

# Policing the Periphery

## Opportunities and Challenges for Kenya Police Reserves

*by Kennedy Mkutu and Gerald Wandera*



A Working Paper of the Small Arms Survey



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Published in Switzerland by the Small Arms Survey

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Published in March 2013

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[www.raumfisch.de/sign](http://www.raumfisch.de/sign)

Printed in France by GPS

ISBN 978-2-9700856-4-5

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# Acknowledgements

Thank you to Peter Matunge, Calystus Longole, and Pilitai L. Moile, for their work as research assistants; to the active and retired provincial administrators and security officers (including all the OCPDs and their assistants), as well as the many KPRs and community members, KWS personnel, civil society representatives, and faith-based workers who were ready to assist in this work; to conservancies for their willingness to talk to us and the Police Headquarters personnel in Nairobi; to the Kenya School of Government and the US International University for their willingness to allow us to work on this venture; and to Tessa Rhodes Mkutu for editing. Lastly, thank you to the Small Arms Survey, which funded the work; to Anna Alvazzi del Frate and Eric Berman for having faith in it from the beginning; to David Atwood for his guidance and input; to Margaret Wagner for fact checking; to Martin Field for overseeing the publishing process; and to the reviewers for their helpful comments that have helped to shape the report.

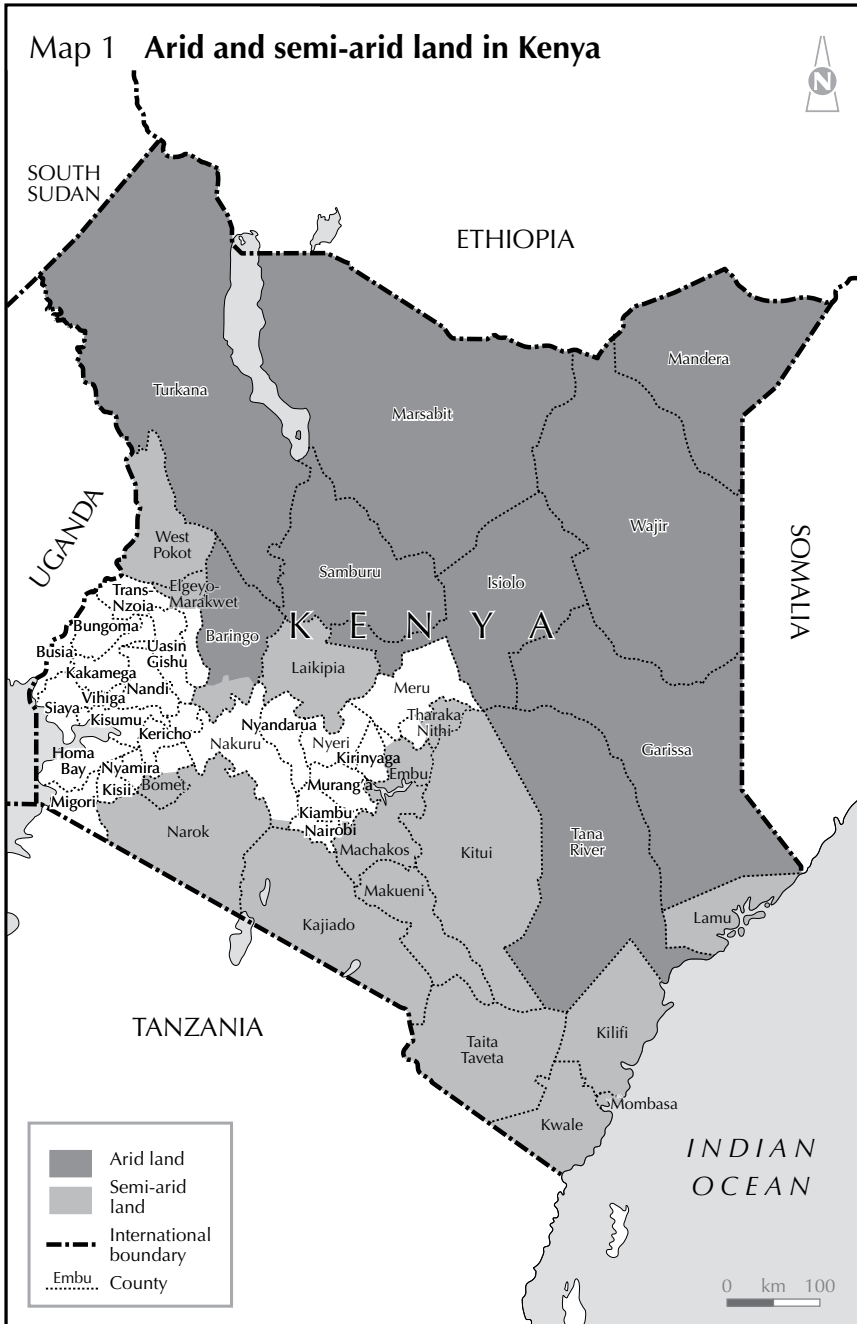
This study was conducted with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. None of the views presented here necessarily represent the official view of the Government of Denmark.



# Abbreviations and acronyms

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| ADC   | African Development Corporation                |
| APS   | Administration Police Service                  |
| ASAL  | Arid and semi-arid lands                       |
| BRICS | Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa |
| CDF   | Constituency Development Fund                  |
| CPA   | Comprehensive Peace Agreement                  |
| DC    | District commissioner                          |
| DO    | District officer                               |
| DRC   | Democratic Republic of the Congo               |
| FGD   | Focus group discussion                         |
| KIA   | Kenya Institute of Administration              |
| KES   | Kenyan shilling                                |
| KPR   | Kenya Police Reserve                           |
| KPRs  | Kenya Police reservists                        |
| KSG   | Kenya School of Government                     |
| KWS   | Kenya Wildlife Service                         |
| LDU   | Local Defence Unit                             |
| LRA   | Lord's Resistance Army                         |
| MP    | Member of parliament                           |
| NGO   | Non-governmental organization                  |
| NRT   | Northern Rangelands Trust                      |
| OCPD  | Officer commanding the police division         |
| OCS   | Officer commanding the police station          |
| PDF   | Popular Defence Forces                         |
| RCD   | Congolese Rally for Democracy                  |
| SSR   | Security sector reform                         |
| UPDF  | Uganda Peoples Defence Force                   |
| USD   | US dollar                                      |
| USX   | Ugandan shilling                               |

Map 1 Arid and semi-arid land in Kenya



# I. Introduction

More than 80 per cent of Kenya consists of arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) (WRI, 2007; MSDNKAL, 2008) (see Map 1), and across much of this area the main visible security force is not the police, but the Kenya Police reservists (KPRs).<sup>1</sup> The Kenya Police Reserve (KPR) is an auxiliary force detached from the Kenya Police Service and is made up of volunteers operating within their own localities. KPRs are armed by the state to supplement the role of the police in providing security where police presence is low. They often guard pastoralist cattle kraals (enclosures)<sup>2</sup> and move with cattle caravans to protect them against raids by other pastoral groups.

Locals have mixed opinions as to the value of KPRs. For many they provide an important first response to insecurity in remote communities where there is heavy reliance on their local knowledge and ability to operate in harsh climates and over difficult terrain, and to provide security against resource-based conflicts and cattle raiding. A Turkana-based Catholic priest remarked:

*In urban areas they do the arrests and they are used by police on most missions. In some areas they act as spies for the police and General Service Unit. In the conflicts between Turkana and Merille and Turkana and Nyangatom they fight on the front line. They are acting as kraal scouts, animals scouts, [and] spies, and inform police patrol[s], but they are unpaid.<sup>3</sup>*

For others they are a source of insecurity through firearms misuse, poor training and supervision, a lack of operational policy or governance, and an absence of any formal compensation mechanisms for any misdeeds they may commit or damage they may cause.

This paper examines the various opportunities and challenges facing the KPRs in Kenya's Turkana and Laikipia counties, and considers in particular the management and control of reservists' firearms, given the wider problems of arms control and insecurity in Kenya's peripheral areas. It seeks to

relate the changing economic environment in rural parts of these counties to the evolving role of the KPRs. The paper highlights how each distinct context (Turkana with its natural resource economy and Laikipia with its conservation tourism industry) is adapting the KPRs' traditional role. These new roles, as we shall see, are not always positive. Economic pressure, competition for resources (both natural and technical), weak or non-existent operational policy, a lack of oversight or governing structure, the attraction of secondary employment, and the constant flow of destabilizing small arms from neighbouring conflict zones are straining the KPR towards breaking point. Firearm misuse and criminal behaviour by KPRs are exacerbating tensions in Kenya's remote rural regions. This paper will argue that without the immediate implementation of operational and small arms controls, the KPR risks evolving into armed militia groups.

## Methodology

Research undertaken between October 2011 and January 2013 used a combination of questionnaires; firsthand observation; and interviews with provincial administration officials, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, security personnel, chiefs, KPRs, community elders, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Forestry Commission personnel, staff of faith-based organizations, civil society representatives, and medical staff. Interviews were conducted face to face and follow-up phone interviews were used where necessary. Interviews with community leaders lasted between one and two hours and were taped, while others were carried out opportunistically in Nairobi during training workshops and meetings (see KSG, 2012). Focus group discussions (FGDs) were attended by community members, KPRs, youth representatives, and chiefs. They were arranged through provincial administrators and existing contacts (see Mkutu, 2005; 2008). The overwhelming support and openness of interviewees and FGD participants highlighted to the authors the level of interest and concern among communities regarding the issues surrounding KPRs.

An open questionnaire was administered to provincial administrative officers attending a three-month training course at the KSG between September and November 2011.<sup>4</sup> Thirty-four provincial administrators were

surveyed to build a picture of the challenges and opportunities facing the KPR. These administrators came from a variety of ethnic groups and had served in various districts as chairpersons of district security committees responsible for overseeing the police and KPRs.

Archival data on the KPR; media reports; government documents; official statistics; and secondary data in the form of books, peer-reviewed journals, civil society reports, and media reports were also used, taking into account the limitations of bias and validity.

The authors' research methodologies were limited by two factors. The first is the sensitive nature of security issues—specifically the fact that such issues tend to be viewed as confidential and a state prerogative—and the reluctance of some conservancies to supply information. Secondly, travel through Kenya was at times restricted due to insecurity or impassable roads. In Laikipia, researchers and their research assistants were only able to access several conservancies in the north and east, but not the west (there are no conservancies in the south and central areas), leaving an incomplete picture of KPRs' numbers and weapons holdings in Laikipia. Despite these limitations, the use of varied research methods and a wide geographic focus ensured that researchers were able to draw valid conclusions.

## Theoretical framework

This paper contributes to the security sector reform (SSR) debate; takes as its context the ungoverned spaces of northern Kenya; and, where relevant, expands its focus to northern Uganda, and the failed and post-conflict states in the Greater Horn region. While Kenya itself does not fall into the category of a 'failed' or 'post-conflict state', SSR concepts can also be useful in the context of normalized development environments (van de Goor et al., 2010).

### *Ungoverned spaces*

Commentators have noted the importance of considering not only failed or ungoverned states, but also spaces within otherwise functioning states that may be failed or ungoverned. Rabasa et al. (2007: xvi) provide a useful

framework for considering ungoverned spaces in terms of four dimensions. The first is the level of state penetration of society, including its management of infrastructure and the economy. The second is the extent to which the state has a monopoly on the use of force, including the presence of autonomous armed groups and criminal networks, and the extent of access to small arms. The third is the extent to which the state can control its borders and the fourth is whether the state is subject to external intervention by other states.

In the Greater Horn of Africa region<sup>5</sup> many such areas have been marginalized since colonial times due to their remoteness, inhospitability, aridity, and inhabitants' often strong resistance to attempts at control. The first district administrator of Kenya's North Frontier District,<sup>6</sup> which comprised Laikipia, Samburu, and West Pokot, advised:

*There is only one way to treat these northern territories ... to give them whatever protection one can under the British Flag and otherwise to leave them to their own customs as far as possible, under their own chiefs. Anything else is uneconomical (quoted in Barber, 1968, pp. 415–16).*

These areas remain under-developed to this day, with little physical or communication infrastructure, low levels of state presence, and an under-provision of state security (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 7–9). Where present, police and the judiciary are under-resourced and unable to carry out their functions. Border management is a challenge and may be a source of conflict. Borders are vast—the western border of Kenya is 933 km in length with only three immigration posts (Mkutu, 2005, p. 29)—and in some cases contested, with a history of interstate conflict over oil, land, and minerals (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 7–8).<sup>7</sup> Many borders were created for political and administrative convenience by the colonial governments with little consideration of the distribution of ethnic groups, such that some communities now reside on both sides of an international border, and frequently move in and out of the countries involved without controls. This raises issues of citizenship and makes crime management difficult. Furthermore, unrelated communities are forced to live together.

Most ungoverned spaces are also associated with protracted social conflicts, which are intrastate as opposed to interstate, although they may spill over international and regional borders, as described above. Ungoverned

spaces may also harbour criminal actors and networks, and thus pose a risk to state and regional stability and security. Trade in arms and weapons proliferation among civilians are significant problems and relate to 'ungovernedness' in terms of supply across porous borders, few controls, and demand resulting from a lack of security.

Ungoverned spaces are often potentially profitable. For example, tourism is an important foreign exchange earner in rural parts of Kenya. Moreover, an NGO worker noted that nearly 63,000 square miles (much of Turkana) has been parcelled out as oil blocks to prospectors,<sup>8</sup> which may cause conflict at the local, national, regional, and international levels.<sup>9</sup> There are also plans for the construction of an oil pipeline from South Sudan to Lamu and for opening up the northern region with a new port under construction in Lamu and a highway into Ethiopia (Gilblom, 2012; *Sudan Tribune*, 2012). Rapid development is likely as a result. At a regional level, there have been several discoveries of oil and gas, which could trigger territorial disputes (Mutambo et al., 2012). Into the melting pot have come new donors, such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa),<sup>10</sup> whose economies are growing rapidly and whose demand for oil is increasing. Thus, as stakes rise and investors bid for finite resources, security dynamics become increasingly important.

### *Policing in Africa*

The current police forces in Africa were the creation of colonial regimes from the mid-19th century whose main role was frequently the provision of law and order to the colonizers, the protection of their property, and the minimization of resistance from the natives. Thus police services were strongly concentrated in central government reserves and not provided to the majority of the people (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 41–42). These structures have persisted and in turn have served the interests of many post-colonial rulers, who have maintained a strong hold on their operations and used them for personal gain. The police in turn are also allowed to operate with impunity and thus their lack of autonomy works in favour of both themselves and the rulers they serve (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 41–42).

Another important challenge to police oversight and accountability in Africa is the pervasive lack of capacity and resources. African police forces

lack the capacity required for policing increasingly complex societies and vast ungoverned spaces. This handicap leads to a lack of trust in the police to promote security and safety, and in turn leads to rural communities' arming themselves and a mushrooming of private security companies in urban areas.

Ruteere's (2011) analysis of the response of the police to the post-election violence of 2007–08 refers to some important themes of policing in Kenya. The politicization of the police is commonly described in the literature, but Ruteere (2011) also refers to their limited capacities, and the ease with which they realigned their loyalties along ethnic lines and operated for their personal profit. He describes the metamorphosis, well before the elections, of some units into vigilantes who by the time of the violence were using force for purposes not necessarily sanctioned by their command structures. Similar problems may be noted with the KPRs in this study. Ruteere (2011) also notes a lack of recent studies on policing in Kenya; this is particularly true of rural policing, a gap that this paper hopes to address to some extent.

### *Non-state security providers*

Baker (2009, p. 212) notes that in the rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa where the reach of the state is limited, many communities fall back on their own mechanisms for protection and safety. This 'vigilantism' may take various forms or adopt various ideologies, and the role of individuals may be difficult to define (Abrahams, 1998). Some operate under or are mandated in various degrees by the state, may be established to serve the interests of the regime rather than the state, and may also serve private interests and self-interests; and loyalties may change according to circumstances. SSR has begun to recognize and focus on these non-state entities as important security providers with functions of deterrence, investigation, conflict resolution, and punishment (Baker, 2009; Baker and Scheye, 2007). They encompass a wide range of players and take various names, including civilian defence forces, reservists, auxiliaries, militias, and paramilitaries.

Moller (2006) gives a useful definition and typology of militias that helps to clarify the various positions occupied by non-state providers of security. He argues that these may be placed on two continuums: firstly, in terms of armaments, they fall between those of the police and the military; and,



secondly, in terms of objectives, between state and anti-state positions. The present paper takes the term ‘paramilitaries’ (and sometimes the term ‘militias’ when quoting others) to describe groups who operate under or are mandated in various degrees by the state. The KPR falls within this context as a legal civilian force mandated and armed by the state to protect members’ own communities that fall outside the reach of regular security forces.

Such an option may be attractive to governments. On the one hand, it is cheaper than deploying a full police or military force, and local people may have useful local knowledge and competencies. On the other hand, there may be difficulties in overseeing and controlling such a force, and the loyalties of its members may not be entirely clear. Importantly, by arming non-state actors the state cedes its monopoly over the use of force, which may threaten state stability in many ways, as this paper will argue.

