoples' capabilities are improved and opportunities availed to them, they can make an immense contribution to their own development, that of their local communities, their countries; and the world as a whole.

The UN General Assembly in its Resolution of 25 October 2012 reaffirmed the importance of the human security concept as a powerful instrument in helping member states in identifying and addressing widespread and crosscutting challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of their people. In this regard, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly highlighted the common understanding of the notion of human security as follows:

• The right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential;

• Human security calls for people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people and all communities; and

• Human security recognizes the inter-linkages between peace, development and human rights, and equally considers civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights (United Nations, 2012, p. 1).

There are at least three developments which have played a part in reshaping the notion of security (United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), 2000). The first is the shift in analysis from a narrow focus on military security in the defence of national sovereignty to consideration of internal sources of instability such as communal strife, ethnic unrest, poverty, unemployment, crime and terrorism. Mass population displacements, taking the form of internal migrations and/or cross-border refugee movements are common consequences (Kumssa & Jones, 2014).

The second notable development is recognition of the inevitable link between the welfare of citizens and state security. Non-military barriers to stability can be economic, social, environmental or civil. Drug smuggling, illegal immigration, corruption, terrorism, human rights violations, disease and poverty can threaten a government no less than armed invasion could. Lastly, there is increasing awareness that national and sub-national problems are amenable to, and sometimes require international assistance or even intervention. Regional humanitarian issues can suddenly become geopolitical, as is the case in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, etc.

As the Commission on Human security indicated, the aim "Human Security" is to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedom and human fulfilment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms—freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations (United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), 2009). The strategies for addressing these concerns are tied to the protection and empowerment of the individuals and communities directly affected by the various political, socioeconomic and environmental threats. The concept is also anchored on four important principles.

• *People-centred*: individuals and communities are at the centre of analysis and intervention for the human security programme. It considers a broad range of conditions that threaten the survival, livelihood and dignity of individuals and communities.

- *Comprehensive*: human security calls for responses that are comprehensive, multi-sectoral and collaborative. This ensures coherent and effective policies that eliminate duplication and promotes integrated solutions to the problems so as to bring about more effective and tangible improvements in the daily lives of individuals and local communities.

- *Context-specific*: the human security approach to development recognizes that the causes and manifestations of threats vary considerably within and across countries, and therefore the solution to these problems should be embedded in local realities and contexts.

- *Prevention-oriented*: looking at the root causes of a particular threat, human security identifies the structural (external or internal), as well as the behavioural changes that are needed to help mitigate the impact, and, where possible, prevent the occurrence of current and future threats (UNTFHS, 2009).

Development initiatives focusing on economic growth, social development, and environmental management have succeeded in increasing income, access to social services, and environmental improvements. However, the benefits of these initiatives have rarely reached the weakest and most vulnerable groups. While benefiting certain groups, forces such as globalization have had negative impacts on the vulnerable groups such as poor farmers or poor and illegal migrants. The underside of development is most conspicuous in sub-Saharan Africa, a region that has been further ravaged by conflict and the HIV/AIDS as well as the Ebola pandemic. While human security concerns are critical in sub-Saharan Africa, initiatives to incorporate a human security orientation in development policies and planning are still few. In the meantime, many other countries like Australia, Finland, the Netherlands, Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine have all taken up the human security issue and included it into their national security policy (Upreti, Bhattarai, & Wagle, 2013). For instance, Canada has linked its foreign policy to the concept of human security, while Japan has gone a step ahead and established a fund for human security within the UN system so as to promote and disseminate the human security concept, norms and practices; and deepen its understanding and acceptance among the world community with the aim of achieving sustainable peace and development (Shinoda, 2004).

A human security orientation demands that the needs of the vulnerable be addressed and integrated into development strategies. Human security assessments identify threats to sustainable development and the factors that cause vulnerability among communities.

