THE IMPLICATIONS OF LARGE-SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO THE COMMUNITIES IN ISIOLO COUNTY: THE CASE OF LAMU PORT SOUTH SUDAN ETHIOPIA TRANSPORT CORRIDOR

BY

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UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY-AFRICA

SPRING SEMESTER, 2019
DECLARATION
I, undersigned, declare that this work is my original research and has not been submitted to any other college or university other than United States International University-Africa for academic credit.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the implications of the LAPSSET project to the communities in Isiolo. In provoking the current debate on the future of rural Africa and large-scale infrastructure projects, the study examined whether the increased pressure on large scale land use change in Isiolo could become a source of conflict or not due to the presence of LAPSSET project. The purpose of this research is to create an understanding of the implications of large-scale state-drive projects even though the expectations of such projects are to improve the human conditions in the areas they are established in. This research was conducted in Isiolo North constituency, Isiolo North constituency, within two wards, namely Ngaremara and Wabera which hosts the completed Isiolo international airport and the completed Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road. The qualitative approach used involved in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The major findings were that LAPSSET corridor based on the two completed projects brought more harm than good to the local inhabitants of Ngaremara and Wabera wards. Most affected communities suffered land-related conflicts as a result of the intensification of land use and the new land rush going on in Wabera and Ngaremara wards. The findings also showed that the two projects have increasingly disfranchised the state and society relations as the communities interviewed felt that the LAPSSET project is a top-bottom approach which does not represent the locals. In conclusion, the study established that LAPSSET project within the two wards of study has contributed to social, economic, political, and environmental implications that have persisted several years after completion of the first two projects. Therefore, this research recommends that the state should embrace corporate social responsibility approach along the corridor to minimize social conflicts across the pastoralist lands.

Key Words: LAPSSET, State, Society, Conflicts, stakeholder relations
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to the Almighty God, my provider and protector, my source of inspiration, wisdom, knowledge and understanding. To my parents for believing in me, supporting me and encouraging me as well as to my entire family for their support. Thank you and may God Bless you.
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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ACLED   The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project

EAC East Africa Community

FGD Focus Group Discussion

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GoK Government of Kenya

KAA Kenya Airports Authority

KIs Key Informants

KNBS Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

KNHA Kenya National Highway Authority

LAPSSET Lamu Port South Sudan Ethiopia Transport Corridor

LCDA LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority

LDGI Land Development and Governance Institute

MDC Maputo Development Corridor

NGOs Non-Governmental Organizations

SAGCOT Southern Agricultural Growth of Tanzania

UNDP United Nations Development Program
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Large-scale infrastructure projects, in general, play an essential role in connecting rural territories in regional and international networks and in enhancing urban-rural links, as well as in bringing about an inclusive and sustainable transformation of the production, institutional and social spheres (UNDP Program, 2014; Bergius, Benjaminsen, & Widgren, 2017). Based on the benefits associated with the outcomes of these projects, infrastructure is also incorporated into the United Nations agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Infrastructure is as a vital tool to improve the population’s living conditions, promote exceptional social stability and create urban centers, cities, and territories that are more resistant and resilient to climate change (United Nations, 2017).

The Chinese One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative is an example of the current global infrastructure development project. President Xi Jinping initiated it following his vision of infrastructure development to connect China’s less developed border regions with neighboring countries (Szunomár, 2017). On land, OBOR is to connect China’s underdeveloped hinterland to Europe through central Asia, the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean. This industrial belt is connecting 65 countries through ports and railways and will impact a population of 4.4 billion across the globe (Xing, 2018; Song, &Qiqi, 2017).

In trying to expose African countries into middle-income economies by 2050 as African Union puts it, infrastructure development is one area considered to be of the significant impact since infrastructure development is meant to facilitate trade, economic integration, regional development as well as interconnectivity between states. In executing this noble dream, a great
equatorial land bridge was anticipated to connect the Indian and Atlantic oceans along the equator (Sena, 2012). According to Enns (2017), East African Community has identified LAPSSET project as an infrastructure priority for EAC Vision by 2050, like LAPSSET there is the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT), and the Maputo Development Corridor (MDC) (Bergius, Benjamin, & Widgren 2017; Enns 2017).

This equatorial land bridge project (LAPSSET) is meant to cut the middle of Africa through construction of highway roads, standard gauge rail network, oil pipeline and fiber optic cables whose construction already begun in Lamu in Coastal Kenya. This will link with Juba in South Sudan, Bangui in the Central African Republic, and lastly to link with the Atlantic Ocean through Cameroon, Yaoundé, and Doula (Enns 2017).

Many countries are experiencing this new global land rush. Africa has not been left behind, especially the Sub-Saharan African countries which are currently experiencing this infrastructure development boom, and an increased change in land use for commercialized agriculture and resource extraction industries like minerals, oil, and gas (Borras & Franco, 2011; Kabukuru, 2016). These discoveries create new demand for advanced infrastructure investments within the continent to enable extraction of the discovered resources (Mkutu, 2017). This current wave is termed “Africa’s new rise” The rebirth of Africa in terms of large-scale projects creates a curiosity to question how the future of rural Africa will look like in the wake of the state-driven large-scale infrastructure development projects the continent is embracing and the new dynamics they come with.
Previously marginalized frontiers that were once perceived as not suitable for economic gain are now becoming sites of rapid development agenda (Kabukuru, 2016; Mosley & Watson, 2016). Within Sub-Saharan Africa, countries such as Tanzania is expanding its port (the Bagamoyo port), and an agricultural corridor called Southern Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT). Ethiopia is also establishing the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, and the Democratic Republic of Congo is constructing grand Inga III dam, an extension of Inga I and II, among other megaprojects currently embraced within the continent of Africa source (Mulat, Moges & Ibrahim, 2014).

Upon completion of the LAPSSET project on the Great Lakes Region side, it will connect Kenya, South Sudan, and Ethiopia from Lamu through Isiolo, Marsabit, and Moyale. LAPSSET will be a game changer and one of the most significant infrastructure projects ever undertaken in Africa (LCDA, 2017). Kenya’s Vision 2030 blueprint and the big four agenda of the current government of Kenya reflect agenda nine of the United Nations’ SDGs which refer to developing quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, (Jaimurzina& Sanchez, 2017).
Figure 1.1: Map of the LAPSSET Corridor route in Kenya (LCDA-website, 2017)
1.2. Statement of the Problem

LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority (2017) notes that this large-scale infrastructure project has positive impacts linked to economic development and growth, technological advancement, improved security and accessibility through built roads, the creation of employment opportunities and improved living standards in the previously marginalized regions in the country. In Kenya, 70% of the LAPSSET Corridor Project traverse communities who heavily practice Pastoralism and have grazing lands. These pastoralist communities currently experience land rush and challenges related to population growth; loss of grazing land; urban growth; increase in dislocation of pastoralists brought about by drought and intensification of large-scale development projects which embraces privatization and individualization of community held resources (Bollig & Österle, 2008; Fratkin, 2001; Greiner, 2017; Kibugi, Mwathane & Makathimo, 2016; and Peters, 2013;). These challenges expose the pastoralists to social, environmental, and economic pressures.

Isiolo County which is 80% inhabited by pastoralists hosts significant components of the LAPSSET project including; the Resort City, the completed Isiolo International Airport, the completed Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale Road, an oil refinery, mega-dam, highway roads, and an oil pipeline. The county is currently experiencing inter-communal conflicts, inter-county conflicts over the boundary and intensified scramble for land in the urban and peri-urban areas. Therefore, this study seeks to examine these current dynamics and the implications of the LAPSSET corridor project on the communities in Isiolo County since these projects not only aim to transform landscapes, but also transform social relations, livelihoods and state-society relations in profound ways.
1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate the implications and contestations emerging as a result of the LAPSSET Corridor Project in Isiolo County.

This study specifically seeks to:

i. Examine the implications of the LAPSSET Corridor Project based on the completed Isiolo International Airport and the Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road

ii. Investigate the contestations emerging as a result of the LAPSSET Corridor Project in Isiolo County and

iii. Find out how LAPSET project has shaped the relations between the state and the society in the quest to open up previously closed Isiolo County.