## Key findings

Key findings of this paper include the following:

- There is a general lack of control over the KPR in terms of recruitment, mandate, record keeping (of personnel and firearms holdings), and firearms regulation.
- The lack of an operational mandate has blurred the role of KPRs, which has changed from providing remote livestock security to providing private security for businesses, NGOs, and conservancies.
- Younger KPRs are more engaged in the market economy than their elders, and are more easily tempted by the improved pay of private security work.
- Politicization is a problem, because politicians at times recruit KPRs for their personal needs.
- Volatile features of the Kenyan context of an under-resourced police force, communal versus private property conflicts, and an unequal division of public goods among ethnic groups are triggers for firearm misuse and armed violence by KPRs.
- The state’s arbitrary arming of some KPRs and not others leads some to take advantage of a very accessible illicit small arms market in the hope of levelling the playing field against roaming armed groups.

- Some KPRs who are supplied with a state-issued firearm use this as justification to possess a second, high-powered illicit firearm.
- Illicit small arms and ammunition prices are such that KPRs are found to have been resupplied using illicit markets rather than by the state.
- The privatization of KPRs increases the instability of these units, emphasizing an urgent need for proper regulation of this force, particularly in the context of the anticipated devolution of government.

This paper maps the changing role of the KPR from its origins during Kenya's colonial era to the present day. It focuses on the KPR in two counties: Turkana, on Kenya's border with Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia; and Laikipia, in its rural interior. It examines KPR recruitment, training, operations, compensation, and oversight, and the management and control of state-issued KPR firearms.

Discussion of these issues is pertinent in the context of the new dispensation of counties in Kenya. Under Kenya's new Constitution promulgated in 2010, many functions of government, including many police functions, will be devolved to the governor of each county and an elected assembly. Thus the paper considers the relevance of KPRs in modern Kenya and makes recommendations for reform.

## II. Background

### Insecurity and KPRs

Kenya is no stranger to localized conflict (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 13–33), particularly in the northern ASAL, where pastoralism is the most common source of livelihood. Cattle raiding, disputes over grazing land and water sources, and human–wildlife competition are widespread and intensified by high rates of civilian firearms possession—Kenya has an estimated 530,000–680,000 civilian firearms, with an estimated 127,000 illicit guns in Turkana alone, replenished by the illicit flow of weapons from its conflict-affected neighbours: Somalia, Ethiopia, Uganda, and South Sudan (Wepundi et al., 2012, pp. 35, 88; Mkutu, 2008).<sup>11</sup> In May 2011 more than 40 Turkana were shot and killed in a revenge raid by Ethiopian Merille along the Kenya–Ethiopia border (Ndanyi, 2011). This is one of several incidents between the two groups in this border area (Ng’asike, 2012) and similar occurrences in other arid and semi-arid areas are frequently reported by the media. At a crime prevention seminar in August 2011 the then-Kenyan permanent secretary for internal security, Francis Kimemia (2011), noted that 60 per cent of his time was spent addressing security crises and conflicts in ASAL.

Across many ASAL, KPRs are the most visible and dependable form of community security. Reservists are recruited from local pastoral communities, so they speak the local language; understand the local security context; and are familiar with the geography, terrain, and climate. In the government’s view the KPR is a cost-effective security body that is well placed to protect livestock, which has been its primary function. The force is often used by the government to bolster police numbers in remote areas. In a survey of provincial administrators several noted this, and also that KPRs are used in border management.<sup>12</sup>

However, the KPR struggles to dispel its reputation as an ill-disciplined and troublesome force, with the media reporting regular cases of firearms

misuse, banditry, renting of state-issued weapons, and livestock raiding (Campbell et al., 2009; Kenya, 2010a; Mkutu, 2005; 2008). In 2003 the then-Nairobi provincial police chief noted that some KPRs were guilty of firearms misuse and human rights abuses (*Daily Nation*, 2003). In May 2012 the government disarmed 55 KPRs in Marsabit Central District after two KPRs were arrested in connection with the murder of three primary school pupils.<sup>13</sup> In 2003 the minister for internal security disarmed all 5,000 KPRs, announcing that the government ‘will no longer entrust the security of its people [to] non-uniformed officers and armed civilians’ (*Daily Nation*, 2003). In January 2012, 170 KPRs were disarmed in Moyale after concerns that they had been renting their weapons out to criminals (Ombati, 2012).

## Origins of the Kenya Police and KPR

Kenya has two police forces, the Kenya Police Service and the Administration Police Service (APS). Kenya’s modern police force originated during the colonial era in 1895 (Ruteere, 2011) and its officers were concentrated in urban areas, along railway lines, and in areas occupied by the propertied class (predominantly people of European origin). The APS originated in c.1902 and was known as ‘the chiefs’ police’ as they were responsible for assisting chiefs in the administration of rural (predominantly African) areas. After independence, control of the APS was moved from the chiefs to the Office of the President, where it remains to this day (see APS, n.d.). The KPR was established in 1948 as an unpaid volunteer force with its own hierarchy and rank structure (Mkutu, 2005). In rural areas the KPR is an integral part of the administrative structure.

## Law and policy on KPRs

The new National Police Service Act of 2011, which has been written to give effect to the new 2010 Kenyan Constitution, notes that the KPR may be deployed to

*assist the Kenya Police Service or Administrative Police Service in their respective mandates, including in the—(a) maintenance of law and order; (b) preservation of peace; (c) protection of life and property; (d) prevention and detection of crime, the apprehension of offenders; and (e) enforcement of all laws and regulations with which the Service is charged (Kenya, 2011b, part XV, sec. 110).*

Regarding the arming of KPRs, the Act notes that regulations regarding who is authorized to carry firearms and other regulations regarding their control are to be issued by the cabinet secretary in consultation with the inspector-general of police. Currently, as security personnel, KPRs are authorized to hold firearms, although not all are armed, and arms are to be inspected, controlled, and accounted for by the officer commanding the police station (OCS) in the locality.<sup>14</sup>

The oversight of KPRs is not only carried out by the police. Of the 34 provincial administrators surveyed, although most stated that the police managed the KPRs, ten noted that chiefs and district commissioners (DCs) also played a role. Furthermore, it was stated that since police are transferred regularly, it made sense for chiefs, who live in a particular locale, to manage KPRs.<sup>15</sup> Under the new Act, policing will be overseen by a county policing authority made up of the governor or his or her designated representative and police service heads, as well as other members, including six lay members appointed by the governor and two elected members nominated by the governor. However, neither the new Act nor any other document provides explicit guidelines on the management of KPRs, leaving much to the discretion of governors. Importantly for KPRs, chiefs will be retained under the dispensation, although it is not clear whether or not they will continue to take a role in managing KPRs (Muiruri and Sigei, 2012).

## The number of KPRs

Determining the number of KPRs is difficult due to incomplete records and the recent reassignment of senior police officers who would normally monitor KPRs. Table 1 provides an estimate of the number of KPRs in each region.

### **Box 1 Problems of legality and mandate among paramilitaries: Sudan and Uganda**

For some states it may be helpful to have only loose control over militias/paramilitaries, because such states may then conveniently absolve themselves of responsibility for human rights abuses, as in the cases of the 'janjaweed' and Popular Defence Forces (PDF) in Sudan (Flint, 2009, pp. 16–17), described in Box 3. In these cases paramilitaries are not properly covered by the international laws of war and cannot easily be held accountable, as states can.

In Moroto in Karamoja, northern Uganda, in 1992, with high insecurity on roads and high levels of cattle raiding, the Moroto District Council organized a local police force from among the armed warriors (armed local youths) known as 'The Vigilantes' (Gomes and Mkutu, 2004). Because it was effective to some extent the concept was supported and numbers increased to 8,000 personnel (Gomes and Mkutu, 2004, p. 14). However, pay was frequently in arrears and this led Vigilantes to misuse their arms by carrying out the very crimes they were supposed to be fighting. The deteriorating security situation in Karamoja led the government to begin a disarmament exercise in 2001. As part of the exercise, Local Defence Units (LDUs) were formed to assist the national army, the Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF). LDUs were armed by the state and were paid US\$ 30,000 (USD 19.50) per month (Gomes and Mkutu, 2004; Mkutu, 2005, pp. 211–14; 2008, p. 40).<sup>16</sup> Many Vigilantes were absorbed into this new force (although it is not clear what happened to the arms of those who were not) (Mkutu, 2003).

When LDUs were recruited they thought they would be residing in their communities, protecting and directing the affairs of their families. However, they were disappointed to find that they would be housed in military barracks. Even when cattle raiding incidents occurred that involved their own cattle, they were not allowed to respond promptly, but were subject to UPDF command. The result was violations of army rules and desertion, mistrust, and confusion. Moreover, they were inadequately trained and resourced. As a result they became involved in the facilitation of arms trafficking, turned to banditry, deserted with their arms, and sometimes allied themselves with armed youths to fight the UPDF (Gomes and Mkutu, 2004; Mkutu, 2003). Members of parliament (MPs) questioned the minister of defence as to whether LDUs were being used as cheap labour (Mukasa and Namutebi, 2003). Deserting paramilitaries increase the numbers of arms in the community that cannot be traced and trained personnel can join or train other armed groups.

As noted in an interview with a former MP for Moroto, 'There is no statute that covers LDUs. ... we are using a certain Police Act, which I think has expired'.<sup>17</sup> In 2003 the non-legality of the LDUs was also the subject of discussion in parliament (Mukasa and Namutebi, 2003).

Table 1 **Estimated number of KPRs in Kenya**

| <b>Region</b>                               | <b>Estimated number of KPRs</b>        | <b>Comments</b>  |
|---|--|--|
| Rift Valley (includes Turkana and Laikipia) | 9,000                                  |  |
| Eastern                                     | 5,000                                  | Mainly used for border management  |
| North Eastern                               | 500                                    | Press reports indicate 300 more armed in 2012 ( <i>Daily Nation</i> , 2012a) |
| Coastal                                     | 2,000–3,000                            | Most in Tana River to protect Tsavo National Park from poachers              |
| Other regions                               | Few                                    |  |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>16,500</b> (conservative estimate)* |  |

\* This conservative estimate of 16,500 KPRs should be seen in the context of approximately 40,000 APS officers (who until recently were linked to the provincial administration and therefore mainly served rural areas) and 40,000 Kenya Police officers (author interviews with various security officers, January–August 2012). This number of police is responsible for a population of nearly 38 million people.

**Source:** Compiled from author phone interviews with several senior security officers in Nairobi, Nakuru, Laikipia, and Mombasa; author interviews with three provincial commissioners, locations withheld, January, April, July 2012

Map 2 Turkana County



SOUTH SUDAN

ETHIOPIA

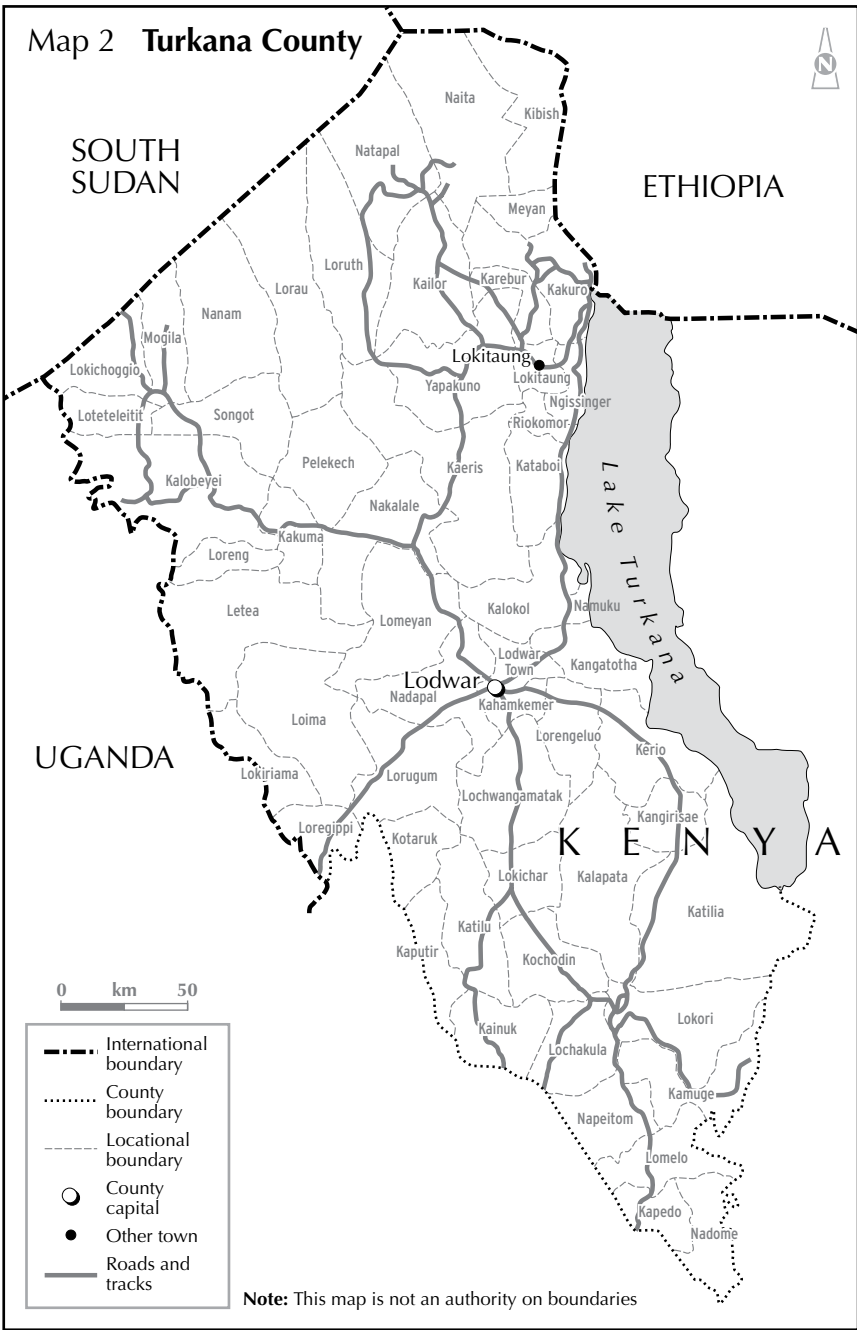
UGANDA

K E N Y A

0 km 50

- International boundary
- ..... County boundary
- - - - Locational boundary
- County capital
- Other town
- Roads and tracks

**Note:** This map is not an authority on boundaries





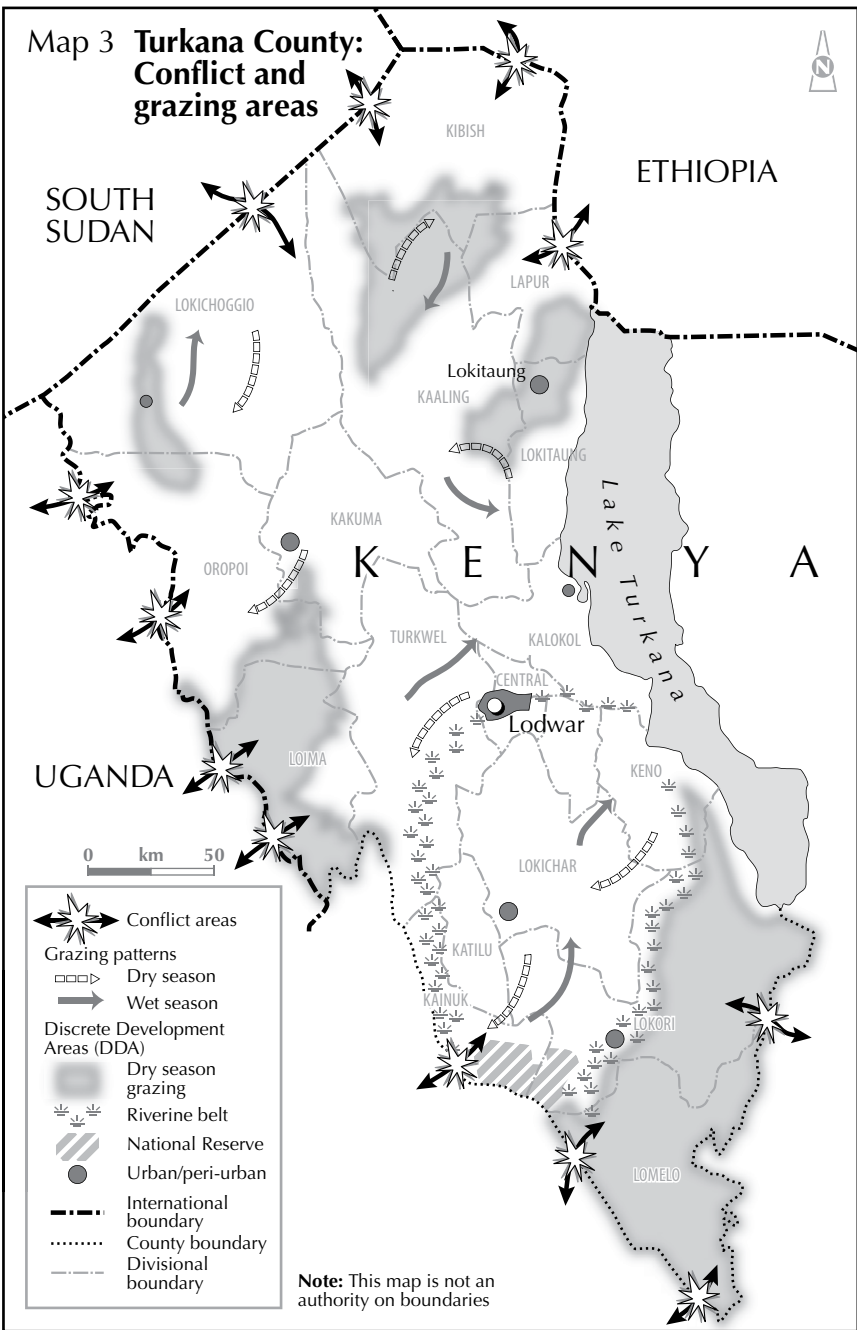
### III. The case of Turkana

Turkana is Kenya's second-largest county, with an area of 77,000 sq. km, situated in north-east Kenya and bordering Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia (Kenya, 2002)<sup>18</sup> (see Map 2). The population is small (900,000) and the predominantly pastoral Turkana are widely dispersed across the arid region. Seasonal groups takes place across local and international borders, including the Karimojong (from the west), the Dodoth and Toposa (from the north-west), the Merille and Nyangatom (north-east), the Samburu (south-east), and the Pokot (south-west).