Protecting and empowering people are the two important strategies for achieving the goal of human security (UNTFHS, 2009). Protection entails "strategies set up by states, international agencies, and the private sector to shield people from menaces"; while empowerment is defined as "strategies that enable people to develop their resilience to difficult situations" (CHS, 2003, p. 10). In this regard, protection is a "top down" strategy to protect people in a systematic, comprehensive and preventative way, while empowerment is a "bottom up" strategy to build the capabilities and institutions of individuals and communities so as to develop their own potential and find ways of dealing with human security threats by themselves (UNTFHS, 2009).

As noble and important this concept is, it has not been void of criticism. Some argue that the concept is "too idealistic", and fails to take into account the real-world politics of geopolitical power in today's rapidly changing globalized world, compounded by a rapidly changing international system (Chen & Narasimhan, 2002). Others (Oberleitner, 2005) argue that human security may lead to interference in the domestic politics of sovereign states using humanitarian concerns as a pretext. As correctly noted by Aduloju and Pratt (2014), perhaps the strongest criticism against the concept comes from those who argue that it is too vague and broad, making it is impossible to prioritize its policies and actions.

Despite these criticisms, the concept has evolved to be an important concept and a key term in the discourse on international relations, development, security studies, and in economics and the social sciences in addressing traditional socioeconomic concerns as well as non-traditional threats such as human and drug trafficking, human rights violations, political repression and environmental degradation, etc.

2. Research Methodology

This research used both *qualitative* and *quantitative* research methodologies to address the specific objectives of the study. The rationale for the *quantitative approach* is to enable quantification of the degree of impact of human security interventions across key target groups. This will increase the possibility of making limited generalizations, and increase the validity and reliability of the research findings. Face-to-face survey questionnaires were administered to capture the various responses from participants. The face-to-face interview method was applied because it enables data to be collected in a timely manner also allows clarification of complex or sensitive issues as well as enabling the researchers to probe and verify confusing concepts. The

qualitative approach was used to complement the quantitative method. The strength of qualitative research lies in its ability to provide complex textual description of people's experiences in a natural setting (Mack et al., 2005). By going directly to the social phenomenon under study and observing it, the researchers gained comprehensive insight and deeper and fuller understanding of human security issues. Data gathering techniques typically used in qualitative research, namely; observation, key informant interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were employed.

Four counties were selected for investigating and assessing the economic, food, political, personal, environmental, health and community insecurity. A sample of 8-12 respondents from each of the representative sample counties were interviewed in the FGD; and ten respondents from each county were subjected to face-to-face interviews. The respondents of FGD were drawn from various human security related sectors and departments. Steps were taken to ensure there was gender balance. For face-to-face interviews, the study strove to interview young and middle aged women and men from various socio-economic backgrounds. The data collected was analyzed using STATA. Descriptive statistics, in the form of tables, have been used to report the findings of the face-to-face interviews. The results of the FGD are also reported.

2.1 Scope and Limitations of the Research Methodology

The field research and data collection exercise was carried out from 4 to 15 November 2013 in the four Counties. The study involved collection and analysis of primary and secondary data to examine the current status of human security issues in Kenya. The main focus of the research was on:

• The most critical and pervasive human security threats in Kenya;

• The communities and groups most vulnerable to these threats;

• The manifestations of these threats on the different domains of human security, whether political, social, economic, community, health, environment, etc.;

• The interconnected insecurities that arise as a consequence of these threats; and

• The protection and empowerment strategies required to respond to these insecurities.

However, the study has certain limitations, which should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings. Due to some logistical problems, the face-to-face interviews covered only a small sample as explained below:

• The number of sample counties was limited to only four out of forty-seven. Their selection was, however, not random but was based on historical human insecurity issues and injustices.

• Selection of respondents was purposeful and inclined to the motive of the assessment. The number of respondents was restricted to 10-12 for the FGD and 10 for the face-to-face interviews depending on the identified type of human security threats.

• In both the FGD and face-to-face interviews, respondents were guided by standardized questionnaires. Therefore, the responses from the counties, while addressing the same human insecurity concerns, vary depending on the county in question.

• The human security concerns are interrelated. For instance, economic security concerns influence healthcare, food, political, personal and other human security dimensions. Thus, there are correlations in the data analysis that need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings.