1.4 Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

i. What are the implications of the LAPSET project based on the completed Isiolo International Airport and Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale Road?

ii. What are the contestations emerging as a result of the LAPSET Corridor Project in Isiolo County?

iii. How has the LAPSET project shaped the relations between the state and the society in the quest to open up the previously closed Isiolo County?
1.5 Justification of the Study

The literature on the linkage between megaprojects and socio-economic conflicts like land-related conflicts has been widely recognized globally, regionally and locally in different contexts. However, the gap in research on LAPSSET project and its implications on communities in Isiolo based on the two complete projects the Isiolo international airport and Isiolo Marsabit Moyale road within Wabera and Ngaremara wards were still enormous. This follows the emerging contestations and the shaped relations between the state-society as a result of these megaprojects within Wabera and Ngaremara Wards.

The choice of Isiolo was informed by the fact that Isiolo is a multi-ethnic county which has experienced a range of conflicts such as resource-based conflicts, inter-county border conflicts, ethno-political conflicts, violent extremism, and interpersonal violence. Isiolo also borders other counties such as Meru, Samburu, Wajir, Garissa, Marsabit, and Turkana which, apart from Meru that has also shown interest in the LAPSSET Corridor Project, are all dominated by pastoralists who experience resource-based conflict from time to time (Mkutu & Boru, 2018). Isiolo county is also a gateway into the former North Frontier District that leads to Somalia and Ethiopia.

This puzzle seemed compelling because with the increasing urge to deliver Vision 2030 flagship projects, there is a renewed interest in examining potentials for new dynamics and conflicts emerging as a result of the LAPSSET project within Isiolo County. Hence, this study seeks to understand the local setting and its dynamism in order to recommend how such conflicts can be mitigated in the future in the interest of different stakeholders involved to minimize future conflicts around megaprojects.
Beyond the intentions of the fulfillment of academic requirements of a Master’s degree, this research may be of use in the development of policy framework for the LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority and Kenya Vision 2030 blueprints. This research is meant to all stakeholders in public and private sectors involved in infrastructure development projects from a peace and conflict research perspective.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research was limited to examining the implications of the LAPSSET infrastructure project on the communities in Isiolo with a focus on the Isiolo International Airport and the Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road as cases of completed projects under LAPSSET Corridor, the contestations and the relations between the state and the society shaped by the project. In Isiolo County, the study was narrowed down restricted to two administrative wards, namely Wabera and Ngaremara wards. The project took six months with two months of proposal development, two months of field work and data collection, and two months of writing the entire paper based on the data gathered in the field.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter seeks to explore and review the empirical literature on the megaprojects and their implications from the global, regional, and local projects. The study examines the implications of the LAPSSET Corridor project to establish voids that this research desires to fulfill on the emerging contestations on national versus communal interests surrounding the LAPSSET project within Isiolo.

2.1 The Implications of large-scale projects development projects on local communities

Flyvbjerg (2017) defines megaprojects as large-scale and complex ventures that involve multiple private and public stakeholders and impact millions of lives in the long run. Megaprojects are often transformational upon completion, giving a territory, region, or entire state a transformed image in terms of economic development (Gellert & Lynch, 2003). This study operationalizes megaprojects as large-scale in nature and is associated with sociological aspects such as displacements as they transform landscapes rapidly, profoundly and intentionally in very authentic ways due to their demand for coordination, state power, and commercialization processes. Megaprojects can also act as a catalyst to climate change resulting from the large-scale destruction of forest covers and other natural resources such as water reserves to establish these projects which can lead to conflicts (Gellert & Lynch, 2003).

Apart from driving economic growth and regional and international market integration, development corridors are said to deliver further development benefits through regional integration between states, livelihood diversification opportunities, excellent food security and
improved social service delivery (Enns, 2017). Thus, investment in the new development corridors is often anticipated as a way of incorporating previously excluded marginalized groups into development processes while at the same time simultaneously driving national economic growth.

Walter (1973) defines human development as the processes of enabling social changes within a society. However, such changes are quite contrary to the approaches the states sometimes intend to take to achieve the transformation as per the societal interests (Scott, 1998). Based on the scholarship interacted with locally (Elliot, 2016; Enns, 2017; 2019; Mkutu & Boru, 2018; Mosley & Watson, 2016; Menkhaus, 2015; Kabukuru, 2016; Kibugi et al, 2016; and Browne, 2015), regionally (Mulat, Moges & Ibrahim, 2014; and globally (Flyvbjerg, 2017; Jaimurzina & Sánchez, 2017; and Scott, 1998), the main argument picked is that populations in rural or remote areas, as well as indigenous populations, tend to bear the full force of the negative externalities of the large-scale infrastructure development projects pursued by the states needed for national development.

These claims relate to what Vermeulen & Cotula (2010) notes that with the emergence of large-scale land use change for megaprojects, population’s livelihoods and living conditions are often affected without their expectations for a better life being met. The study uses the cases of Bakun Hydroelectric Dam under the Sarawak Corridor of renewable energy in the island of Borneo, East Malaysia to expound on these claims. The project displaced almost 10,000 people from 17,000 hectares of land where they had lived for generations (Sarawak, 2016; Keong, 2005).
These intensifications of large-scale land use changes, as Vermeulen & Cotula (2010) claims, are often accompanied by widespread reports of corruption in the project zones as large-scale infrastructure projects require land for investments. Besides the project land, such land deals tend to isolate the locals who are affected by the land use changes. Large-scale infrastructure projects have also proved to create displacement as well as livelihood disruption among the poor indigenous communities such as: small-scale farmers, hunters, and gatherers, and pastoralists.

Locally, LAPSSET is a flagship development project of Kenya’s’ Vision 2030. The corridor aims to improve connectivity between potential oil-producing regions in Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan and the Port of Lamu and other infrastructure across northern Kenya which is a vast arid region where Pastoralism is the dominant livelihood. The project traverses a vast region of significant physical, socio-cultural and economic diversity (LCDA, 2017). Browne (2015) argues that land is an emotive subject in Kenya and along the route, most land is predominantly owned by pastoralists have insecure land tenure system creating insecurity among the individuals who may be exploited in an unprecedented land rush.

The existing literature reveals that LAPSSET project in the various counties it touches has faced severe opposition from the pastoralist communities because of the implications that directly affect the communities who have lived in weak economic conditions for decades (HakiJamii report, 2017; Kanyike, 2015; Kabukuru, 2016; Kibugi et al., 2016; Mkutu & Boru, 2018).
2.2 Contestations and Relations Shaped by the LAPSSET Corridor

Scott (1998) argues that when bureaucrats in the state offices try to assess what is going on the ground, they usually use maps of territory with demarcations between plots or regions of their interests. Scott uses the example of the first railroad from Paris to Strasbourg which ran straight from Paris across the plateau of Brie, far from populated Marne, whereby the decision of technocrats made it expensive for locals to use the rail, reducing the project demand. Scott’s framework argues that large-scale development visions and projects often result in high social and environmental costs for the people they are designed to help (as cited in Mosley & Watson, 2016). Protests and resistance and even violence among affected communities resulted as the consequences of such large-scale developments as a reviewed from case studies of various mega projects below will show.

One case reviewed the case of the Chotiari Water Project in Pakistan. This megaproject was meant to improve the lives of many families that did not have access to water in Sanghar District. Instead of fulfilling the expectations and the intentions of the Pakistani government, the project displaced up to 993 families from their homes, and they did not have a resettlement plan or compensation from the government, leaving these families as squatters (Magsi, Torre, Lui & Sheikh, 2017). The same case applied to the Lombok International Airport in Indonesia, whereby its expansion brought land right struggles as locals were displaced from their homes and farmlands. The government’s vision by then was to target the tourist market as Lombok as a top world’s place of many tourist destinations (Bridger, 2017). The commonality of these two projects is that they both created displacement and contestation between the state and the society the projects were meant to impact.
From the literature of villagization policy in Tanzania during the Ujamaa system, the late president Nyerere also believed that Tanzanians should live in villages rather than be scattered across the countryside where agricultural resources were to be found. His justification for this move was that …*Unless we live in the villagers, we shall not be capable of providing ourselves with the things we need to develop our land and raise our standards of living* (Scott, 1998: 217). The state approach to development policies presented here is of whether the state considered what Tanzania’s local communities wanted in pursuing what it deemed was best for the community. Lack of social relations between these two entities clashed and, eventually, this project collapsed due to lack of ownership and interest by the rural population. The expansion of the large Inga III dam project in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the case of the Grand Ethiopia Renaissance Dam brings out the same dynamics of social implications to the indigenous communities living around the projects (Mulat et al. 2014).