Turkana suffers from high levels of resource-related intra- and intercommunal conflict, cattle raiding, and road banditry, as well as the spillover of conflicts from neighbouring states (Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Uganda). There are sustained arms flows across Turkana's long, porous borders, such that the Turkana community has become the most militarized in Kenya (HRW, 2002). Turkana has a small government and police presence, and is heavily dependent on the KPR force as its first line of security (Bevan, 2008; Mkutu, 2005; 2008).

Turkana is a challenge to administrators due to its remoteness and poor infrastructure, which curtail external investments. In a recent government survey Turkana ranked as the country's poorest county, with 94.3 per cent of people living in poverty (Omari, 2011).<sup>19</sup> Wind farming and solar energy projects are growth industries in the north, and in 2012 oil was discovered at two sites near Lokichar in Turkana South (Thiong'o and Kimani, 2012), but the extent to which local pastoralists will benefit from such investments is unclear. Pastoralist issues are not adequately articulated in national strategy and no policy on conflict management is in place, although strong customary governance institutions exist (Knighton, 2005; Kenya, 2010b). In the past Turkana was marginalized by colonial and post-colonial governments. Weak governance and the absence of security have compounded the poor security picture.

Map 3 **Turkana County:**  
**Conflict and**  
**grazing areas**



## Conflict dynamics in Turkana

The main conflicts in Turkana (see Table 2 and Map 3) are related to competition over natural resources (pasture, water) and cattle raiding. Climatic variability and the resultant mobility of pastoralists are important factors contributing to resource competition.

Table 2 **Conflict areas in Turkana**

| District | Area  |
|----------|---|
| North    | Todenyang, Kibish, Toro   |
| South    | Kotaruk, Ujuluk, Lorogon, Kaputir, Nakwamoru, Kainuk, Kakongu, Kalemungorok           |
| East     | Kochodin, Nakukulas, Lokori, Elelea, Kapedo, Lochakula, Lokwamusing, Napeitom, Lomelo |
| West     | Nadapal, Nanam, Loipoto, Lokichokio, Oropoi, Loreng, Letea                            |
| Loima    | Lorugum, Loima, Kalemunyang, Lorengippi   |

Source: Author interviews and observations in Turkana, 2012

Locals estimate that one in three Turkana is armed.<sup>20</sup> Firearms are used in defence against and in the perpetration of cattle raiding, conflict over resources, and banditry (which is very frequent—around three to four cases per week).<sup>21</sup> Of concern has been the emergence of armed groups perpetrating large-scale cattle raids for quick commercial gain by the sale of stolen stock.<sup>22</sup> A security officer described such raids as follows:

*In the south we have two raids per week. They come in large numbers—between 50 and 100 people. When schools are closed raiding is worse. There are so many arms within the community: you may find six KPRs in the community, but when a raid takes place you see more than six armed people. The kraals are likened to a small army.*<sup>23</sup>

There are also cases of cattle merchants' commissioning warrior groups to raid cattle on their behalf and transporting the stolen livestock direct to markets in trucks. The executive director of the Agency for Pastoralist Development gave an example of livestock raided in Loima later being identified by the owners in a market in Kotido, Uganda.<sup>24</sup> The Ministry of Livestock has

been accused of not being sufficiently vigilant when issuing permits for the transportation of cattle.<sup>25</sup>

Important factors contributing to armed conflict in Turkana are its proximity to international borders, and borders that are long, remote, and porous: Kenya's eastern border from Busia in the south to northern Turkana is 933 km long and has only three official crossing points (Mkutu, 2007, p. 48). Pastoralists routinely cross from one side to the other, while some communities straddle the border. According to police records, in the first four months of 2010 there were nine notable cross-border conflicts between pastoral groups in which a total of 30 people died.

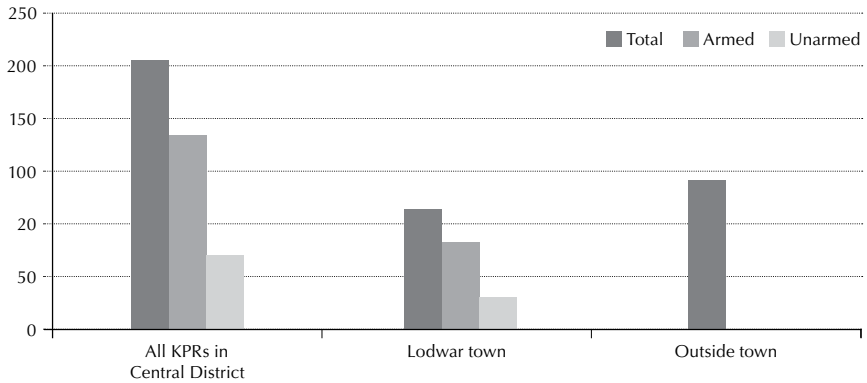
These conflicts are difficult for the police to manage. In October 2012, in neighbouring Samburu, police and the General Security Unit attempting to pacify raiding conflict between Samburu and Turkana pastoralists were ambushed by the Turkana and 42 police officers, including eight KPRs, were killed.<sup>26</sup> It was noted that because they were new recruits with little knowledge of the area and terrain, they were no match for the pastoralists. The government responded by sending in the national army (Obuya and Kiplang'at, 2012; Wachira, 2012).

There are eight police stations in Turkana.<sup>27</sup> Despite high levels of insecurity in Loima District<sup>28</sup> there is no police station there, so personnel police the 9,000 sq. km area from Lodwar town, which is 118 km from areas prone to insecurity in Lorengippi. The Lodwar police have been supplied with a vehicle, but have complained that a truck is necessary to double as an ambulance.<sup>29</sup> The creation of districts without sufficient support structures, including security, transport, and communication infrastructure, has not helped address the region's security issues.

## Features of KPRs in Turkana

The KPRs in Turkana have evolved into various forms. The familiar rural KPRs continue to provide security for kraals and caravans and also fulfil the roles traditionally carried out by police, although they are unpaid. These KPRs face an uncertain future. Without financial incentives there are few new recruits in rural areas. A large number of KPRs now operate in Lodwar town (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 **Proportion of KPRs in rural and urban areas in Turkana Central District**



Source: Author interviews with KPRs in Turkana, March and August 2012

This is an evolving phenomenon as Lodwar expands due to Tullow's and BGP's exploration for and discovery of oil, and as the business community seeks the security that the official police are unable to provide. Thus, KPRs are deployed to perform 90 per cent of the work usually assigned to the police.<sup>30</sup> A security officer stated: 'In Lodwar, the majority of people patrolling or helping are KPRs as there are not enough [police] personnel.'<sup>31</sup>

KPRs also operate as security guards for army operations travelling from Lodwar to Kitale and escort traffic along the trans-African road from Kitale to Sudan. A district livestock officer in Lodwar noted:

*During livestock recording we pay the KPR to give us escorts. The district is so vast and when you go out there, it's risky, so we give them money to protect us.<sup>32</sup>*

Many KPRs seek secondary employment using their skills, and sometimes their firearms. In many cases KPRs have also been recruited to guard schools, churches, private enterprises, and NGOs, particularly those outside urban centres. In early 2012, after oil was discovered at Kodekode, near Lokichar, Turkana South, 24 KPRs and some police officers were recruited to protect the site and its workers.<sup>33</sup> In mid-June 2012 a second oil deposit was discovered near Lokichar, requiring additional KPRs.<sup>34</sup> Fifteen KPRs are also employed to guard another site in Loima.<sup>35</sup> Other KPRs are employed to guard private homes, including the homes of MPs. A former police officer in

Turkana noted: '[The] KPR is now a commercialized force which is armed by the state.'<sup>36</sup>

Some KPRs confirmed that they use their state-issued small arms to escort private vehicles when they are struggling economically.<sup>37</sup> In an author interview with a senior police officer, the officer noted that since KPRs are not paid, they were encouraged by the police to provide for themselves by working as paid guards and escorts. This use of government-issued arms for private profit is not provided for in the law. The most relevant provisions note that a police officer or other public officer may possess a firearm 'for the purposes of his duty', and the firearm should be given up on his ceasing to be in the public service (Kenya, 2009, sec. 7(2)). Related to this, the Police Act of 2011, Sixth Schedule B 8(c) states that regulations will be issued by the cabinet secretary in consultation with the inspector-general to

*regulate the control, storage and issuing of firearms, including procedures that ensure that officers are accountable for the weapons and ammunition issued to them (in principle; don't allow to take firearms home [sic] and officers are provided by their superior with a fixed amount of ammunition and have to explain at any time when requested if bullets are missing).*

This implies that KPRs' arms should be kept in an armoury and are only allowed to be used for public duty and not for personal profit. However, when KPRs move with caravans and live in temporary shelters, the requirement for an armoury is clearly impractical. Therefore both established and current practice lack proper legal provision.

In Lodwar, where arms are secured in the armoury overnight, it is more likely that KPRs are moonlighting using privately held firearms. A retired DC confirmed that KPRs often also have their own private (unlicensed) arms or 'home guns': 'The arms KPRs are given are simple arms. They are just window dressing. They often have illegal arms which are sophisticated.'<sup>38</sup> It must be noted that these firearms are also needed for self-defence. Many KPRs believe they should be able to 'make a living' with their state-issued firearms as security guards or escorts. Regular police and administrative police are not given this freedom, yet some KPRs believe that, as unpaid volunteers, they should be authorized to use their weapons to earn a wage.<sup>39</sup>

The urbanization of KPRs away from remote rural communities into a variety of paid private security roles raises concerns over the security vacuum left in their wake in what were under-policed areas in the first instance. The use of KPRs to guard oil sites seems to be on the increase, such that residents and others note that KPRs are not available to guard cattle in communities.<sup>40</sup>

### *Recruitment and training*

Historical records on the recruitment of KPRs in the 1980s and 1990s are difficult to obtain. The high turnover of officers commanding police divisions (OCPDs) and provincial administrators, the creation of new districts and jurisdictions, and the lack of modern technology in peripheral areas have made record keeping difficult. Attempts to maintain and update records are further complicated by the movement of KPRs with pastoralists across districts and even international borders in search of fresh pasture and water, or because they have been displaced by insecurity.<sup>41</sup> The logistics of reporting and record keeping are also hamstrung by the size of jurisdictions and the difficulties inherent in transferring information across such distances. The district of Turkana South was created in 2007. Although the OCPD was appointed in September 2010, he first reported for duty in 2011, and at the time when this research was conducted the files/records were still in neighbouring Lodwar (Central) District. To cover Loima District, created in 2009, the police still operate from Lodwar. The OCPD has no transport and is unable to ascertain first hand exactly what is going on.

The application process to become a KPR is relatively unregulated and primarily involves a recommendation from the local chief.<sup>42</sup> Selection criteria and processes are not subject to appropriate controls, which jeopardizes the professionalism of the force, as a security officer noted:

*You are recruited on the basis that you are Turkana and can fire the gun. That is the criteria [sic] for being hired. Hence they use the firearm to harass or kill their people, as they are not trained on police work. They do not know how to handle people and they do not know about the law.<sup>43</sup>*

Significantly, women are now applying to become KPRs, hoping that acceptance into the KPR and being armed will help them to become empowered and achieve wider security.<sup>44</sup> The OCS in Lodwar noted that by March 2012 around 30 women had applied, although none had been recruited.<sup>45</sup> One local businesswoman with young children said:

*When the men go [on operations] I am left in the village as security .... For us to learn how to shoot, we will go to the bush and teach each other how to use the gun. If God helps me to become a KPR, I will help my family; no one will reach me.*<sup>46</sup>

Similarly, women in Turkana North were reported to be learning to use AK-47s to protect their property and animals amid high death rates among their husbands from raids (*The Citizen*, 2012).

In a survey of administrators most said that KPRs undergo approximately three weeks' training, although it was noted that the duration and quality vary according to the location.<sup>47</sup> One experienced reservist recalled:

*I became a home guard in 1986 and have been a KPR since 1997. Our training was done locally in Lokori, by the police; however, since then, I have never been given any refresher training.*<sup>48</sup>

One OCPD, later supported by the local OCS, noted that training requires resources; however, funds once available for the training of KPR recruits no longer exist. In fact, no specific KPR budget exists at all.<sup>49</sup>

### *Uniform and identification*

Uniforms are not routinely available to KPRs in Turkana. In Turkana South a long-serving reservist said that the last time he had been issued with a uniform and shoes was in 1997.<sup>50</sup> In rural areas most KPRs wear everyday attire (*shukas*, or large cloths, and open shoes). In urban areas most wear some kind of uniform, often borrowed from the army or APS, although the styles vary, as no specific uniform is used.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, despite a legal requirement for all security personnel to carry identification cards, very few KPRs interviewed had them. One reservist in Turkana South remarked: 'We have no IDs. My identification is the gun and [a] national ID.'<sup>52</sup>



## Compensation

KPRs do not receive salaries from the state.<sup>53</sup> KPRs in Loima refer to themselves as *'askari ya deni'*, meaning 'security on credit'.<sup>54</sup> Other KPRs joke that KPR stands for *'kufa pamoja na raia'* (die together with citizens).<sup>55</sup> There is a great deal of resentment among reservists at the lack of reliable pay. Many of the problems causing disorder within the KPR are a result of the economic woes experienced by reservists. As a reservist stated: 'We are working on the front line and we go for the operations without any assistance. We are on the border and we are not paid.'<sup>56</sup> The new Police Act—which is awaiting parliamentary approval—makes provision for KPRs who have been deployed to serve in policing roles to receive 'such pay and allowances as may be prescribed for a police officer of corresponding rank and seniority in such a rank' (Kenya, 2011b, Part XV, sec. 115). It is yet to be seen how this law will be interpreted and implemented. Importantly, in the Act there is no legal provision for compensation for families of those killed or injured in the course of duty (*Daily Nation*, 2012c).<sup>57</sup>

KPRs have been used to provide security for political events such as the 2005 referendum on the proposed constitution, the 2007 elections, and the National Census.<sup>58</sup> At no stage during these events were the KPRs paid. Their complaints were heard by the OCPD, who forwarded them to the central government, but at the time of writing they had not been addressed. With national elections scheduled for March 2013, few KPRs believe their grievances will be addressed.

In the rare instances where KPRs are paid, payment is not on terms of equal pay for equal work. In February 2012 KPRs guarding oil exploration sites took strike action, citing unfair payments. They disputed being paid KES 500 (USD 6) a day while police were paid KES 1,000 (USD 13) in addition to their regular salaries and claimed that their pay was being shared with bosses in the security sector.<sup>59</sup> On 13 December 2012 more than 300 workers at an oil exploration site in Kalkol, Turkana Central went on strike over safety issues and poor pay (NTV, 2012). The protesters included KPRs.

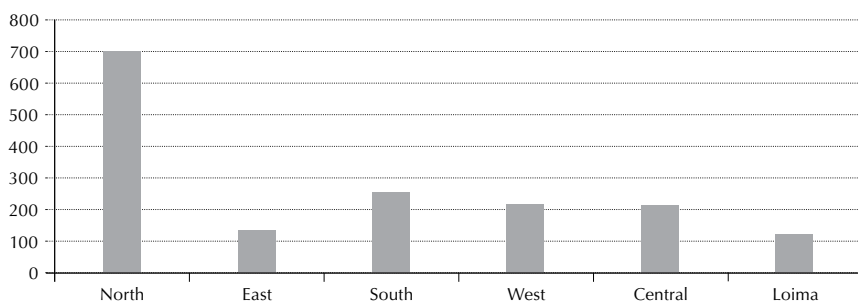
## Box 2 Welfare of paramilitaries

States may rely on paramilitaries because of convenience; lack of resources or time to mobilize the formal security sector; or, as noted in Box 1, where the legality of the action to be taken is questionable (Salmon, 2007, pp. 21–27). This may result in abuse or neglect of the welfare of paramilitaries. Young recruits into the PDF in Sudan were given 45–60 days of intensive training. However, a large portion of this time was given over to religious indoctrination, the glorification of martyrdom, and prayer. In combat against the Sudan People’s Liberation Army they were ill prepared for the terrain and methods of warfare, and casualties were very high. In rural areas PDF personnel were recruited on the basis of being able to shoot a gun and training was abandoned altogether in some cases (Salmon, 2007, p. 25). Similarly, Arrow groups in northern Uganda who mobilized themselves to protect Acholiland by fighting Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) suffered crushing defeats, brutal treatment, and maiming at the hands of Kony’s forces (Castelein, 2008). They were no match for the LRA, who were being funded by the National Islamic Front of Sudan.

## Number of KPRs and their weapons

There are 1,639 armed KPRs spread across Turkana’s six districts (see Figure 2), with a further 900 applications submitted over the past two years awaiting approval.<sup>60</sup> The high number of KPRs in the north may be explained by applicants’ being fast-tracked through the application process in response to high levels of conflict across Kenya’s northern border.