3. Findings of Human Security Threats in the Target Counties

This section presents the findings from face-to-face interviews, complemented by FGD that are specific to each county. Using the means derived from descriptive statistics from face to face interviews; the study found that environmental insecurity is the main threat to the community in the target counties. Table 1 shows the ranking of the human security threats in the four sampled counties.

Table 1. Ranking of threats to human security in the four sampled counties in Kenya

Threat to human security	Mean	Rank
Economic insecurity	0.56	2
Food insecurity	0.28	6
Health insecurity	0.52	3
Environmental insecurity	0.60	1
Personal insecurity	0.40	5
Community insecurity	0.43	4
Political insecurity	0.40	5

Source: Authors.

3.1 Environmental Insecurity

Table 1 shows that environmental insecurity poses a major and serious threat to human security with a mean of 0.60. Air pollution is the greatest contributor to environmental insecurity and together with deforestation they each contribute 12 per cent to environmental insecurity, followed closely by climate change and lack of proper waste disposal. These threats are all interrelated with each other.

Isiolo County suffers from environmental insecurity caused by deforestation due to charcoal burning as a source of livelihood, cutting down trees for firewood and illegal logging. Other factors contributing to environmental insecurity include water pollution due to lack of proper waste disposal; direct watering of livestock in the main rivers; climate change due to global warming that results in frequent floods and perennial droughts. Other problems include chemical pollution from flower farms in Meru County and Nanyuki; overgrazing caused by migration of pastoralists from Garissa, Wajir, Samburu and Meru Counties that causes natural resource depletion and results in drought which is a perennial occurrence in the County.

Laikipia county also suffers from environmental insecurity due to among others deforestation caused by dependency on charcoal as the main source of fuel; water pollution caused by the depositing of chemicals and molasses by flower firms into the Nanyuki and Ewaso Ng'iro rivers and soil erosion; lack of proper waste management and disposal systems such as dust bins and sewerage system; drought leading to loss of life of animals due to diseases caused by migration of pastoralists from one place to during which time they usually graze their animals in any farm leading to conflicts and loss of life.

Nandi County suffers from environmental insecurity caused by deforestation due to dependency on firewood and charcoal as forms of energy for cooking. Charcoal burning is also a way of earning income leading to invasions of and clearing of indigenous forests such as Kimondi which is part of the Mau Complex and which is a source of many rivers such as River Yala. The County also lacks proper waste disposal mechanism especially in Kapsabet town which is the headquarters of Nandi County. The County suffers from natural disasters such as landslides, lightening and so on. Disregard for family planning has led to overpopulation.

Elgeyo Marakwet County suffers from deforestation due to charcoal burning, human encroachment in the hilly areas and escarpment, failure to replace forest plantations that have been depleted, landslides and soil erosion. It also suffers from chemical and air pollution from the Fluorspar Company and flower farms and also due to lack of a proper sewerage system. However, most of the pollution occurs from indoor activities that include biomass dust, charcoal burning, dust, construction site remains and smoke.

3.2 Economic Insecurity

Economic insecurity was ranked second after environmental insecurity with a mean of 0.56. This was mainly due to high levels of unemployment and poverty. Unemployment is endemic especially among the youth and is the main threat to economic security in the four counties. Unemployment contributed approximately 26% of the economic insecurity in these counties followed closely by poverty at 18%. Low income and income inequality came third contributing 16% each to economic insecurity. Poor harvests and income instability contributed 14% and 10% respectively.

Isiolo County suffers from high levels of unemployment mainly among the youth and women with 80% of women suffering from unemployment. About 70% of the youth and 50% of adult men are unemployed. The informal sector employs 80% of those employed which is characterized by underemployment, low and

unregulated earnings making them suffer even more from economic insecurity since the little that they get is not enough to sustain their livelihoods. Most of the unemployment in Isiolo was attributed to low levels of education, especially among the women and the pastoral nature of the residents making the men not able to exploit their potential. Negative attitude towards agriculture and self-employment also account for the high levels of unemployment. Results show that most of the residents have a negative attitude towards education and are willing to be engaged in pastoralism rather than have formal education. Requirement of experience, bureaucracy and the belief that it is only the government that provides employment were also factors contributing to unemployment in Isiolo County which has led to many young people resorting to drug abuse and burglary leading to community insecurity.