The Northern Kenya, Isiolo included, presents possibilities for cross-border collaboration in infrastructure development which is why the government is implementing the LAPSSET Corridor Project to connect Lamu through the northern region to neighboring countries such as South Sudan and Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa (Government of Kenya, 2011). The existing literature indicates that the government of Kenya continuously sidelined the communities from genuine public awareness, participation and involvement in planning and implementation processes of the projects as required by the constitution of Kenya 2010 (Kibugi et al. 2016). The literature on megaprojects in this study shows the irony of state-driven development projects initiated in underdeveloped areas and the complexities they bring with them to the local communities these projects are intended to transform. Failure by the state to incorporate the interest of the societies with the visions of the state results in social, economic, political and
environmental implications as were the outcomes of some of the case studies presented (Bridger, 2017).

The review of several case studies of different megaprojects embraced within sub-Saharan Africa currently and globally indicates that megaprojects indeed can act as a source of conflict due to their implications on state and society relations. It is from the scholarships explored that the study seeks to examine the implications of the LAPSSSET project on the communities in Isiolo County who are dominantly pastoralists, and have an unsecure land tenure system.

2.3 Conceptualizing the State and Society Relations Theory

Joel Migdal (1994; 1988) argues that in the contemporary world, the state is the single accepted entity of political order. This position portrays the state as a central political organization within a given territory and should be the institution to set and enforce binding rules among the society it governs. In the western countries over centuries this notion has not been disputed since the western nation states evolved naturally.

The idea of a state was quickly embraced in the newly decolonized territories of Latin America in the 19th century, the Asian and African continents in the 20th century with democratization coming into place (Braton & Chang, 2006; Grawert, 2010). These developing countries quickly adopted the state as “the means to the achievement of economic development and social modernization.”

Alexandre, Willman, Aslam, & Rebbosio, (2012), define all societies in their natural state as political arrangements among elites. Some societies have progressed from closed to open access system, but others have relapsed. Alexandre et al., (2012) also argues that, the relations between the state and the society is often shaped by the conflicts among elite groups who exert powerful
influence as the groups struggle over resources distribution and political power, what Migdal (1994; 1988) termed the process of state formation as a political survival and the localized elites.

2.3.1 Theoretical Framework

The study’s main argument is that the state is embedded in the society creating an arrangement of different interactions, meaning that the state does not operate on its own separately from the society, but it is embedded in the network of relationships with multiple actors. Clough, Berman & Lonsdale (1992), in their work on the state formation in Kenya in the 19th and early 20th century, noted that the state power is the fruit of experience that is made of intentions and compromises between different social groups as well as actors. This work takes the notion that the capability and the scope of the state is not determined in isolation, but it instead evolves through interactions with different social groups within the society as suggested by (Alexandre et al., 2012). Migdal’s claim of state-society relations are examined further following the LAPSSET project in Isiolo, the emerging issues surrounding the project and the relations shaped between the different stakeholders involved.
3.0 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter's purpose is to discuss the methodology that was adopted by the study, the overview of the study area, and also outline the whole plan of research, research design, sampling techniques, and data collection and analysis, research ethics and chapter outline.

3.1 Study Site Selection and Description

Isiolo County has a population of 143,294 with 51% males and 49% females (2009 census). The population was projected to rise to 159,797 by 2012 and around 191,627 by 2017. This was speculated to be as a result of the LAPSSET Corridor Project that the county would host (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2009; Isiolo County, 2013:22). The population density is about five persons per square kilometer with the highest density of 29 persons in the Central Division and the lowest density of 1 person per square kilometer in Merti Division (KNBS, 2009).

Isiolo County is located about 285km from Nairobi, and it lies between geographical coordinates of 36.60° and 38.50° East and 0.5° and 2° North. The topography of the arid zone covers Chari, Cherab, Sericho, and parts of Oldonyiro wards and low semi-arid plains include Wabera, Bulla-Pesa, and Burat wards, making the county vulnerable to resource-based conflicts (KNBS, 2009). The county is divided into two constituencies, Isiolo North and Isiolo South, with the headquarters being Isiolo Town. The spatial area covers 25,361 square kilometers, and the town was established during World War (Mkutu and Boru, 2018). Temperatures within Isiolo County range from a minimum of between 12°C to a maximum of 28°C. The rainfall ranges from 150mm to 650 mm per annum, typical of arid and semi-arid lands in Kenya (KNBS, 2009).
3.1.1 Socio-Cultural and Economic issues

The inhabitants of Isiolo County comprise mainly the Borana, Samburu, Turkana, and Somali, all pastoralists, and Meru whose source of livelihoods is mostly small scale crop farming (KNBS, 2013; Isiolo County, 2013:19; Sena, 2012; Kochere, 2012). Meru and Somali communities are the majority within Isiolo Town (a highly cosmopolitan outlook). Borana community is the majority population in Isiolo followed by Somali, Samburu, Turkana, and Meru the least (KNBS, 2009; 2017)

However, Isiolo County also has complicated borders with Marsabit County to the north, Samburu and Laikipia Counties to the west, Garissa County to the south-east, Wajir County to the north-east, with potential for resource-based conflicts as well as Tana River and Kitui Counties to the south and Meru and Tharaka-Nithi Counties to the south-west. Historically, Isiolo County was the headquarters of the former Northern Frontier District and a center of Shifta war fought to join Northern region with Somali and not Kenya in 1963 (Menkhaus, 2015; Isiolo County, 2013).

The land distribution system in Isiolo is still mostly centralized with 96% of the total land area registered as community land under the Isiolo County government and less than 1% with title deeds within Isiolo town. The primary issue in Isiolo is unclear land tenure. The main economic activities practiced in Isiolo County include Pastoralism, subsistence agriculture, small-scale trade and limited harvesting of gum Arabica resin (Isiolo County, 2013).
Figure 3.1.1: Illustration of ward distribution in constituencies within Isiolo County

Source: Authors own extraction from KNBS, (2009).

Figure 3.1.2: Map of Isiolo County and conflict dynamics

Source: (Mkutu & Boru, World Bank report, 2018)
3.1.2 Description of the Administrative Wards Studied

The work concentrates on two wards with brief information below. However, the fieldwork covered five wards, namely; Wabera, Ngaremara, Burat, Oldonyiro, and Garbatulla, to understand the conflict dynamics along the LAPSSET corridor route within Isiolo County.

3.1.2.1 Wabera Ward

The ward is situated within Isiolo Central Division and Isiolo town which is the headquarters of Isiolo County. Wabera Ward has a population of approximately 17,431. The population is projected to increase to 19,679 by 2020 and 20,065 by 2022 (Isiolo County, 2018). Wabera Ward has two sub-locations: Kiwanjani and Wabera. In terms of education level, those with primary school education stand at 20.2% while secondary education level stands at 32.7%. The ward is mainly a metropolitan area with the constant movement of people coming in and out.

All the significant big five communities occupy the ward and, though an urban area, cattle rustling is rampant within the outskirts of Isiolo town. All the five communities practice cattle rustling which is a significant security challenge. The ward also constantly faces ethnic clashes almost every year between Turkana-Samburu, Borana-Meru, Borana-Somali, Turkana-Meru, and Somali-Samburu as a result of land claims, cattle rustling, and business competition. The ward also faces land conflicts which include land grabbing as indigenous tribes feel they legitimately own the land which causes clashes in most cases (Isiolo County, 2018)

The government started the adjudication of land in Wabera Ward in June 2018, but the process halted due to land irregularities in land ownership. This was also as a result of cases filed in court by some concerned parties demanding that the government should stop the process until those
who were given plots for resettlement during the airport construction be sorted out (Interview, local ward administrator, Isiolo County, 2018).