Figure 2 **Number of KPRs in Turkana**



**Note:** A minor discrepancy is evident in the number of KPRs given for Turkana South, with 257 given as the official figure.

**Source:** Interviews with security personnel, KPRs, and community members in Turkana, March and August 2012

Table 3 **KPRs and weapons per location in Turkana South**

| Location     | Sub-location or village       | No. of KPRs | G3        | AK-47     | Mark 4    | Liai     | FN       | Self-loading rifle | Carbine  |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| Kainuk       | Kainuk                        | 49          | 18        | 15        | 11        | 1        | 1        | 0                  | 3        |
|              | Kaakong                       | 12          | 5         | 4         | 3         | 0        | 0        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Lorugum                       | 5           | 3         | 1         | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Loyapat                       | 16          | 9         | 6         | 0         | 0        | 1        | 0                  | 0        |
| Kaputir      | Nakwamoru/ Lomopus/ Kapelibok | 22          | 10        | 2         | 8         | 0        | 2        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Kaputir village               | 8           | 4         | 1         | 1         | 0        | 2        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Ujuluk                        | 11          | 3         | 2         | 5         | 0        | 1        | 0                  | 0        |
| Katilu       | Nadome                        | 8           | 5         | 2         | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Lopur village                 | 23          | 7         | 9         | 7         | 0        | 0        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Katilu                        | 16          | 10        | 3         | 2         | 0        | 0        | 1                  | 0        |
|              | Kanaodon village              | 17          | 2         | 7         | 3         | 0        | 1        | 4                  | 0        |
|              | Lokapel                       | 10          | 5         | 4         | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Kalemungorak/ Nakabosan       | 16          | 9         | 5         | 2         | 0        | 0        | 0                  | 0        |
| Lokichar     | Lochwaa                       | 22          | 4         | 14        | 4         | 0        | 0        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Lokichar village              | 4           | 1         | 0         | 2         | 0        | 1        | 0                  | 0        |
|              | Locheremoit                   | 18          | 2         | 6         | 10        | 0        | 0        | 0                  | 0        |
| <b>Total</b> |                               | <b>257</b>  | <b>97</b> | <b>81</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>5</b>           | <b>3</b> |

Source: Police records, Turkana South, 2012

The most common small arms among Turkana South KPRs are G3s, AK-47s, and Mark 4s (see Table 3). The Mark 4 is an old gun that often belongs to more long-serving KPRs and ammunition for it is now scarce.<sup>61</sup> A senior security officer revealed that the state does not have access to this ammunition, raising two issues: firstly, that KPRs who are involved in many conflict situations are not adequately equipped; and, secondly, that there is likely to be an illegal source for this ammunition. Bevan (2008, p. 64) suggests that many KPRs are forced to acquire ammunition through traders and fellow Turkana:

*Members of the KPR, like many Turkana, are both suppliers and recipients of illicitly traded ammunition. Owing to the irregular supply of ammunition from*

*the police, many KPR personnel have to acquire ammunition from traders and fellow Turkana. In the latter case, the transfers are best characterized as friend-, family-, and clan-based, comprising a bi-directional flow of ammunition (sometimes traded, often gifted) in response to the respective needs of Turkana warriors and the KPR who reside alongside them.*

A former police officer in Turkana West also stated: 'KPRs are given 10–20 rounds of ammunition. But they get others by other means, using their own resources to get them.'<sup>62</sup>

## Arms controls

As noted above, acquiring a firearm as a reservist is not always straightforward. Corrupt transactions and bribery are often necessary to obtain arms from the state. A former Turkana-based police officer noted:

*The worst place is Lodwar, where everyone is a KPR [reservist]. You are given a gun provided you are able to give 'something' to the OCPD .... The issue now is [that if] you have money, you get the gun and the same gun will refund your money.<sup>63</sup>*

In one interview, a Catholic priest provided the link connecting corruption, the police, and KPR firearms:

*My brother wanted to be a KPR [reservist]. He was trained in Lokitaung and not given a gun because he did not bribe [anyone]. He decided to come to Lodwar in 1987 to try and obtain a gun. When he arrived the OCPD needed money for a gun. I decided to approach a prison officer and an administrative police officer, who both suggested that he had to give a bribe to obtain the gun. Around 2007–08 you had to pay between 9,000 to 10,000 shillings [USD 110–122], so we managed to raise 9,000 shillings and he was given an official gun. He is now in [the] Kibish area working as a KPR [reservist]. I have never heard [of] him [being] called for training or given any benefits.<sup>64</sup>*

One issue this case highlights is the movement of weapons. A gun that was originally supposed to be purchased in Lokitaung in the north was instead bought in Central District and then moved to Kibish in North District. It is

unlikely that this gun's movements would have been tracked. The cost of a bribe is a small fraction of the cost of acquiring a gun in the illicit market (see the section on illicit arms and ammunition in Turkana), making bribery and corruption the preferred method of acquisition. The priest added, 'once you get the gun you just disappear'.

It is very difficult to ascertain the exact number of weapons held by KPRs in Turkana. OCPDs are required to send monthly reports on KPR numbers and weapons held, but it is unusual for them to physically check these details (except in Central District, where arms are held in an armoury overnight). The lack of any reliable accounting process for state-held small arms is alluded to in comments made by an OCPD:

*Since 1986, when the KPRs were given arms, each OCPD comes, but handing over is not clear. It's based on a monthly report, which is just a paper, as opposed to physically seeing the gun and the individual.*<sup>65</sup>

As a DC explained further:

*[The] government would recruit police reservists to handle cattle raids and to move with the people and their cattle. They were promised initially that they would be employed, but the idea changed. They were given arms and called home guards. They were expected to keep the gun to protect the homestead and when bullets are finished, they would be supplied by the state. The only thing that is registered is the number of the gun.*<sup>66</sup>

Meetings between the OCS and KPRs are supposed to take place weekly, but in peripheral areas where KPRs are more transient, routine reporting back to police stations may not occur. Therefore the OCPD only meets with KPRs occasionally. Without close supervision, chiefs have been known to issue state arms to people of their own choice without oversight or discretion.<sup>67</sup>

The first-generation KPRs (originally called 'home guards')<sup>68</sup> from the 1970s were supplied with small arms. With many of these original reservists now ageing, the legacy of the first generations' firearms is currently causing problems. Firearms originally issued to KPR recruits decades ago have been inherited or passed down to younger generations without OCPDs' records having been updated. OCPDs are unable to trace who is in possession of

these weapons and have no control over the new owners' intended use of these firearms. A security officer identified the issues surrounding such weapons:

*We have people of 70–80 years [of age] and still having the arms. It is dangerous to take arms from them. What do you do with the animals? The young generation are not willing to go and take care of the animals. The new generation looks at things differently; they do not see the need.*<sup>69</sup>

Owing to corruption, bribery, resource and technology constraints, administrative changes, challenges of geography, the mobile nature of KPRs, and issues connected to the long lifespan of firearms, the recording and tracking of state-issued KPR firearms is a huge challenge for OCPDs.

## Diversions and misuse of arms

Criminal behaviour and firearm misuse by some KPRs is widely reported and recognized (Wepundi et al., 2012, pp. 46, 66, 75–76; Mkutu, 2003, pp. 14–15; 2005). A Catholic priest remarked in an interview that

*KPRs are the commanders of 'ngorokos' (thugs). They are key organizers and even raiders. Some are the most respected commanders. They are now being used as assassins [sic], [for] robbery, stopping vehicles on roads, and intimidation in urban areas where they behave like messengers of police by arresting people.*<sup>70</sup>

Cases of banditry on the roads, notably between Lokichogio and Kakuma, are well coordinated and known to be initiated by LPR reservists in close partnership with local police.<sup>71</sup> One case in Kainuk in May 2010 involved the ambush of a truck driver by three bandits in army uniform armed with G3s (a commonly issued KPR weapon—see Table 3). The bandits fired multiple shots at the truck, instantly killing the *tandboy* (assistant) and making off with KES 4,600 (USD 61) and a mobile phone. Security forces arrested two suspects, one of whom was a KPR, and recovered his gun.<sup>72</sup> There is also anecdotal evidence of KPRs from Turkana East forgoing kraal security to carry out road banditry.<sup>73</sup> Numerous cases of inside criminal activity

implicating KPRs are seen by some as the reason for the failure of the police to manage security on the nation's roads.<sup>74</sup> One DC expressed his desire to do away with KPRs in response to their criminal activity and firearm misuse:

*The time has come when we do not need these people, as no supervision exists. They are not paid and so may use firearms for the wrong purpose. The arms given to them are used against their neighbours, for highway robbery, hired to criminals, [and] used to destroy property, and politicians take advantage of them. Money also exchanges hands. The same arms given to KPR[s] are used in conflict.*<sup>75</sup>

When small arms accounting methods are weak—or non-existent, as is the case with many KPRs—and a force that is disgruntled by the lack of pay is given arms that provide an all-too-precious commodity in this conflict-affected region, a perfect environment is created for the diversion of these weapons to undesirable groups. As a retired DC stated: 'While I served in North Eastern [Province] we gave them arms and they disappeared into Somalia; we gave them ammunition and they sold [it].'<sup>76</sup>

Diversion—whether intentional or otherwise—of state-held firearms feeds criminal activity nationwide. KPR arms have been traced to crimes in different parts of Kenya, for example, a gun seized in Narok was traced back to Turkana Central, where it had been issued to a KPR reservist.<sup>77</sup>

## Politicians and KPRs

In 2003 parliament created the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), an annual budgetary allocation of 2.5 per cent of the national revenue divided among the nation's 210 parliamentary jurisdictions/constituencies (Chweya, 2006). These funds are intended to enable grassroots funding through the appointment of local committees to determine local priorities for investment. However, in Turkana representation on the CDF Committee has been left in the hands of sitting MPs, who in most cases appoint people of their own choosing. Committee members have been accused of irregular awards of tenders, suspect payments, and the use of CDF funding for political purposes.<sup>78</sup> The acting chief executive officer for the CDF has acknowledged that

CDF money has been misused (Kulali, 2012; TISA, 2009). In a pastoral district CDF money was used to purchase bullets and ammunition that were given to the KPRs and youths under the opaque heading in the accounts of ‘mobilization and logistics’.<sup>79</sup> It was not entirely clear what was intended by this, and whether the KPRs and youths were being manipulated by politicians, but what is clear is that development money was used to resource an improperly controlled force and to militarize communities, risking human rights abuses.

As more KPRs seek secondary employment and take on private contract work, the KPR is becoming increasingly politicized. Even in general employment by the force, potential recruits are selected in terms of political allegiances. Political elites are able to put forward the names of people whom they want to be KPRs so that they can protect the homes and businesses of the elites.<sup>80</sup> A DC highlighted the implications of this:

*If a member of parliament requests ordinary police, it’s not a problem, but if a KPR is employed and recruited in the constituency of the politician, he takes orders from the politician and gives allegiance and loyalty to the politician.*<sup>81</sup>

## Turkana: costs of illicit arms and ammunition

Table 4 **Arms costs in Turkana in terms of cattle or cash (KES)**

| Type of gun | Loima  |         | South  |         | West   |         | North  |         | East   |         | Central |        |
|-------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
|             | Cattle | Cash    | Cattle | Cash    | Cattle | Cash    | Cattle | Cash    | Cattle | Cash    | –       | Cash   |
| G3          | 7      | 140,000 | 7      | 140,000 | 10     | 200,000 | 8      | 160,000 | 7      | 140,000 | –       | 50,000 |
| AK-47       | 6      | 120,000 | 5      | 100,000 | 6      | 120,000 | 6      | 120,000 | 5      | 100,000 | –       | 20,000 |
| FN          | 7      | 140,000 | 6      | 120,000 | 8      | 160,000 | 7      | 140,000 | 8      | 160,000 | –       | 50,000 |
| Mark 4      |        |         |        |         |        |         | 8      | 160,000 |        |         | –       |        |
| HK11        | 10     | 200,000 |        |         | 10     | 200,000 | 8      | 200,000 | 10     | 200,000 | –       |        |
| M16         | 8      | 160,000 |        |         |        |         |        | 160,000 |        |         | –       |        |

**Note:** KES 83.30 = USD 1.

**Source:** Author interviews with warriors and KPRs, Turkana, October 2011–April 2012



Table 5 **Ammunition costs in Turkana, 2009–11 (KES)**

|              | <b>Loima</b> | <b>South</b> | <b>West</b> | <b>North*</b> | <b>East</b> | <b>Central</b> |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| Type of gun  |              |              |             |               |             |                |
| G3           | 40           | 30           | 50          | n/a           | 30          | 20             |
| AK-47        | 150          | 100          | 150         | n/a           | 150         | 50             |
| FN           | 40           | 30           | 50          | n/a           | 30          | 20             |
| Mark 4 and 3 | —            | 50           | —           | n/a           | 50          | 50             |

\* We were unable to collect this information in Turkana North.

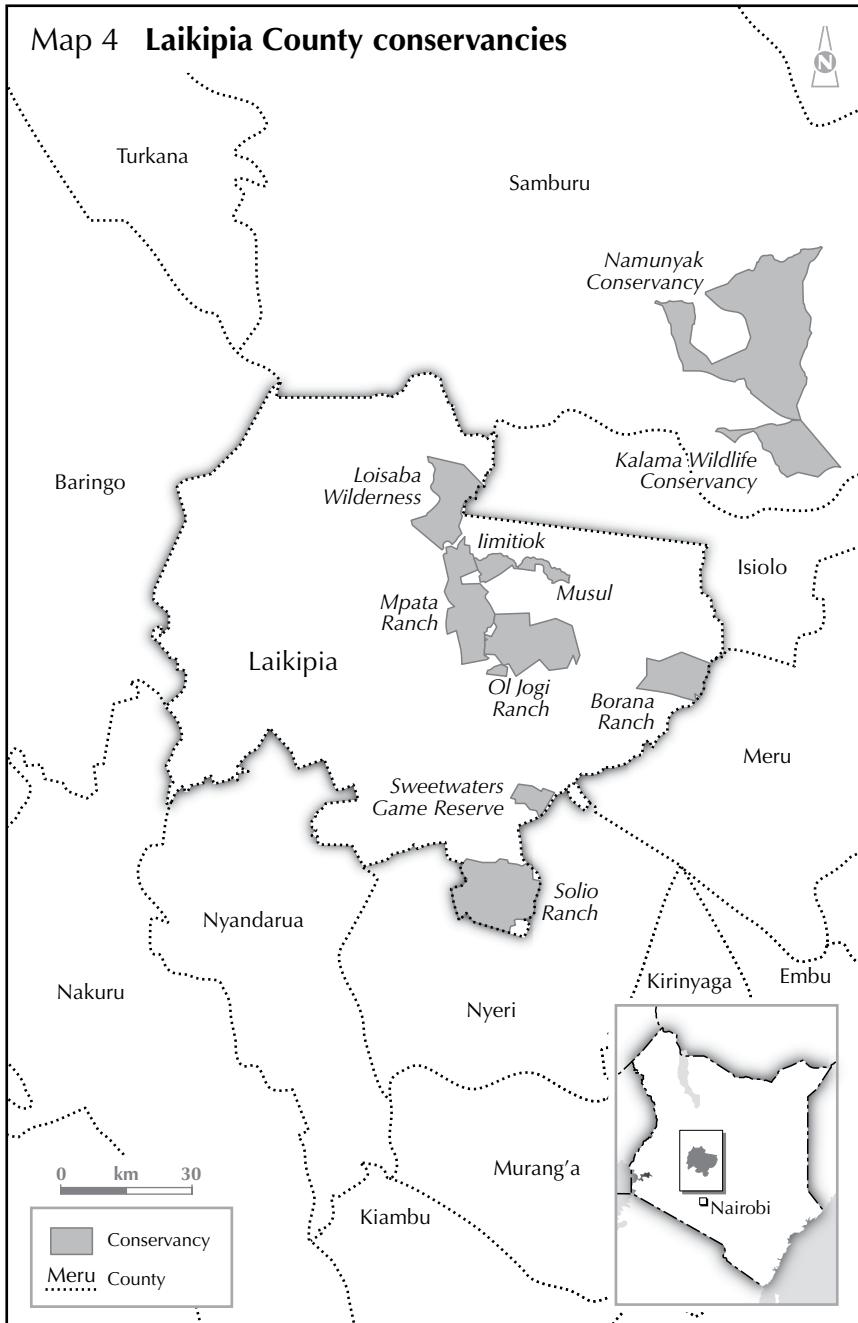
KES 83.30 = USD 1.

Source: Author interviews with warriors and KPRs, Turkana, October 2011–April 2012

As Table 4 shows, illicit small arms tend to demand higher average prices in the northern and western border areas, where cross-border conflict creates a demand for weapons. This demand feeds the illicit market. In the north, too, more weapon types are available than in any other region, while the price of the Mark 4 reflects the demand for the gun and also the flow from bordering states. Ammunition prices too, are higher in western areas, with AK-47 ammunition demanding the highest value.

Bevan (2008, p. 63) describes the selling of ammunition by KPRs and the weak institutional controls to prevent this. Warriors and KPRs use bullets as currency in many places, such as Kalilo, where bullets were used to buy alcohol.<sup>82</sup>

Map 4 **Laikipia County conservancies**



## IV. The case of Laikipia

Laikipia County lies in the east of the Rift Valley Province, occupying an area of 9,500 sq. km (see Map 4). The total population was estimated to be 399,227 in 2009 and over the past ten years has increased by nearly 20 per cent, or 2 per cent per annum on average (Kenya, 1999; 2009).