Poverty rates were also found to be high especially in the rural areas in Isiolo County with the poverty headcount at 60%. Low and unstable income due to lack of markets for livestock and their disease prone livestock cannot compete effectively especially with the neighbouring disease free livestock from the bordering Laikipia County. The holding grounds are very far and the livestock reach these grounds having lost weight and hence fetch very low prices. Drought is very common leading to poor harvests for those who practice farming. Land is also communally owned leading to lack of personal initiatives to increase production by borrowing money from banks due to lack of collateral.

Laikipia County suffers from high levels of unemployment, high poverty rates, low and unstable incomes, income inequality, poor harvests and drought. Formal employment is only 28% while informal employment is about 72%. Causes of unemployment are few employment opportunities, poor attitude among the youth towards manual work, lack of incentives among the youth and the pastoralists' nature in some areas of the County. Poverty in Laikipia on the other hand is 47% in general, 71% in urban centres and 39% in the rural areas. The main causes of poverty are poor pay, income instability, poor harvests due to drought and poor rains and the poor pricing systems of both crops and livestock. The area falls on the leeward side of Mount Kenya making it to receive poor rains.

Nandi County has high levels of unemployment, high poverty rates, low, unstable and unequal incomes and poor harvests although it is an agriculturally rich county. Most of the people in Nandi are employed in the informal sector and KIPPRA (2013) reports that the employment rate in the informal sector is approximately 78% while the formal sector employs about 22%. Most of the unemployed are the youth and women. Most youth find themselves unemployed due to their negative attitude towards informal employment and they prefer migrating to Kapsabet and other urban areas to look for white collar jobs. Most women in Nandi are unemployed due to their low education levels and the cultural beliefs that their place is in the kitchen cooking and doing other forms of housework.

Agriculture is the mainstay of Nandi's economy and maize, sugar cane and tea are the major crops grown with maize being the staple crop. Nandi County has high poverty levels with poverty rates standing at 47% (KIPPRA, 2013). Poverty in Nandi is caused mainly by poor harvests due to the Maize Lethal Necrosis, a disease that attacks maize and sugarcane in the region. Poor harvests are caused by insufficient use of farm inputs due to ignorance and high costs of inputs.

Elgeyo Marakwet County has good climatic conditions that support agricultural activities with maize, wheat, mangoes, passion fruits, tomatoes grown in most parts of this County as well as livestock keeping making farming the major employer of most people. However, the rate of unemployment among youth and the disabled is quite high. KIPPRA (2013), reports that the informal sector accounts for 82% of total employment. Most of the unemployed are the youth mainly because of their negative attitude towards agricultural work and informal employment. Low literacy levels bars the youth who are mainly Form four drop outs and who lack relevant training from seeking the few employment opportunities available in the County. Fluorspar mining is the only industry in the County and it offers a few employment opportunities.

Poverty rates in Elgeyo Marakwet stand at 55% (KIPPRA, 2013) which is way above the national poverty level of 46% with the Marakwet region leading with 66% and Keiyo at 44%. Poverty is mainly caused by poor remuneration, low prices of agricultural produce, cartels and brokers who exploit the farmers, drought especially along the Kerio valley, abuse of alcohol among the youth that makes them economically inactive and lack of proper storage facilities for harvested output.

Economic insecurity is closely related to all other types of human insecurity as attested through FGD in the four counties. Economic insecurity leads to food insecurity and evidence showed that most of the food insecure individuals lived in areas that were not environmentally friendly since they lacked clean water, had poor sanitation; the air and water were heavily polluted, and faced conflict over resources due to high levels of

environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources causing economic insecurity once again and resulting in personal and community insecurity due to inter-ethnic and gender based violence. Lack of clean water and sanitation are health hazards and result to health insecurity which also causes food insecurity.