3.1.2.2 Ngaremara Ward

Ngaremara ward has a population of approximately 5,520 and is projected to increase to 6,232 by 2020 and 6,354 persons by 2022 (Isiolo County, 2018). The ward has four locations, namely, Ngaremara, Attan, Gotu, and Nakuprat. The ward also has eight sub-locations, namely, Zebra, Ngaremara, Attan, Aregai, Daaba, Nakuprat, Boji, Dera and Gotu Sub-locations. The level of education in Ngaremara ward is very low with those who have attained primary and secondary school education at 4.2% and 35.5% respectively. The ward is located in peri-urban areas in the outskirts of Isiolo town (Ibid).

The community living in Ngaremara Ward is largely Turkana who are pastoralists and also practice small scale farming. The other communities who share the ward are the Boranas found in Gotu Location who are also pastoralists and Gare-Somali business people who are farming and also keep camels, goats, and sheep. The issue faced in Ngaremara Ward includes problems of cattle rustling between the Turkana and Borana, the Turkana, and the Somalia, Turkana, and Samburu and Turkana and Meru. The ward also faces land conflict as LAPSSET projects like the oil pipeline, the railway and road pass through Ngaremara

3.2 Research Design

The study considered a qualitative approach within a case study framework as the best suit the study since this research is exploratory and also because it enabled the researcher to obtain a complex textual description of the research questions (Huberman & Miles, 2002). The study found this approach also suitable because it provided an in-depth understanding of the social
phenomenon of the targeted population and the unit of analysis by describing the respondents’
experiences, opinions, perspectives, histories and feelings. For the validity of data, the study
employed data source triangulation using in-depth interviews conducted with the pastoralist
households and critical informants with the secondary data from library research.

3.3 Unit of Analysis

The targeted population was pastoralist communities in Isiolo County where LAPSSET corridor
traverse. The study focused on households as the primary unit of analysis due to their role in
resource utilization, large-scale land use for grazing, access to and control over community land.
The study included pastoralist communities because they are the majority of land users in Isiolo,
considering that pastoralism takes about 80% of the land use in the region (Isiolo County, 2018).
Pastoralists are the most likely to be affected by the project followed by the small-scale farmers
who were also interviewed since LAPSSET cuts across several communities (Isiolo County,
2018).

3.4 The Study Sample

The study covered Isiolo County. A sample of 160 respondents was incorporated into this
research. Convenient sampling was first employed to identify areas where evictees from the
airport land had settled in, and those within the proposed LAPSSET Corridor route. Snowball
sampling technique was also applied to target respondents who were displaced from the Isiolo
Airport land and also the displaced persons from Kambi ya Gabra following the road expansion.
A snowballing approach was used to create an entry point to the victims of the two projects to
access those available within Wabera Ward. The purposive sampling design was also used to
identify respondents among members of the general public who had crucial information on the
LAPSSET project that was helpful. This approach was ideal in identifying cohort groups for collective views in focus group discussion (FGD) sessions and key informants (KIs).

3.5. Data Collection Methods

**In-depth interviews:** This was the main instrument for the collection of primary data at both pastoralist and the institutional level. The reason this study focused on the qualitative approach is that the primarily targeted population was pastoralists and the level of illiteracy within Isiolo County is 70% (Isiolo County, 2018). Due to this limitation, the study decided to represent all the communities in Isiolo by using a standard tool, that is, in-depth interviews, to explore the views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations of individual participants which allowed both the educated and those with no education background to give oral testimonies and narrate their stories.

**Focus group discussions:** this method was used to supplement the in-depth interviews in generating data. The purpose of the focus group discussion was deemed a suitable avenue for generating collective views, quick information and the meanings that lie behind those views. It also helped this study in generating a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs around pastoralist culture, their traditions, grazing land and their imagination on modernization emerging in their land. The study also collected data through conferences attended and from Isiolo/Samburu security and conservation workshop that was held on February 1, 2019, in Isiolo County.
3.6 Reliability and Validity

The researcher pre-tested the interview guide tool during the preliminary field visit in order to understand the terrain of Isiolo, identify project site and population to be studies as well as to provide important information on the response rate as well as to provide the opportunity to see the acceptability of my topic and some of the community concerns. This allowed the researcher to identify unforeseen challenges in terms of the interviews based on certain wording of questions which I then had to change or other factors. This work was also presented before review panelists for correction and even presented in several conference.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data collected from the in-depth interviews, including the field notes, were transcribed using the general standard transcription of qualitative interviews. Data was interpreted, coded and analyzed using the Weft qualitative data analysis software. Further, verification of information was corroborated with follow up interviews to ascertain the validity of the research findings.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

In collecting data from respondents, the researcher adhered to the principle of informed consent, no harm principle, and confidentiality for all respondents throughout the study. Right from the study’s incubation, data collection and the presentation of the research findings, ethical guidelines were considered. A research permit was issued sought from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) and the researcher took time to explain orally to the pastoralists being interviewed the nature of the research and their liberty as per the consent letter to choose whether to be part of the exercise or not. Data were collected only from the respondents who agreed to participate in this study who were 18 years and above.
3.9 Limitations of the Study

The coverage of the whole LAPSSET route in Isiolo County was not possible to achieve because of the vast nature of the county and poor infrastructure within rural areas. However, the researcher managed to visit five out of ten administrative wards in Isiolo. Insecurity was also a big concern as most pastoralist households, especially in places like Mlango area, constantly experience land conflicts. The other challenge was that not every respondent seemed excited to be interviewed for free on the LAPSSET and land issues. This created fear of the possibility of being followed or being spied on during field interviews. This is because the LAPSSET corridor project touches hugely on land grievances and land speculation and land grab deals which, it was discovered, involved some elites within the county and even the national government.

Some communities were a bit aggressive on being interviewed on LAPSSET and land during the first field visits. For example, in Kulamawe and Gotu locations some elders thought the researcher was working with the LAPSSET people from Nairobi. Some government officials also found it difficult to disclose some information during interviews thinking that the researcher might have been sent by NGOs in Isiolo to do their work, so both sides interviewed had trust issues when it comes to disclosing the information on LAPSSET and land issues in Isiolo.
4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This chapter presents the research findings based on the data collected from the field. The main source of data was in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, which were supplemented by media analysis, ACLED data and library research. The research acknowledges the limitations of ACLED data in that most areas in Isiolo are isolated and media access is impossible hence the data should be viewed with caution. The same case applies to media analysis that the study has also incorporated. The findings are presented in relation to the research objectives stated in Chapter One.

The data collection process was between September 2018 and March 2019 having gone through the five wards within Isiolo North seen as significant routes to the LAPSSET corridor project. The wards visited were Wabera, Ngaremara, Burat, Oldonyiro and Garbatulla wards respectively. However, the study focuses on two distinctive wards that is Wabera ward and Ngaremara ward with the two complete projects as components of the LAPSSET project. Methods used to analyze data were as described in Chapter Three. The chapter begins with an overview of the conflict dynamics in Isiolo County, mapping of some of the conflict hotspot areas within Isiolo and then dwell on the key findings from the field.

4.1 An Overview of Conflict Dynamics in Isiolo County

Isiolo experiences intra and inter-pastoral resource conflicts of water, pasture, and raiding. Based on the observations in the field from August, 2018 to date, cattle rustling, border/grazing disputes and road banditry are currently the main conflict dynamics. However, these also have strong ethno-political dimensions (UNDP Kenya, 2010); the county has a long history of an
escalation of conflict during electioneering period which is associated with ethnic rivalry (Interview, Isiolo peace link, Isiolo, August 28, 2019).

The county also faces border conflicts mainly between Isiolo and Meru residents in Waso area, Isiolo and Garissa-based pastoralists at Modogashe and Lagdera, and Isiolo and Wajir-based pastoralists along the inter-county border. Currently, Isiolo is hosting mega-projects which. Areas facing these land issues include Ngaremara, Kinna, Wabera, Garbatulla, Burat and Oldonyiro wards (Isiolo County, 2018; field notes August 2018 to May 2019, ACLED Data and media analysis).