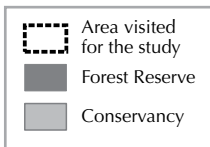
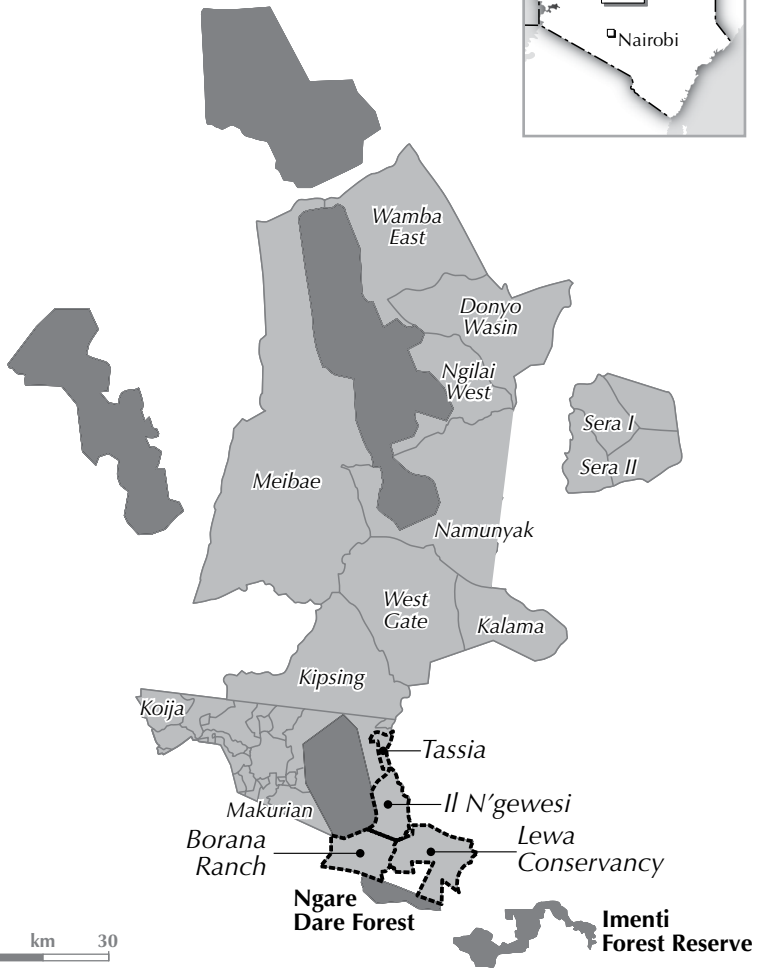
Laikipia is an interior, rural, semi-arid county where resource-based conflicts occur among a variety of land users, including pastoralists, horticulturalists, agriculturalists, and ranchers. The development of fenced wildlife conservancies over the past nine years, merging former ranches, groups of ranches, or communal land, has increased land tensions in some cases (Campbell et al., 2009). Like Turkana, Laikipia is also vast and underdeveloped, with sparse, poorly resourced security coverage, which means that it relies on the KPR to assist in the provision of security. Laikipia is a useful study because it has similarities to other regions, such as the coastal districts and the Tana River, where large numbers of KPRs provide security to conservation areas.

### Pastoralism and wildlife conservancies in Laikipia

Laikipia is a multi-ethnic county containing Kikuyu, Meru, Samburu, Maasai, Kalenjin, Borana, Turkana, and people of European origin. The Kikuyu and Meru occupy the urban and arable parts of the county, and the Europeans mainly live on ranches. Ninety per cent of the population are pastoralists, who occupy all parts of the county (Mkutu, 2001; 2005).

There is a long history of ranching in Laikipia, which currently produces 60 per cent of the country's beef (Gitonga, 2011).<sup>83</sup> There is now a shift from pure ranching to conservation, with many areas demarcated as conservancies (i.e. areas designated for wildlife conservation in which there may also be ranching and tourism). This began in around 1994 in Lewa, which had been taking the lead, along with the Solio Game Reserve, in rhino conservation and

Map 5 **Conservancy Corridors**



anti-poaching. By early 2012 there were 30 conservancies<sup>84</sup> and the number is increasing rapidly. Conservation areas may be made up of one or several private ranches or areas of communal land. Thus they may be privately owned (Lewa, Borana), community owned (Il Ngwesi, Tasia), or government owned (Mutara). Conservation areas are a relatively new concept and are not yet governed by official policy. Most community conservancies register as trusts to put them on a more secure legal footing and many (around half) fall under the umbrella of the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) headed by the Lewa conservancy, whose role is to raise funds for the establishment and management (including security) of conservancies (NRT, n.d.). There is no financial support from the government for conservancies in Laikipia, unlike in Samburu, where conservancies are allocated KES 1,000,000 (USD 12,000) per year from the CDF.<sup>85</sup>

There are incentives for landowners to form conservancies (*Daily Nation*, 2011). First, under the new Constitution, it is harder for non-Kenyans to own land in Kenya, and when leases agreed with the Maasai in the early 20th century run out they may not be renewed (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 24–25). However, land is unlikely to be seized if it is being used for eco-tourism, which is a major revenue earner, and wildlife is increasingly recognized as a national treasure. Secondly, being conservation projects, they are easy to market to tourists and thus make economic sense. Lastly, there is a security incentive for forming conservancies. The presence of wildlife allows managers to ask their scouts to be registered as KPRs. This then gives them the right to carry arms to protect animals from poaching, which also safeguards the interests of the landowners.

The NRT has brought the concept of conservancies from Laikipia to several other counties, including Lamu, Samburu, Isiolo, and Marsabit, and this model is being exported to South Sudan (Gettleman, 2012). In Isiolo and Marsabit, however, some communities resisted the model, fearing that they will lose large tracts of communal grazing land. They accuse the NRT of being concerned with making money more than helping communities. The Isiolo pastoral community has gone to court over this. Conservancies have now blocked pastoral corridors, which is a recipe for large-scale conflict.<sup>86</sup> A local bishop noted that individuals or groups of private foreign investors are now

buying land next to conservancies to build tourist lodges.<sup>87</sup> Elders in Dol Dol voiced concerns that although the conservancy model is supposed to benefit the community, from time to time managers open fences to reduce elephant numbers, thus allowing wildlife, specifically elephants, to enter neighbouring communities' land and destroy the crops.<sup>88</sup>

## Resource conflict in Laikipia

In Laikipia over the past 40 years, large areas of what was once communal land<sup>89</sup> have been set aside for national parks, horticulture, agriculture, commercial ranching, and now conservancies. Individual land ownership has increased through the acquisition of title deeds by elites, and land grabbing by the ruling class in Kenya as a whole has reached such proportions that it is hardly considered illegal (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 24–25). Further opening of the land market has allowed many new investors to buy land for agriculture, ranching, and tourism,<sup>90</sup> to the point where commercial ranchers, farmers, and absentee landlords own 70 per cent of Laikipia's land.<sup>91</sup> The result has been the restriction of grazing land and water sources available to pastoralists and other locals. 'Squatting', or occupying private land and using private resources, by pastoralists is common and causes tensions that sometimes lead to conflict (Mkutu 2001; 2005; 2008). The over-extraction of water from rivers by large- and small-scale horticulturalists leads to tensions downstream and in some cases invasions of ranches to access water points. Rapid population growth and drought have also increased the pressure on resources. Drought conditions that have been prevalent since 2001 have on several occasions forced the Maasai and other pastoralist groups in search of fresh pasture and water to migrate onto private ranches and to areas farmed by agriculturalists (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 14–15).

The creation of conservancies has already in some cases had the unintended consequence of fuelling conflict. Campbell et al. (2009) note several examples of this, including the Sera Conservancy in Samburu, where traditionally the Rendile, Borana, and Samburu have shared pastures during the dry season. With the creation of the conservancy, only Samburu scouts are able to access the land, which leads to disputes. Boundary disputes between

the Lekurruki community and neighbouring Il Ngwesi groups also occurred after the creation of a conservancy in 1999 (Campbell et al., 2009).

The representation of the differing interests of pastoralists and agriculturalists has always been closely related to election outcomes, because pastoralists are historically under-represented. Laikipia was Maasai ancestral land before being appropriated by 'agreements' with the British in 1904 and 1911 to create parts of the so-called 'White Highlands' (KNA, 1910–11; 1933–34; Mkutu, 2008, pp. 23–26). From time to time Maasai elders have called for the large ranches and farms to be returned to pastoralists, but security forces have suppressed such calls.

In Laikipia wildlife can move freely across private and communal landholdings (Mkutu, 2001). However, human–wildlife conflict is an important issue and animals, especially elephants, are a threat to the water infrastructure, because they destroy watering points (pans, dams, pipes, etc.) and also compete with livestock for the limited pasture. Locals in Dol Dol noted:

*Human–wildlife conflict is a major problem, especially elephants, which can come to main Dol Dol centres. They are all over, as the Samburu–Laikipia wildlife corridor has been interfered with especially by electric fencing, which does not allow the elephants to move north. This means that the population of elephants in Dol Dol is greater. Two months hardly pass before elephants kill someone. That is when KWS wardens come to either kill them or move them.<sup>92</sup>*

Although less intense than in many parts of the Horn of Africa, armed conflicts in Laikipia are widespread and of increasing concern. Inadequate policing and the inappropriate arming of militias by the state have led to a tendency towards self-defence and retaliation. In addition to the widespread resource-based conflicts between pastoralists and agriculturalists, frequent cattle raiding occurs among pastoral groups.<sup>93</sup> In 2008 an estimated 8,000 people were displaced and 25 killed in conflicts between farmers and Tugen and Turkana pastoralists in Laikipia West (Gichigi, 2008). The availability of small arms has led to widespread weapons ownership and guns are now considered a tool necessary for survival. For example, in Laikipia West pastoralists have at times united against agriculturalists, leading to calls for the latter to be armed for self-defence (IRIN, 2008).

## Features of the KPR in Laikipia

Research carried out on the KPR in Laikipia by the author (Mkutu) in 1999, 2002, and 2003 found little mention of conservancies, but the current situation is markedly different.<sup>94</sup> Two KPR models now exist: the traditional KPR continues to operate, but KPRs are now working as scouts or rangers<sup>95</sup> in conservancies (Lagat, 2012). Gettleman (2012) calls them conservation militias who have become ‘de facto 911 squads’ or a ‘nonprofit army’. Traditional KPRs are not uniformed and tend to wear *shukas* (large cloths) and open shoes (or no shoes), and carry firearms. Scouts are generally younger and are provided with uniforms, training, and salaries, making it an attractive employment option. Conservancy security teams are networked and closely linked to the KWS, and some to the NRT. Many have radio communication equipment, binoculars, global positioning systems, tracker dogs, camping equipment for mobile security teams, computer and office resources, airstrips, and other resources. The contrast between traditional KPRs and scouts is stark (see Table 6) and a source of tension between the ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ KPRs (as they are often referred to). Scouts view traditional KPRs as illegitimate and as ‘members of the public carrying arms’. Scouts are in turn accused of usurping security powers and poaching.<sup>96</sup>

Table 6 **Differences between scouts\* and traditional KPRs**

| <b>Traditional KPRs (outside conservancies )</b> | <b>Scouts (inside conservancies)</b>                  |
|--|---|
| No uniform or borrowed uniforms                  | Uniform provided                                      |
| Work for communities                             | Work for conservancies                                |
| Minimal or no training                           | Trained in Manyani by the KWS and British ex-soldiers |
| No salary or compensation                        | Salaried and compensated in case of injury/death      |
| No promotion                                     | Promotion is clear                                    |
| Armed by OCPD                                    | Some armed by OCPD                                    |

\* It is worth noting that some scouts in conservancies are not KPRs.

Source: Author interviews at Samburu and Laikipia, October 2011–January 2012

‘Scouts’ are a recently introduced type of security personnel who are not widely recognized and tend to be associated with an unarmed force.<sup>97</sup> The



concept came from African Conservation Centre headed by former KWS director David Western, who first introduced scouts in Amboseli in 2003 to manage wildlife.<sup>98</sup> The group is unarmed, but in response to increasing numbers of armed poachers from Somalia, there is pressure to supply weapons.<sup>99</sup> In Samburu and Laikipia scouts are armed because they are also KPRs. However, in Samburu most KPRs are traditionally unarmed.<sup>100</sup>

The introduction of scouts to Laikipia began in Lewa, where many were armed to protect rhino that were vulnerable to poaching. The Ol Pejeta Rhino Sanctuary was later established to protect the animals, requiring additional KPRs. Since 2009 this model has spread to other conservancies, with arms being issued for the protection of wildlife (Gettleman, 2012). The role of scouts includes monitoring wildlife and protecting it from poachers, involving the KWS in instances of poaching or other problems with wildlife,<sup>101</sup> dealing with cattle raids and trailing stock theft, pursuing people in possession of illegal arms, informing chiefs, and assisting with arrests.<sup>102</sup> Yet despite the increased number of armed KPRs, two rhinos were killed in 2012 and the KWS became uncomfortable with arming KPRs throughout Laikipia.<sup>103</sup>

Questions have been asked about the legality of using NRT funding to arm scouts.<sup>104</sup> Gettleman (2012) notes the risks:

*In Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other African countries, home grown militias initially mustered to protect communities have often turned into predators themselves.*

A prominent government donor in Kenya expressed his concerns: 'Donors are not supposed to fund security, especially paramilitaries.'<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, donor money can run out at any time, raising questions about the long-term sustainability of arming the scouts, which has implications for the security of conservancies.

### *Recruitment and training*

The same application process applies to both types of KPRs. Scouts noted that there is a standard application form to be filled in, and their fingerprints are also taken. The applicant should come from the local community and the application should be supported by the chief, who has to issue a certificate of

good conduct. Lastly, there is a medical examination. The application is then sent to the OCPD, who sends it to the Criminal Investigation Department in Nairobi for approval.<sup>106</sup> Although the procedure is clear on paper, various sources noted that it is open to abuse from local councillors and politicians, who are able to recommend people of their own choice and ensure that they are approved.<sup>107</sup> Conservancies may recruit and train their own scouts, but they will not become official KPRs nor be permitted to carry guns unless they are approved centrally.

Training is lacking for KPRs outside conservancies. A former high-ranking provincial administrator noted:

*There is no sensible training, they are only taught at the police. Firearms are given by the police, but they are not trained on how to use them.*<sup>108</sup>

In the absence of police training, the KWS trains scouts at Manyani and British ex-soldiers who served in Afghanistan train them at Lewa.<sup>109</sup> This is of concern because there is no control over the doctrine, mandate, and methods being taught, and military training methods do not necessarily translate into adequate training for a policing or conservancy role. Furthermore, it is unclear who authorizes and arranges this training. An OCPD noted that training had gone ahead despite his refusal to authorize it and that he did not see the relevance of KPRs being trained by the military.<sup>110</sup>

The police are supposed to train KPRs in the handling of weapons, but resources are not available for this at the local level. Tasia and Il Ngwesi scouts have requested a short course in ammunition training, because the KWS only provides training on wildlife law and security drills.<sup>111</sup> The NRT has requested the KWS to start training KPRs in weapons handling and to standardize their uniform.<sup>112</sup> However, in interviews KWS officials commented that this is not their mandate.<sup>113</sup>

### *Uniform and identification*

A uniform has an important role in identification, legitimacy, and even professionalism. KPRs inside conservancies are given uniforms by the conservancy. Those outside are supposed to get their uniform from the police, but this does not happen. KPRs operate in a variety of uniforms (army, police, or

other security personnel) or entirely without a standard uniform. This frequently leads to confusion and sometimes fatalities during confrontations. A KPR noted, 'Several KPRs have been shot dead because of no uniform.'<sup>114</sup> Most traditional KPRs do not carry identity documents and are only identified by the number of their gun.<sup>115</sup>

### *Compensation*

KPRs outside conservancies claim they are supposed to receive a contribution of KES 3,000 (USD 36)<sup>116</sup> per month from the government, but this does not happen.<sup>117</sup> Some KPRs note that they do receive some compensation from communities after the successful recovery of cattle.

Each conservancy-employed reservist is paid a salary of between KES 7,000 (USD 84) and KES 20,000 (USD 240),<sup>118</sup> which is periodically increased. The NRT has been able to develop a salary structure for KPRs and scouts that includes leave, daily sustenance, medical, transport, and telephone allowances.<sup>119</sup> In another example, Borana Ranch does not fall under the NRT structure, but is privately funded and managed, and therefore not donor dependent. Borana is extremely well resourced: the owner has a light aircraft for security purposes, there is a clear recruitment process with an employee welfare committee for staff to raise issues, a compensation structure, and food and medical assistance for security personnel.