3.3 Food Insecurity

Food insecurity was ranked 6th as a contributor of human insecurity in the sampled 4 counties. The study found that famine contributes up to 24% of total food insecurity while 17% of the respondents stated that they ate a limited variety of food which could have been caused by poor harvest and lack of income due to unemployment. It could also have been caused by the culture of having a staple food such as maize as the main contributor to food security and without which the community suffers from food insecurity. Results show that 16% of the people in the sampled counties eat less than 3 meals per day while 12% eat foods that they do not prefer while 8% eat smaller quantities of food.

Hunger and famine which are signs of food insecurity are rampant in Isiolo County since most of the people sleep hungry, eat food that they do not prefer, have fewer than three meals per day and eat food that lacks variety. The main causes of this food insecurity are unemployment, poverty, drought, harsh climatic conditions, over-dependence on rain-fed agriculture and the pastoral nature of the people in this County since they are so attached to their livestock that they would rather sleep hungry than slaughter and eat their livestock for food. During drought, the animals lack pasture and water and lose a lot of weight hence fetching very low prices in the market if they ever make it to the market before they die. Conflict between pastoralists and the agro-pastoralists over grazing land has also contributed to food insecurity.

Food insecurity in Laikipia is as a result of unemployment and poverty. Food poisoning, eating fewer meals, sleeping hungry and also eating food that is not of one's preference were very common. According to the Laikipia County Development Plan, approximately 27% of the population in the County is food insecure. Lack of proper grain storage systems such as silos and drought exposes Laikipia County to food insecurity.

Poverty in Nandi County is caused by the concentration on tea farming and the dependence on maize as the main staple food which is usually attacked by the Lethal Necrosis disease. Tea farmers who are mainly men usually do not consider buying food whenever they get their earnings due to entrenched gender inequality while the small scale maize farmers also suffer from high costs of farm inputs and the effect of the maize lethal necrosis. Food insecurity is also caused by unscrupulous businessmen who sell poor quality fertilizers and seeds to farmers which affects their yields leading to shortages of food in the County. Women participants in the FGD complained of men disappearing from home after receiving payment of tea bonuses and they do not return home until all the money is finished after spending it on themselves and their friends. This means that since most of the land is on tea and very little on subsistence crops, the families end up suffering from food insecurity even though they could be getting a lot of money from tea. Nandi people also believe that without *ugali* (Note 3), there is no food in the house since *ugali* is eaten at every meal. Cases of people eating fewer meals, smaller amounts and those that are not of their preference occur due to financial constraints.

Unemployment and poverty in Elgeyo Marakwet lead to food insecurity especially due to poor post-harvest handling which causes aflatoxin poisoning. The use of agrochemicals without observing the safety measures also leads to food poisoning since the right quantities and qualities are not taken care of during handling. All this leads to people having a limited variety of food due to low income while some are unaware of what to eat in order to have a balanced diet.

3.4 Health Insecurity

Health insecurity was ranked third with a mean of 0.52. Health insecurity was mainly caused by malaria, HIV/AIDS, cancer and emerging diseases, lack of drugs in health facilities and tuberculosis. The study found that lack of drugs in health facilities and malaria contribute 17 per cent each to health insecurity in the four counties followed closely by cancer at 16 per cent while HIV/AIDS and other emerging diseases contributed 15 per cent each to health insecurity. Tuberculosis contributed 11 per cent to health insecurity while distance to health facility contributed 8 per cent to health insecurity.

Isiolo County suffers from health insecurity with the most prevalent disease being malaria. Other diseases that affect both human and animals are tuberculosis; cancer and HIV/AIDs among human beings and East Coast Fever; Foot and Mouth Disease and Tick Borne Diseases among animals. Environmental insecurity, economic insecurity and food insecurity contribute to health insecurity in Isiolo County. For example, the study found that poor sanitation, lack of water, poor infrastructure, long distances to health facilities, lack of drugs and health personnel in the health facilities exacerbate the situation leading to high mortality rates. Infant and maternal

mortality rates are also very high in Isiolo County standing at 43/1000 and 72/1000 respectively. Lack of extension officers or veterinary officers to advise people of Isiolo County on good animal husbandry leads to increase in livestock diseases.