4.2 Conflict Hotspots in Isiolo County

The map below which was extracted from Isiolo Peace Link database (UNDP, 2010) shows wards which regularly experience conflicts of various kinds making them become hotspots. The information was cross-checked with ACLED data and field notes. These hotspot areas mapped will also be traversed by the LAPSSET corridor project route.
4.3 LAPSSET Corridor and Associated Developments in Isiolo County

LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority (2017:15) notes that a total of 55 administrative wards situated in a 102,467 square kilometer of land with a population of 2.8% of the total national population will be traversed by the project. The population along the corridor is dominated by pastoralists, followed by agro-pastoralists and, lastly, urban and peri-urban settlements encountered in Isiolo, Moyale, Garissa, and Marsabit counties (Ibid: 15). A resident interviewed in Isiolo town had the following to say about the LAPSSET project;
LAPSSET is a project that has tried to identify unique aspects of bilateral and international business and countries. It has looked into reducing the regional marginalization in terms of infrastructure-changes through air, roads, pipeline, mega-dams, electricity, railway line and fiber optic. (...) It has also connected marginalized regional counties like Garissa, Isiolo, Lamu, Meru-Gambela, Samburu, Turkana, Marsabit, and Baringo. LAPSSET is also trying to look into unique projects for development and benefits that the community will gain as the project will also reduce conflicts in Isiolo County (interview, Ngaremara resident, Isiolo, February 2, 2019)

The opinion of the respondent resonates with the national government’s anticipation to close economic marginalization in northern Kenya and improve the pastoralists’ living conditions. The officials interviewed had a positive opinion about the megaprojects being established in the region, unlike the locals who felt left out by these projects. Media reports stated that the LAPSSET project was positioned in the northeastern counties to add value to the economy of the locals and lives of residents, attract investments, increase county competitiveness and make business easier.

4.3.1 Isiolo International Airport

Isiolo International Airport project is situated in Isiolo County within Wabera ward in Isiolo Central sub-county. The airport’s terminal is in Isiolo, while the runway is in Meru County. It is approximately 283 km by road and about 200 km by air from Nairobi and occupies 260 hectares (642 acres) of land, having a 4,500 square kilometers passenger terminal (LCDA, 2017). The airport was constructed with a capacity to handle up to 350,000 passengers per year. The construction which was funded by the government of Kenya cost US$ 27 million.
Three years after its opening, Isiolo airport operates far below capacity, handling only one flight every Friday with few passengers. The airport is operating below the capacity with a mere one flight per week three years after finishing construction. Later, when asked why the demand was so low, most of the respondents argued that it is a bit expensive for the locals to fly to Nairobi via the airport. The current flight fare from Isiolo to Nairobi is 6,600 Kenya shillings (US$66) from Isiolo to Nairobi. Respondents complained that this is almost the same amount as Lodwar to Nairobi yet Isiolo is nearer, and even Kisumu to Nairobi is a bit cheaper than their prices. The project is thus in danger of being another huge project which has no economic value to the community (Interview, a former peace ambassador, Isiolo, September 7, 2018).

Some respondents also felt that the demand is low because of the ban by the UK on the import of miraa (a soft recreational drug produced in Meru county) for which Somalia is now the only remaining market. The airport was initially envisaged to decongest Nairobi’s Wilson Airport which was handling this transportation, but flights from Isiolo now mainly focus on passengers rather than goods (Interview, Ngaremara resident, Isiolo, February 2, 2019).

Livestock production was also a potential good targeted by the market as experts thought that through a built abattoir in Isiolo, meat production could be made possible for the international market from Isiolo and other neighboring pastoralist counties. The Isiolo abattoir however is not yet operational. Hence, the initial vision of the airport has been frustrated by other languishing projects and markets which are no longer viable, making the newest and most expensive facility to languish (Interview, a cohesion department, Isiolo, January 24, 2019).
The anticipated benefits of the airport, according to the LAPSSSET Authority officials interviewed, include that it is “expected” to contribute to the sustainable development of the two counties it touches (especially Isiolo County), alleviating poverty and improving living standards. Furthermore, the airport is to facilitate tourism development as Isiolo’s main revenue comes from tourism. The other benefits include the promotion of accessibility through cross-border investments, trade and mobility of labor among others (Interview, LAPSSSET Corridor Development Authority officials, Nairobi, February 19, 2019). However, from the interviews and observations made in the field, the airport project is not yet a viable project that impacts the local economy, and it has not yet achieved its primary purpose for which it was meant three years down the line.

Based on media analysis, Isiolo International Airport project was “expected” to create access, develop, open markets and transform lives, particularly those of farmers in neighboring counties of Meru, Nyeri, Laikipia, Marsabit, Samburu counties, and to connect the counties to the international market in terms of the export of livestock products, khat (Miraa from Meru) and fresh flowers. It was also to form a crucial part of the envisioned Isiolo resort city by providing access to wildlife sanctuaries in the region.

4.3.1.1 The Airport Expansion and Land Alienation

Land acquisition for the upgrade and expansion of Isiolo International Airport from a small airstrip 1,400 m runway to now 3,000-metre runway international airport commenced in 2004 when the Kenya Airports Authority in a letter dated August 17th 2004 wrote to the Clerk of Meru North County Council and the clerk of Isiolo County Council requesting for land from both the two Councils to expand Isiolo Airstrip. On November 2nd 2004, it was passed by a full council. A
team of councilors and elders from the area was appointed by the council to examine the number of people who were staying in the area to be affected by the expansion.

It was agreed that anyone who had a letter of allotment from the commissioner of lands, lease or titles or was tilling the area to be taken by the Kenya Airport Authority were to be resettled. The team was expected to identify the number of people to be displaced by the expansion, the number of people with structures in the area to be affected, and those with letters of allotment from the council and the form of compensation. With the acceptance of the two county councils back then, the land was taken away from several people (Report from local ward administrator’s office, Isiolo, January 25, 2019).

Based on the report by the former county council, the Isiolo County Government gave the residents of Isiolo around the airport a notice to evacuate their land without a proper resettlement plan in place. As a result of the national government decision, Isiolo County Council taskforce took an exercise of identifying people in Mwangaza and Airstrip area who would be affected by the expansion of the airstrip.

Response from the victims interviewed was that the council decided that the entire Mwangaza and some parts of Chechelesi 1 and 2 areas were to be re-planned to accommodate all those people affected by the expansion of the airstrip. From the government’s decision, a ballot process was used to identify the displaced residents from Isiolo side to be resettled. The innocent victims were removed from their land without giving them alternative sites for resettlement. Those with legitimate letters of allotment issued by the county council and had paid the required rates were eligible for resettlement (Report from local ward administrator’s office, Isiolo, January 25, 2019).

The report notes:
The initial 700 affected persons were to be relocated to Mwangaza, but the number increased over time to 1500. As a result, some of the people were relocated to Kiwanjani location (Wabera Ward), but there were only 450 plots, 150 of which fell on developed areas and 50 squatters had already occupied the area, so approximately 400 were then to move to Chechelesi which had 1,900 plots but also had some occupied by squatters. Ultimately, although the ballot was done, from 2008 until 2019 April when this research was submitted, no land has yet been given out to resettle the victims in Chechelesi. (Report by participants of group discussion conducted by LDGI, 2016; Crime and Violence county survey report by Kajumbe, Mkutu, Otieno, Palmreuther and Wandera, 2017).

In an interview with one of the airport victims, they noted that the problem began with the implementing issuance of allotment letters. The resettlement commenced in July 2008 in the Mwangaza area; however, the process of determining individuals who were the rightful owners of the land and were legally entitled to compensation was fraught with difficulties. New Part Development Plans (PDPs) were issued by the Land Development and Governance Institute (LDGI, 2016) which, the participants of focus group discussion argued, undermined the security of tenure system because those who wanted to relocate or wanted to grab land were the ones issued with the new PDPs. This resulted in double and triple issuance of allotment letters over the same piece of land creating land conflicts. The same sentiment was noted by one of the ward administrators within Isiolo-sub-county who was also affected by the airport expansion in 2008.