## **Number of KPRs and their arms**

Table 7 provides the registered number of KPRs and their small arms in each conservancy (excluding Laikipia West, where scouts numbers are few),<sup>120</sup> as well as the type of firearm issued and the monthly allocation of ammunition per reservist. There are 1,137 KPRs in conservancies, but the number of reservists outside conservancies is unclear and the OCPD does not keep records of this.<sup>121</sup>

Table 7 shows that just below a quarter of KPRs are authorized to carry firearms. Although conservancies are requesting more arms, many KPRs remain unarmed. Some conservancies hold firearms that are licensed to the owners and are then assigned to scouts. Borana has 47 security personnel,

Table 7 **Armed and unarmed KPRs in conservancies**

|     | <b>Name of ranch/<br/>conservancy</b>           | <b>No. of<br/>registered<br/>KPRs<sup>a</sup></b> | <b>No. of<br/>armed KPRs</b> | <b>Type of<br/>weapon</b> | <b>Ammunition sup-<br/>ply per scout per<br/>month (rounds)</b> |
|-----|---|---|------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1.  | Ol Pejeta                                       | 158   | 42                           | G3                        | 100   |
| 2.  | Mpala   | 42  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 3.  | Mogwooni  | 32  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 4.  | Lolmarik  | 60  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 5.  | Segeera   | 49  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 6.  | Lewa <sup>b</sup>                               | 204   | 86                           | G3                        | 100   |
| 7.  | Oljogi  | 66  | 48                           | G3                        | 100   |
| 8.  | Ole Naishu                                      | 52  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 9.  | El Karama                                       | 22  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 10. | Lolldaiga                                       | 18  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 11. | Mount Kenya Game Ranch                          | 43  | 21                           | G3                        | 60  |
| 12. | Jessel  | 12  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 13. | Solio   | 44  | 28                           | G3                        | 40  |
| 14. | Suyian  | 20  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 15. | Borana  | 47  | 3                            | .303                      | 10  |
| 16. | African Development<br>Corporation (ADC) Mutara | 0   | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 17. | Mugie   | 14  |                              |                           |   |
| 18. | Laikipia Ranch                                  | 0   | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 19. | Loisaba   | 75  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 20. | Ngorare/Finafran                                | 16  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 21. | Ol Malo   | 32  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 22. | Sosian  | 18  | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 23. | Mukugodo  | 8   | 2                            | G3                        | 60  |
| 24. | Mukima  | 0   | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 25. | Naibunga  | 38  | 8                            | G3                        | 60  |
| 26. | Il Ngwesi                                       | 18  | 10                           | G3                        | 60  |
| 27. | Tasia/Lekuruki                                  | 25  | 12                           | G3                        | 60  |
| 28. | Laikipia Wildlife Forum                         | 8   | 0                            | 0                         | 0   |
| 29. | Oldonyo le Pororog                              | 17  | 17                           | G3                        | 100   |
| 30. | Makurian  | 8   | 2                            | G3                        | 60  |
|     | <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>1,137</b>                                      | <b>279<sup>c</sup></b>       |                           |   |

<sup>a</sup> Some of the scouts are not registered as KPRs.

<sup>b</sup> The government issues arms to the DC, who distributes them among the various locations. At Lewa, half are in Meru and half are in Isiolo, and they have received more arms as a result of this. This raises issues of coordination.

<sup>c</sup> This is equivalent to an infantry company.

Source: Field data collected November 2011–January 2012

of whom three are licensed to carry firearms, although they are not KPRs.<sup>122</sup> More comprehensive data was not available; however, it is likely that the small arms recorded above do not fully represent those available in reality (see *The Standard*, 2012).

Firearms seem to be unequally distributed among conservancies. Lewa, as the first conservancy and a rhino sanctuary, has the most armed personnel. However, Ol Pejeta has 85 rhino, but fewer arms. Borana Ranch personnel noted that the delay in arming its KPRs is partly because there are no rhinos in Borana and also due to its position on the boundary between two administrative districts, which has led to confusion. The government ranch at ADC Mutara appears to have no KPRs (armed or otherwise) at all, raising questions that would benefit from further research.

## Arms controls

The local OCS is supposed to supervise KPRs, but in practice this is not the case. Ammunition is provided monthly and the OCS is required to file a monthly return, but, as in Turkana, this process is held back due to limited resources available for covering large distances to implement such reporting. A prominent security official noted:

*KPRs do not strictly follow police orders or firearms handling procedures. This is because they are not in constant touch with police and they are left to self-regulate.*<sup>123</sup>

The OCPD's control over the scouts is minimal and this is complicated by the lack of a regulatory framework for supervision. Conservancy managers have been seen taking command of scouts during cattle recovery operations and confrontations with raiders without the involvement of the official security forces.<sup>124</sup> Official security personnel are not permitted free access to conservancies without permission and OCPDs interviewed stated that no framework exists to enable them to supervise animal scouts without being seen as interfering. This relates to the issue described above involving the training of scouts by British ex-soldiers. This training is mainly carried out in Lewa and wholly arranged by conservancies without the OCPD's permission.<sup>125</sup>

Furthermore, official security personnel rely on the scouts for resources, as a private rancher noted:

*Police have no fuel. They ask for fuel. When we report cattle raids to the chief or OCS, we must send a car in case of raids. We are the police. We know about insecurity issues before the OCS. The police station at Ethal is often empty.*<sup>126</sup>

Armouries are an important factor in small arms control. Some conservancies have armouries for the secure storage of arms when they are not in use.<sup>127</sup> Several group ranches operate under an umbrella organization known as Naibungu, which is a joint body that manages the scouts. Scouts under Naibungu spoke at an FGD about the need for assistance so that they could build an armoury and find a responsible person to manage it.<sup>128</sup> Firearms kept at home in *manyattas* (huts) increase the risk of misuse and theft.

The mobile nature of pastoralists raises issues of jurisdiction and gun control for the KPR outside conservancies. Officially, security on duty should not allow KPRs to patrol outside their jurisdiction, but because of the nature of the work they frequently do.<sup>129</sup> Once outside their jurisdiction there is no legal provision for them to report to OCPDs in other areas. Coordination and communication between security organs in neighbouring districts and counties is lacking, which allows arms to be misused without any disciplinary procedure to follow. In one instance 18 KPRs, who were armed but not in uniform, boarded a *matutu* (minibus taxi) from Samburu to Rumuruti, Laikipia. No one asked who they were. When they alighted in Rumuruti, they were rounded up by the police and one of the KPRs started shooting. It was later discovered that the men were KPRs from Samburu on their way to protect a politician's farm.<sup>130</sup>

The movement of small arms beyond the jurisdiction of issue, or in some cases registration, is an important management and control issue. The question as to why the group of KPRs discussed above had been recruited to work for a politician is also important and will be considered. One security officer noted:

*In Isiolo we have four conservancies in which there are 300 arms. All you need is a letter to get arms and not even an application.*<sup>131</sup>

## Criminal behaviour and misuse of small arms

*Corruption, misuse of weapons and incompetence [are] rampant. Although started with good intentions, it must be categorically stated that the Kenya Police Reserve have, on the contrary, fuelled crime and livestock thefts among pastoralist communities.*<sup>132</sup>

Numerous examples exist of criminal behaviour and firearm misuse by KPRs. Multiple reasons for this have been provided in earlier sections, but this sort of behaviour should be of no surprise when considering an under-regulated, under-supervised, under-trained, under-supplied, under-paid, and over-worked force like the KPR. Both provincial administrators and scouts have referred to several instances of KPRs' having been arrested for being in possession of wildlife 'trophies'. A conservancy owner confirmed that in some of the confrontations between scouts and poachers it was discovered that the poachers were 'outside' KPRs.<sup>133</sup> An administrator in Laikipia concurred, noting that arms seized from poachers were found to be KPR arms that had been used or supplied for poaching.<sup>134</sup> An OCPD noted: 'Those who have arms use them to solicit money from the community for protection.'<sup>135</sup> An OCPD noted during an interview that KPR arms are sometimes used in domestic conflicts to extort money from members of the public. He added that many of the crimes his officers deal with could have been committed with KPR arms.<sup>136</sup>

In an interview, a private rancher stated:

*At the moment the KPR force is full of micro-management corruption in the area of ammunition. The government issues weapons for magendo.*<sup>137</sup> *It's easy to get a gun issued. You can buy a gun from the government and do what you want.*<sup>138</sup>

## Politicians and KPRs

Many KPRs are recruited to work for politicians.<sup>139</sup> At every political rally (or *baraza*), politicians call for more KPRs to provide security. Some are thought to be recruiting KPRs rather than police as a way of rewarding their supporters

and employing their 'own people'.<sup>140</sup> In some instances it was indicated that KPRs are used as politicians' 'escorts' and spies at the local level.<sup>141</sup> KPRs themselves believe politics is the biggest problem: 'When the politician goes home, he needs loyalists, which [are] equal to KPRs.'<sup>142</sup> It is also worth noting that some local councillors and politicians are on the NRT board (although some are opposed to the concept of conservancies) and are therefore in a position to influence decisions on security matters in conservancies.

When politicians demand the arming of KPRs, weapons may be provided without proper procedures.<sup>143</sup> In early 2012 a government official visited Isiolo County and 40 arms were given out, officially for new KPRs, to control raiding violence among Samburu, Turkana, and Maasai. However, the delegation was unable to reach the area until nightfall. It was decided to distribute the weapons, but supervision was poor and they were given to the wrong people. The same arms were then used in counter-attacks and counter-raids in the area, causing several deaths. A senior security official later confirmed that politicians demanded that these arms should be distributed.<sup>144</sup>

## **Laikipia: illicit arms and ammunition costs**

It is important to view KPRs and small arms in context. It is estimated that in Kenya there are around 530,000–680,000 civilian firearms (excluding those held by KPRs), while around 12.8 per cent of households located in high-volatility areas (such as Turkana and Laikipia) possess an illegal weapon (Wepundi et al., 2012, pp. 20, 88). Disarmament exercises have been attempted in West Pokot, Turkana, Isiolo, and Laikipia, but have failed to achieve the objective of reducing armed conflict in these areas. According to a senior administrator who has served in most arid and semi-arid areas, KPRs often have a second gun. The possession of a government-issued gun (which may be substandard) helps legitimize the possession of a second, more modern illicit gun: 'Government arms are a camouflage.'<sup>145</sup>

The Mark 4 and .303 have lower sale values because the .303 is an older weapon and the Mark 4 requires ammunition that is more difficult to obtain. But KPRs said that the Mark 4 could be seen as more desirable because it is a bigger gun suitable for poaching large animals.<sup>146</sup>



Table 8 **Prices of arms in Laikipia, Samburu, and Isiolo, 2010–2012**

| Type of gun | Price of arms in terms of cattle or cash (KES) |             |             |              |             |             |             |              |             |             |             |              |
|-------------|--|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
|             | Laikipia                                       |             |             |              | Samburu     |             |             |              | Isiolo      |             |             |              |
|             | Cattle 2010                                    | Cattle 2011 | Cattle 2012 | Cash 2010–12 | Cattle 2010 | Cattle 2011 | Cattle 2012 | Cash 2010–12 | Cattle 2010 | Cattle 2011 | Cattle 2012 | Cash 2010–12 |
| G3          | 2  | 3           | 4           | 45,000       | 4           | 4           | 5           | 60,000       | 2           | 3           | 4           | 40,000       |
| AK-47       | 3  | 3           | 4           | 51,000       | 3           | 3           | 5           | 60,000       | 3           | 3           | 4           | 44,000       |
| FN          | 2  | 3           | 4           | 33,000       | 4           | 4           | 5           | 50,000       | 2           | 3           | 4           | —            |
| Mark 4      | 2  | 2           | 2           | 41,000       | 3           | 3           | 4           | 42,000       | 2           | 2           | 2           | 30,000       |
| M16         |  |             |             | 28,000       |             |             |             | 65,000       |             |             |             | 35,000       |
| .303        |  |             |             | 32,000       |             |             |             | 32,000       |             |             |             | 28,000       |

Note: KES 83.30 = USD 1.

Source: Author interviews with warriors, scouts, and community members in Laikipia; warriors in Samburu; and warriors and community members in Isiolo, October 2011–January 2012

Table 9 **Prices of ammunition in Laikipia and Isiolo, 2009–2012 (KES)**

| Type of gun | 2009     |        | 2010     |        | 2011     |        | 2012     |        |
|-------------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
|             | Laikipia | Isiolo | Laikipia | Isiolo | Laikipia | Isiolo | Laikipia | Isiolo |
| G3          | 50       | 40     | 60       | 50     | 70       | 60     | 70       | 60     |
| AK-47       | 70       | 50     | 80       | 60     | 90       | 70     | 120      | 80     |
| FN          | 50       | 40     | 60       | 50     | 70       | 60     | 70       | 60     |
| Mark 4      | 70       | 60     | 70       | 70     | 80       | 70     | 90       | 80     |
| M16         | 80       | 30     | 90       | 30     | 100      | 40     | 120      | 50     |
| .303        | 60       | 30     | 60       | 40     | 70       | 50     | 80       | 60     |

Note: KES 83.30 = USD 1.

Source: Author interviews with warriors, scouts, and community members in Laikipia; warriors in Samburu; and warriors and community members in Isiolo, October 2011–January 2012

The price of firearms increased across the board between 2010 and 2012. In Laikipia this could be related to increased inter-communal conflict due to an influx of Samburu and Somali pastoralists to the area, and because of increased conflict among Samburu, Somalis, and Pokot.

Low ammunition prices indicate that KPRs are able to acquire ammunition from sources other than the government. Ammunition prices in Isiolo are lower because the main smuggling routes into Kenya from Somalia and

Ethiopia converge here, forming what has been termed the 'arms triangle' (Mkutu, 2008, pp. 66–67). The route from Ethiopia travels through Moyale, Marsabit, and Eastern Province to Isiolo. From there it runs through Laikipia and on to Nairobi. The route from Somalia has two main branches. The first runs through Dadaab, Garissa, and Mwingi to Nairobi, but excludes Isiolo. The second runs through Mandera and El Wak, or may bypass Mandera to reach El Wak, then goes to Wajir and Isiolo, and also feeds Marsabit.<sup>147</sup>

## V. Discussion

### Numbers and features of KPRs

There are around 1,630 armed KPRs in Turkana, with an additional 900 applicants waiting to be processed by a system that has been described by a senior government officer as inconsistent and subject to arbitrary decisions by individuals.<sup>148</sup> In Laikipia there are 1,137 KPRs working in conservancies, of whom 279 are currently armed with an unknown number of firearms licensed to conservancy owners.<sup>149</sup> The number of KPRs working outside conservancies in Laikipia is not recorded.<sup>150</sup> The role of KPRs in Turkana and Laikipia has evolved from (often unpaid) community security guards into various paid roles, including working for commercial entities and as scouts in conservancies. This is reflective of socio-economic changes in rural areas as a whole, where a liberalized market economy is to some extent replacing an exclusively cattle-based economy. Livelihood factors are clearly important drivers in the acquisition of small arms, which is in turn a conduit for perceived KPR roles in criminal activity and firearm misuse.

KPRs are the main community security mechanism in ASAL and are regarded as more effective than the police in many situations because they are familiar with the local context—be that political or geographical—and, most crucially, they are present.

*We need them as they offer protection and act as the security for [the] community more than the salaried men and women trained by the state,*

said a DO.<sup>151</sup> A chief noted, ‘They are conversant with the security situations around the environment and they respond immediately’,<sup>152</sup> whereas police may take up to three days to reach a conflict area.<sup>153</sup> A private rancher supported the KPRs, saying,

*KPRs are strength, because they are local. The police are outsiders, they are not local, and they are not risk takers like KPRs, so it is useful for them to help the police.*<sup>154</sup>

KPRs are familiar with the local language and culture, and are thus more relevant to community members, who are therefore more likely to share information with KPRs than they would to outsider police.<sup>155</sup> However, this does potentially cause a conflict of interest: KPRs may hold allegiances to their communities that may limit their professional objectivity.

## Controls over KPRs and arms

In terms of arms control, this paper raises important issues about policy and practice. Arms control relies on clear policy governing leadership, mode of operation, and adequate supervision, including the resources to carry out such supervision, which in the case of the KPR are entirely lacking. For conservancy scouts in Laikipia, although in theory they are overseen by the police, in practice their activities are overseen by conservation managers. The KWS trains scouts, but has no direct role in their operational management, aside from asking that scouts be armed for anti-poaching operations. This has resulted in a proliferation of security governance institutions (including the provincial administration and chiefs), but no framework to govern their activities. The OCPD relies on conservancies for resources and has an inferior role in managing scouts. In both cases the OCPD faces challenges of distance, infrastructure, communication, existing insecurity, and historically poor record keeping, which have led to difficulties in keeping track of KPRs and their small arms.

Addressing the question of KPR operational management and small arms control, an OCPD in Laikipia, supported by the DC, noted that a community policing model has been introduced, but stated that arms should not be used as part of this model. It was suggested that KPRs be incorporated into a security agency where they can be licensed and used for the benefit of the community. He suggested that the recruitment of KPRs be minimized and that those in conservancies should be closely monitored. Those retiring should be given a token of appreciation in return for handing back their arms.<sup>156</sup>

In the light of the changes in KPR roles, modes of operation, and command, there is an urgent need for a clear policy; a clear command structure and strong supervision; a salary structure; transparent and efficient record

keeping; and the availability of resources such as vehicles, fixed-wing aircraft or helicopters, and communications equipment.<sup>157</sup> The creation of fully fledged police stations in Laikipia will ensure a rapid response time, so that scouts will not need to be armed. This will also bring open, ungoverned spaces such as Oropoi under a formal policing umbrella. Monitoring the trafficking of illicit small arms is not easy, but could be approached as a joint strategy applying to all counties. Improved communication networks could assist this. Police should be equipped with solar-powered radios in Turkana and Laikipia, where investors are already pioneering this technology.

KPRs are currently working in a policing capacity in several areas. This must be acknowledged and they must be adequately resourced, protected, and compensated. The decision must be made whether or not to recruit KPRs as fully fledged police officers. If this is the case, then they should be posted out of their immediate localities to deter corruption.