Environmental insecurity, unemployment, poverty and food insecurity have contributed significantly to health insecurity in Laikipia County. According to the FGD participants, the main diseases affecting the people of Laikipia County include flu, malaria, diarrhoea, upper respiratory diseases, HIV/AIDS, and lower respiratory diseases among other diseases. Health facilities that are few and far and the average distance to a health facility in the County is 6 kilometres. The doctor to population ratio in this County is 1:12500 and the nurse to population ratio of 1:1000. The public health facilities suffer from shortage of drugs leading to self-medication with people buying drugs from shops and pharmacies. There is a high infant and maternal mortality rate since most of the births take place at home especially in the rural areas. Other diseases that affect both human and livestock are anthrax, brucellosis, tuberculosis, rabies and rift valley fever among others.

Whereas the distance to the health facility in Nandi County is averagely low except in the rural areas, most of the public health facilities suffer from shortage of drugs. Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, malaria and cancer are among the diseases that are prevalent in Nandi County. Drug abuse, alcohol and poverty are the main causes of HIV/AIDs as a lot of men involve themselves in prostitution when they get their tea pays and bonuses and only return home when the money is finished.

There are very few public health facilities in Elgeyo Marakwet County. Just like in the other counties, unemployment, poverty, food insecurity and environmental insecurity are major causes of health insecurity in this County. The prevalent diseases are malaria, diarrhoea, bronchopneumonia and respiratory tract infections, urinary tract infections, HIV/AIDS, and cancer. Long distances to the health facilities, shortage of drugs and medical personnel pose challenges to the people in this County especially when seeking treatment. Corruption, a source of political insecurity was also said to be rampant in the health facilities especially in drug procurement, prescription and dispensing. Diseases such as diarrhoea, bronchopneumonia and respiratory tract infections, urinary tract infections are mainly caused by environmental insecurity with people living in unhygienic conditions.

3.5 Community Insecurity

Community insecurity was ranked fourth with a mean of 0.43 followed closely by personal and political insecurity with means of 0.40 each at number 5. Community insecurity was caused mainly by inter-ethnic violence and gender inequality which contributed to 20 per cent of community insecurity. Organized crime and loss of cultural diversity each contributed 15 per cent of community insecurity followed closely by drug trafficking, social exclusion and religious intolerance. All these combined contributed to human insecurity in the form of community insecurity. Inter-ethnic animosities mostly for pasture and boundaries especially between the Meru and Isiolo ethnic communities affect the community wellbeing of the people of Isiolo County. Gender inequality is so rampant in this County such that women feel very much neglected and disillusioned as they lag behind socially, educationally, economically and are culturally tortured due to intolerable cultural practices that do not recognize women as important members of the community. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and early marriages are also rampant among the various communities that reside in Isiolo County. Organized crimes in the form of cattle rustling from neighbouring communities, especially in Doldol occurs frequently where the Meru and Samburu people fall victims. Poaching is also so prevalent in the National Parks and Reserves such as Sarova, Shaba, Buffalo and Busanadi. Human and drug trafficking are very common since the County is the passage to and from Somalia. However, *khat* (Note 4) consumption and trade are very much entrenched among the Isiolo people. However, the cultural diversity of the people of Isiolo makes Isiolo County an eco-tourism site that generates revenue from the diverse cultures of the Somali, Borana, Turkana, Meru, Samburu and Nubians.

Community insecurity in Laikipia is mainly in the form of inter-ethnic violence over resources and pastures for livestock. The areas mostly affected are Laikipia West and Laikipia North. Cases of gender inequality, female genital mutilation are also rampant in this County mainly due to the high rates of illiteracy of the women. Organized crime, gun running, drug trafficking and drug abuse are also a threat to community security in this County.