A letter of complaint was written on May 2\textsuperscript{nd} 2008 by a section of the displaced victims of the airport, calling themselves the plot owners in Kiwanjani Zone G Squatter. The letter was addressed to the then Kenya Airports Authority manager raising issues that emerged on the
ground and till to date, with the airport in operation for the last two years, no victim from Isiolo side has ever been compensated for their land loss. Below are excerpts from the letter:

**Excerpts from Letter to KAA by Plot owners in Kiwanjani Zone G Squatter in May 2008**

*(when the land acquisition process was underway) – Dated 2, May, 2008*

- That all the plots are developed … with the owners and their families living there
- That the said plots were not in the area earmarked for the proposed airport…
- That even when the County Council was doing the relocation and allocation of alternative plots for those whose plots were affected by the proposed airport, we were not considered, since as the County Council authorities told us, our plots were not within the affected margin.
- That when your people (surveyors) came to do the fencing of the proposed airport, they tried to annex the said plots; however, when we raised the alarm and notified our leaders, the area chief and the Councilors’ who informed the Engineer on site where the boundary of the airport ended, and also passed our grievances to the District Commissioner Isiolo and to the County Council. After thorough scrutiny of the map in County Council records, they found our complaints genuine that the land was indeed ours and the District Commissioner notified (KAA) people on the ground, and your people telephoned you on the same. That despite this, on 2/5/2008, your people seemed to ignore this advice and appear eager to continue fencing the disputed side but our leaders stopped them again. Therefore, this is to request you humbly to give this matter the necessary attention before it is too late in order to save us from further anxiety and unnecessary tussle.
According to an interview with National Land Commission official the airport resettlement effort is principally a closed case since at the time of the expansion process the new constitution had not been in place. And the process was conducted under a different regime—the then county council and the first regime of the county government who are no longer in office currently. At the time of this research, the airport had also been approved for flight operations making it difficult to dig for older cases of injustices that happened more than fifteen years ago. (Interview, NLC official, name withheld, Nairobi, February 20, 2019). These situations are so horribly complicated. When they start they are fairly simple, but because of poor planning and delays, this gives an opportunity for new people to move in and take advantage of the allocations. Then children eligible for resettlement grow up and become adults who also need to be resettled, and then the change of administration means that no one wants to take it up. Then there is corruption and grabbing at the county level.

However, community members neighboring the airport facility expressed apprehension that the disconnect between themselves, the airport authorities, the state and the Isiolo County Government (which replaced the county council in 2013) continues to pose risks to their tenure security and expressed the wish that the injustices that happened then be addressed with reference to the provisions for those displaced by the LAPSSET project (FGD, displaced airport victims, January 25, 2019).
4.3.1.2 Corruption and Land Dispossession by Elites during the airport expansion

The Isiolo County Council and the Ministry of Land at that time allowed strangers and elites who were land grabbers in Mwangaza to take advantage of the balloting exercise (Interview, airport expansion victim, Mwangaza, September 10, 2018). Portions of land belonging to those who had big tracks of land were forcefully acquired and targeted by the county council under the national government at that time to be given to the balloters, not even to the genuine squatters. An official from the former Isiolo County Assembly argued that:

To be fair, the balloting exercise for the airport expansion favored the rich and foreigners in Isiolo, not the locals who genuinely lost their land (Interview with a former Isiolo County Assembly official, Isiolo, January 25, 2019).

An official from Isiolo County Government (cohesion department) argued that land grabbing in Isiolo County, especially within Isiolo Central region, reached new heights during the airport expansion exercise. A victim who participated in the ballot exercise argued that:

Allotment letters were issued by Isiolo county council not to the squatters but to the “rich strangers” who had money and means of buying them. The ballots were being sold at 50,000 Kenyan shillings and at some point even 10,000 Kenyan shillings for those who were interested in having plots around Mwangaza (interview, Mwangaza resident, Mwangaza, September 10, 2018).

The issue of corruption made the initial estimates of those displaced to increase making the situation increasingly complicated due to widespread corruption that manifested itself at that time. Corruption cases came with the double allocation of land which led to mass land grabbing
and double allotment letters, a problem that up to date the county is still dealing with to determine legal plot owners in Mwangaza location (Interview, ward administrator, Isiolo, January 25, 2019).

In a focus group discussion held with the airport evictees who were residents of Mwangaza, the interviewees argued that they were shocked during the balloting exercise that locals did not benefit in the process that was meant for them, as elite foreigners with “fake ballots” were the ones who got plots (FGD, displaced airport victims, Isiolo, January 25, 2019). A respondent from Mwangaza area who lost her land and was told to go to Chechelesi as per her ballot number had this to say:

(...) I was given a ballot to go to Chechelesi, but I refused because some of those who had gone there were either beaten or killed in the battle as those areas were already occupied or other ballotees already marked the same plots too. (...) there was no free plot in Chechelesi to resettle us in. (...) The Turkanas in Chechelesi and some Somalis who live there did not want to see anybody from Mwangaza seeking a plot in Chechelesi. Our plots here were already given to other rich people we have never seen as residents of Mwangaza (interview, Airport victim, Mwangaza, September 10, 2019).

The issue of dispossession by elites was widely mentioned by the respondents who felt they were weak, with nothing to fight with and hence they lost their lands to the powerful people who immediately began developing those plots they got around Mwangaza area. A response from one of the airport victims (a pastoralist household) whose family lost almost 20 acres of land had the following to say during the interview:
We had 20 hectares of land, and our land was invaded by “strangers” who came with allotment letters that they had acquired from the Ministry of Land granting them legitimacy to claim land and to live here (...). All indigenous tribes of Isiolo living around the airport that is the Boranas, Somalis, Samburus and Turkana were to relocate to Chechelesi while Meru residents-settlers from Isiolo side were to be relocated in Mwangaza and some in Kiwanjani (...) (Personal communication with a pastoralist household, September 9, 2018).

The dispossession by elites led to the accumulation of land for commercial purposes which attracted different actors and entrepreneurs pushing the weak and poor out of their properties.

4.3.1.3 Displacements, Land Loss, and Emergence of Squatters

Land manipulation and malpractices by the then defunct Isiolo County Council led to the emergence of mass displacement of locals. Those that were dislocated from the airport and were moved to Mwangaza found others on the land they were allocated. The struggle and confusion in the process created tension which resulted in land conflicts which further caused displacements around Chechelesi, Mwangaza, and Kiwanjani, and to date, they have not been given the land. The agreement between the airport victims and the Isiolo County Council was that:

*People who had letters of allotments from the Commissioner of Lands, lease or titles or were tilling the area to be taken by the airport authority were to be resettled (Isiolo County Council Report, 2005; FDG, Airport Victims, January 25, 2019).*

The areas affected were the entire zone G, E, and the new Era Primary School (see map in Appendix). The airport displaced around 1,337 people inside the airstrip and around Mwangaza and Kiwanja-ndege (Isiolo County Council Report, 2005). However, the list generated from the
records by the National Land Commission, Kenya Airports Authority and a confirmation from the Office of Isiolo County Commissioner indicates that the displaced persons from Isiolo side are 64 who are the genuine squatters. The 32 of the 64 squatters from Kiwanja-Ndege is attached at the Appendix (Interview, senior national government administrator, Isiolo, March 11, 2019).

The effects around the forceful acquisition of land and displacement also led to land loss. The victims became landless and to make it worse, some became One respondent-former resident of Kiwanja-Ndege who now lives in Kiwanjani location argued that the residents inside the airport alone lost almost 80 acres of land (Interview, Kiwanja-Ndege displaced group member, September 10, 2018). The residents interviewed outside the airport land (Kiwanja-Ndege) claimed to have lost their land; some had 20 acres, some five and the least had one and a half hectares of land. All these plots are now gone (Interview, airport victim, Mwangaza, September 10, 2018).