## Privatization of security

As well as having implications for arms control, the privatization of security leads to a two-tier security system and reinforces social inequality. It must not be forgotten that privatizing security implies the ceding of state sovereignty on matters of law and order and in the resolution of armed conflicts. In other words, it means privatizing part of the state's responsibilities and the social contract to provide protection to individuals, communities, and their properties. The most rational argument for the KPR is the inability of the state to fulfil its constitutional obligation to provide protection. In such a situation the privatization of security may have positive effects by filling the void left by a failing state (although Kenya is not considered to be in this category, there are large ungoverned aspects of the security industry that raise concerns highlighted in this paper). As a DO put it:

*Because of [the] scarcity of regular formal police, KPRs are important. Livestock is valuable, like a rich man carrying money. If you allow the people to guard the bank, you must allow people to own arms and guard their animals.<sup>158</sup>*

However, the failure of the state to provide security for entire communities can lead to vigilantism, which is evident in urban areas.

The shift of KPRs into conservancies and other private security roles takes them away from guarding their own communities, an issue that administrators raised during the survey.<sup>159</sup> Elders in Samburu described how the Mukugodo have been disarmed and most youths from the area have become scouts in conservancies. In the dry period Somali pastoralists from Isiolo travel to Mukugodo Forest to graze their animals and have raided Mukugodo communities, who are now defenceless.<sup>160</sup>

The issue of KPRs must be considered in the context of good governance and maintaining the rule of law for the benefit of the whole nation.

## Arms misuse and diversion

Giving arms to KPRs is worrying because it exacerbates arms proliferation, which is now both illicit and licit in nature (as we have seen, Turkana is heavily armed with an estimated one in every three Turkana owning a gun<sup>161</sup>). It is particularly worrying because arms are being placed in the hands of untrained, unremunerated, poorly monitored citizens who may misuse them. It is ironic that some of the crimes committed in the country may be carried out with licit arms provided for the purpose of security. This then provokes other citizens to arm themselves and in some cases seek revenge. In the worst cases this results in a localized arms race and the militarization of communities, which in turn strengthens illicit arms and ammunition supply channels and feeds the illicit market. This may be reflected in the rising cost of arms and ammunition (see above), where the demand for weapons means that suppliers demand higher prices. As we have seen, the availability of illicit sources means that KPRs are able to acquire their own ammunition from illicit suppliers.

Inside conservancies the training may be better, but there are other potential problems with the formation of small, well-trained elite forces who are likely to be drawn from the same geographical area and therefore to belong to one ethnic group.<sup>162</sup> If funding for conservancy security ends, as is possible, it is not too far fetched to imagine disgruntled, out-of-work KPRs forming militia groups, as has happened in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, with groups like LDUs in Uganda and the PDF in Sudan (Pham, 2012;

Salmon, 2007; Gettleman, 2012). The arming of KPRs in conservancies could prove a challenge to future governments in Kenya. When asked about conservancies in Laikipia, a tour guide remarked: 'If given more arms, it will be another government in the Laikipia–Marsabit corridor'<sup>163</sup>—what Gettleman (2012) has termed 'the non-profit army'.

Scouts may become drawn into conflicts with neighbouring communities as mercenaries rather than as impartial security providers. Already there is tension between 'inside' vs 'outside' KPRs and a few incidents of shooting of 'outside' KPRs by scouts have occurred.<sup>164</sup> What may look like the legitimate provision of security to conservancy communities may be perceived as a threat by communities on the 'outside'. Furthermore, the creation of safe and secure areas in the context of the region's wider insecurity will inevitably draw migrating groups to these areas, putting pressure on resources and stretching the capacity of security providers. Therefore efforts should be made to ensure that conservancy security strategies are sensitive to both local (internal) conflict dynamics and the wider dynamics outside conservancies.

### Box 3 **Abusive violence by paramilitaries: South Africa and Sudan**

While militias are supposed to engage in 'protective violence', they often commit 'abusive violence', targeting the very people they are supposed to protect (Kalyvas, 2006, p. 108). In South Africa, self-defence units organized to protect African National Congress strongholds against Inkatha Freedom Party attacks often spent 'more time in terrorizing their communities than in protecting them' (De Klerk, 1998, p. 303). Township residents would refer to these revolutionary youngsters-turned-thugs as *comtsotsis*, a contraction of 'comrade' and *tsotsi*, with the latter being township speech for 'thug' (Marinovich & Silva, 2000, p. 20).

The PDF (a citizens' army of volunteer mujahideen) in Sudan was used from 1989 onwards to consolidate the power of the ruling party, extend Islamist ideology, and mobilize forces to assist the army when needed to fight the Sudan People's Liberation Army forces in the south. The PDF was a parastatal organization jointly run by the military and civilian committees that was mandated under law to mobilize, equip, and fund militias and auxiliaries, which occurred between 1992 and 1997. Once selected, groups would undergo a period of training and strong Islamist indoctrination, with encouragement to see the cause as a holy war (jihad).

The PDF also illustrates problems of command and control of paramilitaries in rural areas and how such problems can easily lead to abusive violence. Here, recruitment

processes depended heavily on tribal structures (chiefs), and the military was not represented. Training was minimal, or non-existent if recruits already had experience with a gun. The result was a blurring of the line between tribal militias and PDF groups. Political instability with the 1999 split between Hassan ‘Abd Allah al-Turabi and Omar al-Bashir, coerced recruitment, high casualties, and brutality towards recruits, led to a decline in popularity of the PDF and in financial contributions to the cause (Salmon, 2007; Salmon, 2007). With the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with the south in 2005 and later the creation of the new state of South Sudan, the purpose of the PDF and its ideology were thrown into question. One of the CPA’s clauses required the disbanding of the PDF, but currently it continues as an inactive reserve force in most parts of Sudan and remains active in the conflict areas of Darfur and Kordofan (Small Arms Survey, 2011). Many arms once given to PDF personnel have not been collected and the number of PDFs is not clear even to the government (Salmon, 2007). Some PDF groups such as those from the marginalized nomadic Missiriya, who had been promised jobs and development aid by the government, are now highly militarized and ready to fight for whoever is prepared to pay them (Salmon, 2007, p. 31).

In the case of the ‘janjaweed’ in Darfur, abusive violence was to the advantage of the regime and was directly endorsed. The group had been armed in 1996 by the then-prime minister, Sadiq al-Mahdi, from his own tribe, to extend central rule in Darfur by fighting those with whom the ‘janjaweed’ already had rivalries. The group persisted after the 1989 coup and was not integrated into the PDF as other tribal militias had been (Flint, 2009). Later they served as a useful tool of the government, which paid and armed them, and directed them to loot, steal property, burn villages, and kill in order to force Darfurians out of the area. This they accomplished through their extensive knowledge of the local area and capabilities suited to rural Sudan. However, Sudanese government officials have found it difficult to maintain control over the remaining paramilitaries who retain their weapons due to the fear of reprisals (Flint, 2009, pp. 13–14). In the cases of both the PDF and the ‘janjaweed’, arms have not been recovered.

## Politicization

The KPR as a force is vulnerable to politicization for a number of reasons. Firstly, its reservists are based in the constituencies of local politicians. Secondly, KPRs in a particular area are mainly from a single ethnic group, creating a close relationship with local politicians, while the national police employ personnel from the entire country. Thirdly—and this is truer of the younger generation who operate in a cash economy—their loyalties will be influenced by offers of financial compensation. The power of OCDPs to



prevent this is currently limited. One OCPD said: 'My biggest problem with KPRs is the issue of politicians.'<sup>165</sup> The continued arming of KPRs at the request of politicians without a formal governing structure is creating armed groups that resemble private armies ready to be deployed at the appropriate time.

Under the new county dispensation, an elected governor could potentially use KPRs for his or her own purposes. This concern was raised by 11 administrators surveyed who cited as problems core issues such as partisanship, clanism, patronage, politicization, the demanding of favours, and conflicts of interest. It was also noted that a military group could be formed for the governor to use against other counties.<sup>166</sup> With this in mind, what is needed are clear and transparent criteria for recruiting KPRs. Politicians should be distanced from security personnel recruitment at the local level and the proposed inspector general should assert independent control over the KPR.

## Wider conflict dynamics

The management of ASAL has been a challenge to Kenya, particularly with regard to security. The vast and difficult terrain, mobile populations, and climatic variability all contribute to the challenges of securing borders and providing governance, security, and basic services to these areas. The political and economic marginalization of these areas has had a detrimental impact on Kenya's security. Added to this is the problem of small arms flows from areas of conflict in the region such as Sudan, South Sudan, and Somalia.<sup>167</sup>

These ASAL are not resource poor. Conservation tourism is an important foreign exchange earner in Laikipia and its neighbouring counties. Turkana currently faces a complex economic future after the discovery of oil. Nearly 63,000 square miles of land under communal land tenure (over 80 per cent of the county) has been given out as oil exploration blocks to prospectors,<sup>168</sup> despite Article 71 of the new Constitution, which states that

*community land shall not be disposed of, or otherwise used without legislation specifying the nature and extent of the rights of members of each community individually and collectively (Kenya, 2010b).*

Add to this the planned construction of an oil pipeline from South Sudan to Lamu, the opening up of the northern region by the new port under construction in Lamu, and the highway into Ethiopia (LAPPSET<sup>169</sup>), which has already stalled due to land disputes,<sup>170</sup> and land and resource policy becomes a potential flashpoint if it is mismanaged (Okoth, 2012). Investors are coming in and rapid development is likely to take place. Similarly, emerging conflicts between investors and communities have also been witnessed in Tanzania, South Africa, Uganda, and Sudan (Curtus and Lissu, 2008; Luhwago, 2012; Hakiardhi, 2009; Okoth, 2012). Therefore careful planning for security is vital, not only for the benefit of pastoral areas, but for state and regional security. More broadly, pastoralists need to be adequately represented in decision-making processes affecting their land.

## Wider issues

While the use of paramilitary security structures may provide an increased sense of security for states in the short term, in the long term it feeds a cycle of increased insecurity, violence, and escalation of conflict. The lack of policy and sometimes failure to provide paramilitary sectors with a sense of direction makes the sector difficult to control and allows those involved to easily be misused by politicians, warlords, and regimes. Problems of supervision, command and control, record keeping, and the tracking of arms have all been highlighted across the Greater Horn of Africa region. Without arms tracking and good records, disarmament becomes more difficult.

When paramilitaries are the main security providers, conflicts also become regional due to states' sponsoring proxy militias in neighbouring countries. As may be seen in the DRC (see Box 4), Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and Sudan. This severely complicates conflict resolution. Paramilitaries must be seen in the context of ungoverned spaces, which are often resource rich and contested. If paramilitaries are made responsible for managing resource-based conflicts and border disputes, with the current lack of capacity and control over their activities, this becomes a threat to national and regional stability. The failure of African states to deal with ungoverned spaces and adequately provide for their security means that these areas are at risk of

becoming safe havens for terrorists. Militia groups operating in such areas may be vulnerable to recruitment by terrorist organizations. Furthermore, such areas with rich resources could be particularly attractive to terrorists (Rabasa et al., 2012).

#### **Box 4 Regime change and shifting loyalties: the Mayi-Mayi in the DRC**

State fragility and regime changes induce loyalty shifts based on economic and logistical support provided, as illustrated by the Mayi-Mayi, a loose association of armed militia groups operating in North and South Kivu in eastern Congo. They currently control large tracts of land (Vlassenroot and Van Acker, 2001; Jourdan, 2011). Some groups are well structured, with a clear political agenda (Vlassenroot and Van Acker 2001), and some bandits may claim to have a political agenda to give themselves legitimacy. Mayi-Mayi movements have occurred in various places and times, and with various objectives. They are characterized by the use of child soldiers. In Kivu, marginalization and lack of alternative livelihoods have been important factors in the decision by young people to join Mayi-Mayi groups. Strong nationalistic feeling and land conflict in the context of an influx of foreigners into resource-rich Kivu have also been important factors.

The Mayi-Mayi became prominent in the 1960s, taking part in an anti-Mobutu revolution led by Mulele. In the 1990s they took on the role of community defence force, at a time when many Banyarwanda people had migrated from Rwanda to the DRC, placing pressure on land and causing tensions with local people. Later, during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, many Tutsi refugees arrived and some Mayi-Mayi groups took sides with the Interhamwe to remove them. In 1996–97, during the revolution led by Laurent Kabila, many joined to help oust Mobutu, but later turned against Kabila's regime, whose soldiers were committing atrocities in Kivu (Jourdan, 2011; Vlassenroot and Van Acker, 2001). Importantly, when a Congolese Rally for Democracy/Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD) rebellion started in Kivu, supported by the Rwandan government, the response of most Mayi-Mayi was to ally themselves with the Congolese government, who provided support and appointed many Mayi-Mayi into top positions in the national army. This enabled the Mayi-Mayi to control large tracts of land and intensify their military activities, although the RCD still had a strong presence. At the same time marginalization continues, some Mayi-Mayi groups are not under central control, and there has been an increase in disorder in Kivu, with banditry, warlords, and profit seeking through violence. The Mayi-Mayi case is somewhat different from that of the KPR in that it arose as a grassroots movement, not under any central control, having anti-state objectives at least some of the time; however, it has also been openly state supported and is therefore relevant to the discussion.

## VI. Conclusion

This paper has highlighted that resources are often lacking for the training, payment, and proper supervision of KPRs, allowing indiscipline to flourish and leading people to turn to the private sector or other grassroots militias for protection. Local paramilitary forces require a livelihood, and if the state does not pay them, as noted in this paper, they will seek that livelihood with the use of their weapons. Paying local defence forces would give them an additional stake in the government. The case of the Mayi-Mayi noted in Box 4 illustrates how the loyalties and objectives of groups and individuals may shift over time according to the support they receive, economic incentives, and their perceptions of better opportunities. The Ugandan LDUs carried out illegal activities mainly when their pay was in arrears and hunger was threatening (Gomes and Mkutu, 2004; Mkutu, 2008, p. 39). The movement of KPRs into private security roles is reflective of socio-economic changes in Kenya's rural areas as a whole, where a liberalized market economy is to some extent replacing an exclusively cattle-based economy. The livelihood factor is clearly an important one and a driver in the decision to become an armed paramilitary, in the transformation of paramilitary roles, and in the misuse of arms. The wider issue of marginalized youth in Africa is critical to the future stability of states and is a central reason for the mushrooming of various armed groups such as militias and private security firms (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2009; Mkutu and Sabala, 2007).

Despite the various problems plaguing the KPRs, many rural citizens would rather have them than nothing at all. It must not be forgotten that many KPRs are doing a commendable job, as many administrators noted.<sup>171</sup> The issues currently affecting the KPR are not inevitable. They relate more to context—for instance, economic issues of competition for resources and socio-economic issues of unemployment—than to irreversible faults with personnel or leadership. Institutional problems with the KPR can be corrected with internal regulation and policy reform, particularly now that

policing and governance structures are changing under the new Constitution. Securing the country's internal security must be achieved before Kenya can address its border security. A variety of innovative approaches are needed to secure rural safety and security. What is clear from this paper is that the roles of many players must be considered, but ultimately the state must take the lead. Without a clearly defined framework the KPR offers more security risks than benefits.

# Endnotes

- 1 KPRs are sometimes referred to as 'home guards'. In this paper the term 'KPRs' is used.
- 2 These kraals/enclosures are referred to as *arumrum* in Turkana.
- 3 Author interview with Catholic priest from Turkana, Nairobi, April 2012.
- 4 This was an opportunistic contact with administrators studying for a Diploma in Administration for Government at the KSG.
- 5 The Greater Horn of Africa region refers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda.
- 6 Now called the North Eastern Province.
- 7 For example, the newly independent South Sudan was recently reported to have petitioned the African Union to be given the Ilemi triangle, which has been managed by Kenya for decades. South Sudan's Equatorial State has also accused Uganda of encouraging farmers to encroach on South Sudanese land. Tanzania is currently making warlike noises over who has the right to prospect for oil in Lake Malawi, and Uganda and the DRC are in dispute over control of Rukwanzi Island in Lake Alberta since Uganda announced a significant oil find in the Albertine rift. Somalia is concerned about Kenya's licensing of oil exploration in the Indian Ocean in an area that is anticipated to hold significant offshore hydrocarbon resources, and Kenya and Ethiopia are locked in disputes over competition for resources (pasture and fishing rights) in the Lake Turkana area. Uganda and Tanzania are also locked in disputes over land.
- 8 Author interview with local NGO worker with several years' experience in Turkana, Lodwar, 29 August 2012.
- 9 Author interview with several community members, security personnel, and NGOs, Turkana, 3–6 September 2012. This was confirmed in an author interview with Patrick Imana, executive director, Agency for Pastoralist Development, Lodwar, 4 September 2012.
- 10 For more on the BRICS, see Carmody (2011).
- 11 See also Kenya (2010a, pp. 11–12) on cross-border incursions by armed militia from Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia, which prompted the strengthening of security along Kenya's international borders. Al-Shabaab militias pose a serious security threat along the Kenya–Somalia border.
- 12 Survey, Kenya Institute of Administration (KIA), Nairobi, September 2011. This was confirmed to the author in an interview with senior member of the APS in Turkana, Lodwar, 29 August 2012.
- 13 Author interview with Dr Aden Guyo, private consultant, Marsabit, Nairobi, 19 July 2012. He noted that the number of KPRs was 55. He welcomed the disarmament process, but said that the wrong KPRs had been disarmed; see also *Daily Nation* (2012b).
- 14 Author interviews with officers commanding police divisions (OCPDs) in Laikipia and Turkana, August 2011–September 2012.