Just like in Laikipia, inter-ethnic violence also occurs in Nandi County between the Nandi, Kisii and the Luo due to cattle rustling, disputes over boundaries and the fight over other resources such as pastures and water. Gender inequality is also entrenched in this county and drug trafficking and drug abuse are also very common.

Ethnic violence mainly due fight over ownership of resources such as oil between Baringo and Keiyo is common in Elgeyo Marakwet County. And just like in the other Counties, gender inequality in employment, sharing of

resources, decision making, farm work and decision making is well entrenched mainly due to lack of awareness on the part of the women and other cultural beliefs and practices.

3.6 Personal Insecurity

Threats to personal security contributed to personal insecurity. These threats were robbery and burglary which contributed to 19 per cent of personal insecurity followed by kidnaping at 12 per cent. Rape, ageing, physical violence and terrorism each contributed 10 per cent to personal insecurity. Domestic violence and homelessness each contributed 9 per cent to personal insecurity while human trafficking and racial discrimination contributed 6 per cent and 5 per cent respectively to personal insecurity and all these threats combined contributed to threats in human security in the 4 sampled counties.

Threats to personal security in Isiolo County are mainly in the form of robbery and burglary, domestic violence due to gender inequality, rape, kidnapping, human trafficking, homelessness due to the 2007/2008 post-election violence and ageing.

Threats to personal security in Laikipia County is mainly in the form of domestic violence due to gender inequality, rape, robbery and burglary, female genital mutilation, terrorism, prostitution, possession of illegal firearms, cattle rustling, ethnic and tribal violence, homelessness due to the 2007/2008 post-election violence, ageing, presence of British soldiers training in Nanyuki, unwanted pregnancies, bank fraud and so on.

Just like in Isiolo and Laikipia, cases of burglary and robberies are so rampant in Nandi County due to poverty and unemployment among the youth. Rape, physical, domestic abuse and gender violence against women are also very common due to consumption of illicit brews, poverty and the masculine culture and gender inequality. Homelessness in this County is due to sale of land by some family members, street children, ageing and effects of the 2007/2008 post-election violence.

High levels of unemployment, idleness and the culture of cattle rustling by the people from Baringo and Pokot pose a threat to personal security in Elgeyo Marakwet County. Physical violence mainly based on boundary disputes or land ownership is also pronounced in this County. Rape, domestic abuse and gender violence and wife battering, drug and alcohol abuse are also rampant in this County. Ageing and abandonment lead to homeless of the aged.

3.7 Political Insecurity

Corruption, poor governance, abuse of human rights and lack of political participation in decision making were found to be the most prevalent threats to political security. The study found that corruption contributed 26 per cent to political insecurity followed closely by poor governance at 23 per cent. Abuse of human rights and lack of political participation each contributed 18 per cent to political insecurity while torture and detention without trial contributed 9 per cent and 6 per cent respectively to political insecurity.

The new 2010 Constitution has brought a new beginning in Isiolo County since it has brought about a devolved form of government which entails active participation of the people in the form of decision making. However, corruption in the form of bribery in seeking favours and other public benefits are very common in this County.

In Laikipia County, abuse of human rights is rampant involving very poor remuneration of workers and poor working conditions in the ranches. Labour laws are not followed and workers are laid off without compensation. Corruption is rampant in public offices since most people lack of awareness of how governance structures operate and of their rights and responsibilities in the devolved government.

In Nandi County, there is gross abuse of children's rights in the form of denying them the right to education and protection by their parents and society in general. Women are also denied their rights to property ownership, right to equal decision making at the family, household and society levels mainly caused by the culture of gender inequality. Men also face cases of abuse by their wives although this is not widespread. Corruption is also endemic in Nandi County due to ignorance on the part of the populace. The people are also not involved in the budget making process and the projects being implemented by the County Government were not according to the people's preferences.