4.3.1.4 Disruption of Livelihoods and Forced Diversification of Livelihood
The airport displacement also disrupted livelihoods as the squatters who were living around the airport land lost their means of livelihood such as livestock production, small scale businesses and farming. The victims interviewed argued that they had lived in that land, occupied the area, developed homes, houses, some grew crops and trees, and some had had various business structures for many decades then suddenly all was gone, and they had to start afresh. Some of the respondents affected by the resettlement of airport around Mwangaza said that after the displacement, they were forced to diversify their sources of livelihood from Pastoralism and farming to boda-boda business, small businesses and some failed to pick their lives up again (FGD, airport displaced victims, January 25, 2019).
A resident of Mwangaza displaced from her land claimed that she lost her land from the expansion effects in Mwangaza to a prominent politician within the county government. She was a farmer, and after being displaced, she went to live with her elder sister in Tigania. Currently, she lives from hand to mouth because she lost her land and is unable to raise money that can buy another land for farming (Interview, airport displaced victim, Isiolo, September 11, 2018).

### 4.3.1.5 Unsecure Land Tenure System

**Land Ownership**

According to the Constitution of Kenya, (Article 40), the law provides and protects the right to acquire and own any property, and that includes land, in any part of Kenya. This provision is an important link between property rights and the compulsory acquisition of land by the state for public purposes, or in the public interest. According to Article 40(3(b)), where lawfully held property such as land is acquired for a public purpose, or in the interest of the public, the state shall promptly provide payment of just compensation, in full, to the affected person.

**Community Land Tenure**

Land tenure can be defined as how access is granted to individuals within a state as a right to use, control and transfer land. It is an important part of social, political and economic structures in a state (Willy, 2018). The land tenure system in Kenya is categorized into four types, namely, freehold, leasehold, community land tenure and state/public holds. The property system is however classified into three categories; private, communal and public. Private tenure is where the rights are assigned to a private party who may be an individual, married couple, a group of people or a corporate entity.
The second category is community land, whereby a right to use, control or transfer land is granted to the community (the Land Act, No 6 of 2012 and 2016). In the new constitution, the county government has been given authority to facilitate all the transactions, and community decisions over community land and these rights can be rights over grazing area or a common pasture ground or access to resources such as water in the animal holding places (the Land Act, No 6 of 2012). The third category deals with the state where property rights are assigned to some authority in the public sector, including mining fields, forest lands and cultural sites (Kibugi et al., 2016).

The Creation of Trust Land and the Transfer of Trust Land to Community Land Act

As a system of land tenure in Kenya, “Community Land” is a new designation introduced following the promulgation of the new 2010 Constitution. Community Land Act No. 27 of 2016 came into force in September 2016 (Community Land Act, 2016; Wily, 2018). Some of the key objectives of the Act includes giving effect to article 63 (5) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010; providing for the recognition, ownership, protection and registration of community land rights and customary land rights; providing for the management and administration of community land and providing for the role of county governments in relation to unregistered community land and related matters. The new Act also provides for the conversion of community land, benefit sharing on agreements about investments in community land and rights and settlements in community land (Community Land Act, 2018).

In an interview with an elder, he argued that LAPSSET passes through urban areas, and they do not have proper ownership of documents on their land because Isiolo was trust land held by the county council before transferring to the county government. Isiolo now is under the community land Act of 2018. He, therefore, raised concerns that their community has never even been
empowered by the county government on their land rights. He feared that the majority of communities in Isiolo think that the land is still under trust land (Interview, a former Northern Rangelands Trust Council of elders official, Isiolo, September 7, 2018). This same situation was noted during an interview with the Borana Council of Elders (Interview, Isiolo, October 19, 2018).

4.3.1.6 Issues of Compensation

Based on the interviews done, the genuine squatters of the airport were to be given alternative land, not money, as a form of compensation. However, the controversial list of the squatters to be compensated made it difficult to find the genuine victims from the airport area on Isiolo side as those that the respondents called “strangers” were rich and able to fraudulently buy the ballot papers. The key informants from the government institutions and Isiolo County Government acknowledged that compensation, especially on the Isiolo side, was a major challenge with the airport project. It was noted that on the side of Meru, the land was private; hence they were compensated. However, on the Isiolo side, the land was communal resulting in no one being compensated however, the Trust Land Act before September 2016 amendments still acknowledged compensation of trust land in some forms which government never adhered to (Interview with airport victims, Isiolo, January 25, 2019). The Community Land Act does better because it provides for registration of community land by a community, assisting with compensation and exercise of rights, but if a community land parcel is unregistered and then acquired there is still a compensation process which is done on behalf of the people and held in trust for them until they register (Willy, 2018).
In a response from the National Land Commission official in Nairobi office, he admitted that:

*Yes, the airport expansion had compensation issues on Isiolo side, we are aware of that as a commission (...) we are currently working together with the county government of Isiolo to draw a new list of all the genuine squatters who lost their land and were never compensated as the initial list we were given had some irregularities and the number was bigger than the land which the airport facility actually took. (...) (Interview, a National Land Commission official, Nairobi, February 22, 2019)*

However, an official from Kenya vision 2030 secretariat interviewed, in had a different opinion on the airport case arguing that those who were not compensated either encroached government land; otherwise, all the genuine airport victims were compensated (Interview, Vision 2030 secretariat official, Nairobi, February 15, 2019). The locals interviewed around Mwangaza and Kiwanjani locations felt that they were not compensated because they did not have title deeds or allotment letters as land in Isiolo was held under trusteeship by the then Isiolo County Council and currently held under the County Government of Isiolo on behalf of the community.

Their colleagues from Meru-Tigania East and West side had legal documents of their land; hence compensation became easy. As a result of lack of title deeds on Isiolo side, the then county council promised to compensate the victims in form of land for land. For the plots they lost in the airport area, every victim was to be given two plots, one to settle in and the other one to help them navigate through building their livelihoods, but this never happened. This, they said, was a false promise (FGD, Airport victims, January 25, 2019).
Several interviewees’ from Isiolo-sub-county, the National Land Commission and the LAPSSET Authority admitted to the challenge of land ownership which resulted into difficulties in compensating community land in Isiolo.

4.3.1.7 Land Conflicts, Land Grabbing, and Land Speculation

Almost (80%) of the land in Isiolo County is communally owned and is held under the trusteeship of the county government (Isiolo County, 2013). 10% of the land constitutes government land, while the remaining 10% is privately owned. Less than 1% of the land is titled. The lack of land titles may be due to the categorization of the land in the county as communal land by the 2010 Kenyan constitution, with no accompanying law enacted to protect it thus rendering it difficult for communities residing in the county to acquire title deeds. This has created loopholes that have resulted in the encroachment of public land and the displacement of vulnerable communities. The allocation of land and land tenure security are of vital importance to contemporary African rural communities due to inequalities in allocation under the colonial regime and the post-colonial regimes, population increase, expansion of agriculture, increasing investor interests and resettlement schemes (Moyo, 2007).

Several responses from the communities interviewed contended that massive development projects in Isiolo threatened pastoralist land, as people competed over land for compensation where the project will pass. This competition has brought about ethnic confrontation, land conflicts and finally displacement of pastoralists from their way of life (Interview, interfaith group, Isiolo, September 8, 2018).

The statistics gained from the Isiolo magistrate’s court by this research indicate that cases of land disputes have increased from the year 2016 to 2018. In 2016 alone, there were only ten cases of
land reported; in 2017 the cases of land increased to 30, and in 2018 the cases at the court were 92. When asked why the sudden increase, the response from the court official was that the increase followed the 2015 Malindi High Court ruling which allowed land cases to be taken at the magistrate’s courts to reduce the backlog of land cases in the high courts’ (Interview, Isiolo Magistrate Court officer, Isiolo, October 19, 2018). The court record showed that most land cases came from Mwangaza, Kiwanjani, Chechelesi, Kambi ya Juu, and Kambi ya Gabra, all areas where LAPSSET passes through.

Most respondents believed that the airport expansion and the land irregularities and malpractices that followed have led to constant land conflicts within Isiolo County. Several actors claimed that before the balloting exercise, the communities were living in harmony unlike now when people are always clashing over land that once had clear owners. Currently, what is experienced is an intensification of land use and new actors having an interest in land within Wabera-Mwangaza area and Isiolo Central sub-county.