- 15 Survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011. According to an FGD conducted with district livestock officers from Turkana (Lodwar, 16 March 2012), 70 per cent of crime in Kenya is handled by chiefs.
- 16 LDUs are discussed in detail in Mkutu (2008, p. 40); see also Mkutu (2005, pp. 11–14).
- 17 Author interview with former MP for Moroto, Kampala, 16 May 2003; confirmed in author interview with former local councillor for Moroto, October 2003.
- 18 It is frequently stated that 68,000 sq. km is contested; see Kenya (2002).
- 19 The data showed that the ten lowest-ranking counties, which had poor infrastructure, health services, and education systems, were mostly ASAL. The term ‘poverty’ is contested, though: many Turkana are very rich in cattle.
- 20 Author interview with administrator, 17 March 2012; author interview with security officer, August 2012. It is public knowledge that warriors are well armed. This was confirmed in a variety of author interviews and FGDs in March and August 2012. One explanation as to why the Turkana are so militarized is that they are fighting on five fronts: in the west with the Karamoja, in the north with the Merille and Nyangtom, in the north-east with the Toposa and Dodoth, in the south with the Pokot, and in the south-east with the Samburu (see Mkutu, 2008; 2011).
- 21 Author interview with Alex Muyaka Mburu, acting district officer (DO) 1, Turkana South, Lokichar, 17 March 2012.
- 22 As stated in a letter from Chief Amajong of Loima to the OCPD for Loima, ref LOI/L&O/Vol 1/12 dated 30 July 2012. This letter had been forwarded by the OCPD to a local NGO to assist in mediation and alternative justice resolution.
- 23 Author interview with security officer, Turkana, 16 March 2012.
- 24 Author interview with Patrick Imana, executive director, Agency for Pastoralist Development, Lodwar, 29 August 2012.
- 25 Various author interviews indicated this, as well as an FGD with civil society representatives, 18 March 2012.
- 26 Author interview with DC of Baragoi, KSG, Nairobi, November 2012.
- 27 Author interview with acting DC of Loima, Loima, 4 September 2012.
- 28 Loima District was created in 2009.
- 29 Author interview with deputy OCPD, Lodwar, 29 August 2012.
- 30 Author interview with OCPD of Turkana Central. This was also noted by an author interview with the Turkana DC, KSG, Nairobi, 21 October 2012.
- 31 Observation and author interview with security officer, Lodwar, 17 March 2012.
- 32 Author interview with district livestock officer, Lodwar, 16 March 2012.
- 33 Observation and FGDs with KPRs, Kodekode, Turkana South, 18 March 2012.
- 34 Author phone communication with Turkana government official, 16 June 2012. See also Thiong’o and Kimani (2012).
- 35 Author interview with APS officer, 29 August 2012.
- 36 Author phone communication with former Turkana police officer, Nairobi, 19 December 2011.
- 37 FGD with KPRs, Lodwar, 17 March 2012.
- 38 Comment by retired DC in FGD with civil society and government representatives, KSG, Nairobi, 23 August 2011.

- 39 FGD with KPRs, Lodwar, 17 March 2012.
- 40 Administrators, civil servants, and NGO staff from Turkana noted this in a recent workshop, KSG, Nairobi, October 2012; confirmed in a phone communication with local administrators and a primary school teacher, October 2012.
- 41 Kenya's international borders with South Sudan and Uganda are largely unmarked and uncontrolled. Pastoral groups also often straddle international borders that were created by the colonial administration with little concern for pastoralists' patterns of movement.
- 42 Survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011; author interviews with Chief Longole, Ujuluk, Turkana South, 14 and 15 November 2011. The assistant chief of Lorengippi also noted the same phenomenon, author interview, 28 August 2012.
- 43 Author interview with security officer, Turkana South, 18 March 2012.
- 44 FGD with KPRs, Lodwar, 18 March and 28 August 2012. During an FGD with women in Lorengippi, Loima, August 2012, the women argued strongly that disarmament had left their men as defenceless as women and demanded that the government should arm them.
- 45 Author interview with OCS, Lodwar, 17 and 18 March 2012.
- 46 Author interview with Sarah Ekowi, small-businesswoman, Lodwar, 18 March 2012.
- 47 Survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011.
- 48 Author interview with Joshua, KPR reservist aged 60, Kodekode, Turkana South, 17 March 2012.
- 49 Author interview with an OCPD, Turkana, 17 and 18 March 2012.
- 50 Author interview with Joshua, KPR reservist aged 60, Kodekode, Turkana South, 17 March 2012.
- 51 FGD with KPRs, Lodwar, Turkana Central, 18 March 2012.
- 52 Author interview with Joshua, KPR reservist aged 60, Kodekode, Turkana South, 17 March 2012.
- 53 Although some may receive cattle as compensation after their successful recovery (survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011).
- 54 FGD with KPRs, Lorengippi, Loima, 29 August 2012.
- 55 FGD with KPRs, Lodwar, Turkana Central, 18 March 2012.
- 56 Author interview with Esokan Namyua, KPR reservist, Lodwar, 17 March 2012.
- 57 Survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011.
- 58 Author interview with senior security officer, Lodwar, 3 September 2012. It was noted that they had not been paid.
- 59 Author interviews with KPRs and administrators, Turkana, August 2012.
- 60 In an FGD with community members in Lorengippi, Loima, 29 August 2012, elders noted that 56 people have applied for KPR status, but have not yet been accepted; see also interviews with security personnel, KPRs, and community members, Turkana, March and August 2012.
- 61 FGD with KPRs in Lorengippi, Loima, 29 August 2012.
- 62 Author interview with former senior security officer, Turkana, 18 March 2012.
- 63 Phone communication with former Turkana police officer, Nairobi, 19 December 2011. This was also confirmed by an author interview with Father Lolee, KSG, Nairobi, 24 October 2012.
- 64 Author interview with Catholic priest from Turkana, Nairobi, April 2012.



- 65 Author interview with OCPD, Turkana, 18 March 2012.
- 66 Author interview with DC, Turkana, 17 March 2012.
- 67 Author interview with OCPD, Turkana, 18 March 2012. This was confirmed in an FGD with civil society representatives from Turkana, KSG, Nairobi, April 2012.
- 68 In some places they are still called home guards.
- 69 Author interview with security officer, Turkana, 18 March 2012.
- 70 Author interview with Catholic priest from Turkana, Nairobi, April 2012.
- 71 FGD with civil society representatives, Lodwar, 18 March 2012; confirmed by author interview with Catholic priest from Turkana, Nairobi, April 2012.
- 72 Author interview with security officer, Turkana, March 2012.
- 73 Phone communication with chief, Turkana, 16 June 2012.
- 74 Author interview with Catholic priest from Turkana, Nairobi, April 2012.
- 75 Author interview with DC, Turkana, 17 March 2012.
- 76 Comment by retired DC in FGD with civil society and government representatives, KIA, Nairobi, 23 August 2011.
- 77 Author interview with senior security officer, Turkana, March 2012.
- 78 FGD with civil society representatives, Lodwar, 18 March 2012. Government officials concurred that the CDF is controlled by politicians.
- 79 Author interviews with several people, including CDF officials, community members, NGOs, etc., March 2012. Identifying information has been withheld for reasons of sensitivity.
- 80 Author interview with OCPD with years of experience in Turkana, Turkana, January 2012. This was also confirmed in an FGD with civil society representatives in Turkana, March 2012.
- 81 Author interview with DC, Turkana, 17 March 2012.
- 82 Author interview with Catholic priest from Turkana, Nairobi, April 2012.
- 83 See Mkutu (2001) for more on land use in Laikipia.
- 84 Author field interviews with DO, Laikipia, 2011–12.
- 85 FGD with elders, Dol Dol, 9 October 2011.
- 86 Author interviews with elders in Laikipia and Isiolo, November 2011; confirmed in an author interview with donor agency employee in Isiolo, June 2012. This concern was also raised by KWS staff interviewed in Nairobi, 14 November 2011.
- 87 Author interview with local bishop, Nanyuki, 11 November 2011.
- 88 FGD with elders, Dol Dol, 9 October 2011. The authors saw the village, which had recently suffered an attack by elephants.
- 89 Accessible to members of the community and owned by the community.
- 90 Conservancy lodges may charge guests USD 300–700 per night, which is unaffordable for most Kenyans. For price ranges, see <<http://bks.beyondkenyasafaris.com/index.php/hotels/lakipia-safari-camps-lodges/140-lewa-safari-camp.html>>; <[http://www.kenyaonetours.com/camps/camps.htm?Borana\\_Lodge%2C\\_Laikipia](http://www.kenyaonetours.com/camps/camps.htm?Borana_Lodge%2C_Laikipia)>.
- 91 Author interview with district livestock officer, Nanyuki, 28 January 2012. The author previously interviewed this officer in 2002 and 2003 about the same issues (see Mkutu, 2005).
- 92 FGDs with women, men, and youth, Dol Dol, 8–10 October 2012; author interview with Ven. Joseph Ranja, Anglican priest, Dol Dol, 8 October 2011.
- 93 These include Samburu, Turkana, and Pokot.

- 94 See Mkutu (2001; 2005) for details.
- 95 The term ‘rangers’ is also commonly used. Scouts may also be known as ‘animal scouts’ and ‘wildlife scouts’. Some scouts are not registered as KPRs. This is the case in Lewa, Ole Pejeta, and Borana, where some unarmed non-KPR scouts patrol fences.
- 96 FGD with KPRs, Dol Dol, 9 October 2011.
- 97 In the survey of administrators (KIA, Nairobi, September 2011) the term ‘scouts’ was not well understood.
- 98 Author interview with Mrs Buyu, chief executive officer, African International Convention, November 2011.
- 99 Author interview with Mrs Buyu, chief executive officer, African International Convention, November 2011. This was also noted in an author interview by a son of one of the wardens in Laikipia, January 2012.
- 100 Author phone communication with a programme officer for an aid organisation, 1 December 2011.
- 101 Author interview with KWS warden, Laikipia, 11 November 2011.
- 102 FGD with scouts, Tasia Conservancy, 11 November 2011. This was confirmed in an author interview with the manager and his wife.
- 103 Author phone communication with senior KWS staff member, April 2012.
- 104 Author interviews with KWS staff, Nairobi, April 2012.
- 105 Author interview with conservancy owner, Laikipia, January 2012.
- 106 FGD with scouts, Tasia Conservancy, 11 November 2011.
- 107 FGD with elders, Dol Dol, 9 October 2011; see also the sub-section entitled ‘Recruitment and training’ in the Turkana section.
- 108 Author interview with former senior administrator who served in Laikipia and Turkana, Nairobi, October 2011.
- 109 Several scouts interviewed by the author in Laikipia noted this.
- 110 Author interview with OCDP, Laikipia, October 2011.
- 111 FGD with scouts, Tasia Conservancy, 11 November 2011.
- 112 Various FGDs with scouts, October–November 2011.
- 113 Author interviews with KWS staff, Nairobi, April 2012.
- 114 FGD with KPRs not working for conservancies, Dol Dol, November 2011.
- 115 FGD with KPRs not working for conservancies, Dol Dol, November 2011.
- 116 It is not clear where this figure comes from.
- 117 FGD with KPRs not working for conservancies, Dol Dol, November 2011.
- 118 Gettleman (2012) gives the figure of USD 25–320.
- 119 FGD with scouts, Tasia Conservancy, 11 November 2011.
- 120 Author e-mail correspondence with Jennifer Bond, research student in Laikipia, July 2012.
- 121 This is partly due to their movement in and out of the county and because many have now moved into conservancies.
- 122 Borana’s firearms are kept in a private armoury (FGD with scouts, Borana, 26 January 2012).
- 123 Author interview with former Turkana police officer, Nairobi, November 2011.
- 124 Field observation, Laikipia, October 2012.
- 125 Noted and confirmed in four FGDs with scouts, Laikipia, October–November 2011.
- 126 Author interview with private rancher present with scouts, Temau, 26 January 2012.

- 127 FGD with scouts, Borana, 26 January 2012.
- 128 FGD with Il Ngwesi, 11 November 2011.
- 129 This was noted by several security officers.
- 130 Author interview with DO, Nanyuki, 28 January 2012.
- 131 Author interview with conservancy warden, Laikipia, January 2012.
- 132 Author interview with DC, February 2012.
- 133 Author interview with conservancy owner, Laikipia, January 2012.
- 134 Author Interview with DO for Dol Dol, Laikipia, January 2012.
- 135 Author interview with OCPD, Laikipia, January 2012.
- 136 Author interview with OCPD, Laikipia, February 2012.
- 137 *Magendo* means 'corruption'.
- 138 Author interview with private rancher present with scouts, Temau, 26 January 2012.
- 139 Author interview with former DC for Nanyuki, Nanyuki, 7 October 2011.
- 140 Author interviews with security officials, Laikipia, November 2011; confirmed by administrators; author interviews with community members, Dol Dol and Nanyuki, October 2011–January 2012.
- 141 Various author interviews with security officials and administrators, Laikipia, November 2011.
- 142 FGD with KPRs, Lodwar, 16 March 2012.
- 143 Author interview with local leader, Temau, Laikipia, October 2011.
- 144 Author interviews with official security personnel, Nairobi, Laikipia, and Isiolo, February–June 2012.
- 145 Comment by retired DC in FGD with civil society and government representatives, KSG, Nairobi, 23 August 2011.
- 146 FGD with KPRs, Tasia Conservancy, 11 November 2011.
- 147 See Mkutu (2005; 2008) for a full description of arms routes into the North Rift.
- 148 Phone communication with senior government official, Nairobi, July 2012.
- 149 Author interviews, Laikipia North and Central, August 2011–August 2012.
- 150 Commenting on the Tana River crisis, former police spokesperson Mr Kiraithe noted that the exact number of reservist with firearms is not known, since the holders are usually mobile and move from district to district. See Angira (2012).
- 151 Author interview with Alex Muyaka Mburu, acting DO 1, Turkana South, Lokichar, 17 March 2012; the OCPD in Loima concurred on this matter in an author interview, Lodwar, 28 August 2012.
- 152 Author interview with Calystus Longole, assistant chief of the Ujuluk, Turkana South, Nairobi, 13 August 2011.
- 153 Author interview with district security and intelligence officer, Lodwar, 18 March 2012.
- 154 Author interview with private rancher present with scouts, Temau, 26 January 2012.
- 155 Author interview with Alex Muyaka Mburu, acting DO 1, Turkana South, Lokichar, 17 March 2012.
- 156 Author interview with OCPD for Lukutai, Laikipia Central, January 2012.
- 157 Former cabinet member Martha Karua notes that some of the vehicles the police use have recurring mechanical problems, yet officers are expected to respond rapidly to emergencies (Bwayo, 2012).

- 158 Author interview with DO, Laikipia, 16 January 2012.
- 159 Survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011.
- 160 FGD with elders, Dol Dol, 9 October 2011.
- 161 Interview with administrator, Turkana South, March 2012.
- 162 See Ruteere (2011) for a discussion on ethnicity in the police response to the post-election violence.
- 163 Author phone communication with tour guide who has worked for the last 15 years in Laikipia conservancies, 21 April 2012.
- 164 FGD with KPRs not working for conservancies, Dol Dol, Laikipia, November 2009.
- 165 Author interview with OCPD, Nairobi, January 2012.
- 166 Survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011.
- 167 Author discussion with small arms expert, citing a recent workshop in Juba, June 2012.
- 168 Author interview with local NGO worker with several years' experience in Turkana, Lodwar, 29 August 2012.
- 169 For the LAPSET project, see  
<[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5N25wJG4JQ&feature=youtube\\_gdata](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5N25wJG4JQ&feature=youtube_gdata)>.
- 170 Author interview with senior Treasury official, Nairobi, October 2012.
- 171 Survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011.

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- 1 *Re-Armament in Sierra Leone: One Year After the Lomé Peace Agreement*, by Eric Berman, December 2000
- 2 *Removing Small Arms from Society: A Review of Weapons Collection and Destruction Programmes*, by Sami Faltas, Glenn McDonald, and Camilla Waszink, July 2001
- 3 *Legal Controls on Small Arms and Light Weapons in Southeast Asia*, by Katherine Kramer (with Nonviolence International Southeast Asia), July 2001
- 4 *Shining a Light on Small Arms Exports: The Record of State Transparency*, by Maria Haug, Martin Langvandslien, Lora Lumpe, and Nic Marsh (with NISAT), January 2002
- 5 *Stray Bullets: The Impact of Small Arms Misuse in Central America*, by William Godnick, with Robert Muggah and Camilla Waszink, November 2002
- 6 *Politics from the Barrel of a Gun: Small Arms Proliferation and Conflict in the Republic of Georgia*, by Spyros Demetriou, November 2002
- 7 *Making Global Public Policy: The Case of Small Arms and Light Weapons*, by Edward Laurance and Rachel Stohl, December 2002
- 8 *Small Arms in the Pacific*, by Philip Alpers and Conor Twyford, March 2003
- 9 *Demand, Stockpiles, and Social Controls: Small Arms in Yemen*, by Derek B. Miller, May 2003
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- 11 *In the Shadow of a Cease-fire: The Impacts of Small Arms Availability and Misuse in Sri Lanka*, by Chris Smith, October 2003
- 12 *Small Arms in Kyrgyzstan: Post-revolutionary Proliferation*, by S. Neil MacFarlane and Stina Torjesen, March 2007, ISBN 2-8288-0076-8, also in Kyrgyz and Russian (first printed as *Kyrgyzstan: A Small Arms Anomaly in Central Asia?*, by S. Neil MacFarlane and Stina Torjesen, February 2004)
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