Unlike in the other Counties, the FGD participants in Elgeyo Marakwet felt that the political climate was generally good. However, they complained that there were cases of human rights abuse of girls and women at the household level due to the culture of exclusion and restriction. Political exclusion was also said to be rampant. Corruption was also said to be very rampant in this County. Just like in the face to face interviews, the participant in the FGD on the threats to human security ranked environmental insecurity, economic insecurity, food insecurity, community and personal insecurity, health insecurity and political insecurity in that order.

4. Proposed Human Security Intervention Strategies

The participants in the face-to-face interviews and in the FGD proposed the following strategies to prevent the threats to human security and mitigate their impact and to prevent their recurrence.

● Increased in investment in infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and water, communication and so on to open up the areas for development. Others are irrigation projects, dams for water harvesting to reduce the impacts of drought and to reduce reliance on rain-fed agriculture and thereby lead to increased output to combat economic and food insecurity. The government should also use public private partnerships to fund some of the major investments that can provide employment and earnings in order to achieve economic security.

● Improved markets for agricultural output as well as livestock that would provide income to the people and enable them to purchase food and to meet their other needs which would lead to a reduction in economic insecurity as well as food insecurity. The government, through the State Department of Agriculture, should encourage diversification of agriculture and other economic activities and also encourage people to diversify their eating habits.

● The government should build more schools especially in areas where they are few and make use of macroeconomic policies to reduce prices and reduce interest rates to make it easy for people to borrow credit from banks. The government should also streamline the management of the Youth Development Fund, Women Enterprise Fund and the Uwezo Fund (Note 5).

● Improve public housing to deal with homelessness, public hospitals that are well staffed and well supplied with drugs to deal with health insecurity; environmental protection projects such as sewerage and sanitation projects to deal with environmental insecurity; internal security projects such as police stations and post, police vehicles and other equipment to deal with both personal and community insecurity; increase in cash transfers to the old people and to the orphans to deal with personal insecurity especially where the aged are abandoned and orphans turning into street children. The participants also proposed the need to train more personnel in health, education and extension officers.

● Corruption was seen as a major threat to all types of human securities and therefore strategies such as immediate sacking, prosecution and jailing of those involved in corruption and to have them return all those assets fraudulently acquired from the public were suggested.

5. Capacities Needed

From the findings it is clear that there is need for capacity building to achieve the strategies identified and suggested by the citizens to mitigate the impacts of various human security threats. The capacities needed in order to put in place the above mentioned strategies are diversification of economic activities, improved financial and economic & social capital, diversification of eating habits, improved governance, accountability, improved coping and adaptive mechanisms, ethical standards, natural resource capital and human capital since without building capacity, these will remain threats to human security and Kenya cannot achieve its targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

There is also need to promote and disseminate the human security concept, norms and practices; and deepen its understanding and acceptance among the local community through conferences, workshops and participatory forums with the aim of achieving sustainable development.

6. Conclusion and Lessons Learned

The study has found that indeed Kenya is human insecure with serious cases of economic insecurity, food insecurity, environmental insecurity, health insecurity, community and personal insecurity and political insecurity. Threats to human security were ranked starting with environmental insecurity, economic insecurity, food insecurity, community and personal insecurity, health insecurity and political insecurity in that order. It is therefore important for the Government of Kenya to come up with a comprehensive strategy to address these threats. These strategies should people centred and comprehensive. A comprehensive approach should be used since one type of insecurity if not addressed feeds into another. Therefore, the various threats to human insecurity cannot be handled in isolation from one another. It is also important to note that the threats and causes of insecurity differ from one county to the other and so the approach to addressing these threats should be context specific and should be prevention oriented.

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Notes

Note 1. The views expressed here are the authors' and not necessarily those of the United Nations.

Note 2. Human Development Report 1994.

Note 3. A type of maize porridge eaten in East and Central Africa.

Note 4. *Khat* or *Miraa* is a leafy green plant containing two main stimulant drugs which speed up one's mind and body. It is used mostly in North East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula and by expatriate communities from these regions.

Note 5. The Uwezo Fund is a Kenya Government fund aimed at enabling women, youth and persons with disability access finances to promote businesses and enterprises at the constituency level with the aim of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger) and to promote gender equality and empower women.

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