A respondent who lost land and is a member to a group that has filed a lawsuit against the government following the airport expansion and displacement claimed that the airport expansion brought with it militia groups (youths for hire who were paid to intimidate, beat and chase people out of their plots) in Mwangaza area (Interview, Mwangaza legal plot owners-self-help group member, Isiolo, January 25, 2019). These youths, according to another respondent, were used by the local chiefs and elites to forcefully acquire land, turning the field to be a violently contested area where people even lost their lives in the fight. Tensions from the malpractices and injustice to the local owners of land in Wabera Ward and political interference became enormous, and up to date the plots in Mwangaza have not been occupied by those they were allocated, the same
goes for Chechelesi and parts of Kiwanjani (interview, sub-county administrator, Isiolo, January 24, 2019).

However, in an interview with most key informants within Isiolo sub-county, they see the airport as an opportunity the region has witnessed since independence. These elites argued that access and opening up of the northern region have occurred through the international airport. They reasoned that the airport has an opportunity that if utilized will increase business opportunities and transactions, especially within Isiolo town.

Isiolo is rich in wildlife as they have three national game reserves and five community conservancies. Having wildlife around means the tourism sector needs an airport around to allow tourist to have direct flights from Nairobi to Isiolo (interview with a senior county official, Isiolo Town, August, 27, 2018).

Some of the officials interviewed also argued that the airport has improved investments in the area and has impacted a change in living standards. This is, however, conflicting with what the majority locals think of the airport which they see as a ghost project which is not useful for their local economy as pastoralists and small scale farmers. LAPSSET project in Isiolo having two complete projects that is the Isiolo airport discussed above and Isiolo Marsabit Moyale road, the study also looks at the complete road project and its impacts to communities in Isiolo.
4.3.2 Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale Road

The Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road was constructed at the cost of 420 million Kenya shillings. The road was constructed by a Chinese company called China Wu Yi, partly funded by the African Development Bank and China Exim Bank (LCDA, 2017). The road, 526 kilometers long, connects Kenya and Ethiopia and is part of the Great North Road that leads from Cairo to Cape Town and runs through Northern Kenya. The road is part of the Trans-Africa Highway Corridor. It has increased mobility and has also greatly reduced travel time between Kenya and Ethiopia. Most of the county officials interviewed argued that the construction of the road also brought cross-border peace between Ethiopia and Kenya. This was witnessed on December 7\textsuperscript{th} 2015 when the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and the President of Kenya met in Moyale to launch cross border peace initiative (Kochere, 2016).

The image of Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road then and now

![Figure 4.3.3: Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road in the colonial era before tarmacking (Source: Kochere, 2016).](image-url)
It used to take 2-3 days to travel from Nairobi to Moyale. Now it only takes under 12 hours. From southern parts of Marsabit lorries used to be the mode of transport, carrying cattle, goats, and sheep. People traveled perched on top of these trucks up to their destination. The road has increased the transaction and access to goods and services between these two countries. Other advantages include: increased market access for goods and livestock production; enhanced regional security and the road have also opened up marginalized areas for further urban growth (LCDA, 2017).

4.3.2.1 Benefits and Opportunities Brought by the Road

Media reports opined that the immediate benefits of the completed Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road include: reduced transport costs for goods and services; less travel time and no more way sleepovers, reduced wear and tear and other vehicle maintenance cost which used to be the case; and Isiolo town currently enjoying market access. Security-wise, the road has contributed to
improved security as carjacking and gang ambush of vehicles that used to be the case before has been minimized by the speed at which people are now able to travel (The Star, July 5\textsuperscript{th}, 2018).

A Mwangaza resident noted that;

\textit{ (...) we are enjoying the benefits...the response to the incidence of insecurity is also good as security officers are able to move faster and conduct their patrols frequently without any fear. Many Kenyans are now coming in Isiolo which has improved integration; understanding of culture by other people and other religions (Interview, Mwangaza resident, Isiolo, January 24, 2019).}

A cohesion officer noted,

\textit{We have banks; hotel businesses; insurance companies (...) foreign companies coming into Isiolo to invest because of accessibility and good infrastructure we now enjoy; (...) Employment to local people through cooperate business and companies have also increased, so the road has created for us job opportunities indirectly. We have small towns coming up which were villages before; cattle rustling along the road has gone down; livelihood transition-pastoralists are slowly transforming into businesspeople. We can now receive benefits from Ethiopia as we have so many purchased plots in Isiolo too. The road has given us a direct impact on the local economy (Interview, cohesion officer, January 24, 2019).}

The Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road benefits and opportunities mentioned above were also echoed by several respondents within Isiolo County, and the LAPSSET authority officials interviewed in Nairobi.
4.3.2.2 Challenges Brought by the Road

Insecurity

In the past the road created opportunities for banditry, although, as noted, the renovation of the road reduced these risks. During the Shifta War between the government of Kenya and the Northern Frontier District Liberation Front in 1962, the insurgency played out along the Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road and the insurgents used the road to their advantage because they were familiar with the terrain and that gave them an advantage over the state military that was fighting them. The insurgents, using camels as means of transport as opposed to military trucks which were stuck in the mud, launched attacks on the road during the rainy season when the entire region was flooded (Kochere, 2016).

According to a former combatant with the NFDLF, the remnants of the “shifta” militias took the arms they had to the road and started robbing people. From the 1980s to the early 2000s residents and prominent politicians succumbed to these activities. The Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road was dubbed by British Broadcast Corporation Radio 4 in January 2016 as the “road of death” due to banditry (Kochere, 2016). Kenya National Highway and Roads Authority noted that the government decided to open up the road to enable faster movement of goods, people and boost trade. The road was also to be vital in enhancing security through the faster and swift movement of the security forces (The Daily Nation, July 25, 2015).
Displacement and Forceful Land Acquisition

Like the airport, the road expansion also created a significant impact around Kambi ya Gabra as Kenya National Highway Authority commenced forceful land acquisition in 2014-2015. Road surveyors, according to one respondent, used police officers to take dimensions of the road and erect beacons and there were no notifications and prior consultations with the community. Due to lack of title deeds in Wabera Ward, the land taken by the road authority was not considered part of land acquisition, but instead, government land and those residents who were affected were considered to be illegally encroaching on government land. The Land Development and Governance Institute, report that up to 55 households were displaced and no compensation was made. However, in a follow up interview, this number was difficult to confirm as some respondents claimed that some people were compensated and that there was no major displacement incidence like the case of the airport (interview, resident of Kambi ya Gabra, Isiolo, March 14, 2019; LDGI report, 2016).

According to the interviews done in Isiolo, most residents affected were plot owners fronting the road. Plots that were behind those facing the road were also acquired by private investors who fenced them, developed those areas or occupied the land with other projects of their choice. According to the LDGI report, the complete road displaced 55 residents who also filed a lawsuit in 2015 at the Environment and Land Court Case No. 11 seeking the government to stop demolition and eviction that took place at that time. The findings of this report were empirical data drawn from focus group discussions that were held with some of the victims Tension reported during fieldwork was that the roads authority was demanding additional land for an economic reserve along the highway, a plan they never disclosed to the residents during the
survey or acquisition of land to be used for road expansion (Interview, Isiolo Cohesion Officer, January, 24, 2019).

**Access to Arms and Drugs, and Insecurity Risks**

Because of improved road access, Isiolo has experienced increased circulation of small arms and light weapons coming in from South Sudan, Somali and Ethiopia. This has resulted in increased insecurity in the form of commercialized cattle rustling and inter-communal conflict (FGD, Isiolo Peace Committee, Isiolo, October 19, 2018; Interview, senior national government administrator, Isiolo, August 28, 2018).

However, the issue of small arms proliferation in Isiolo is not a new phenomenon. The small arms problem was exacerbated by the road, but was said to be the result of several factors, including: porous borders within the Horn of Africa, namely Kenya’s borders with, Somalia, Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan; the demand for arms by pastoralist communities for their prestige and defense; the conflicts in the region in particular Somalia; the emergence of criminal gang and terrorist groups; and lastly, the lack of goodwill and support from community leaders and political leadership (Security and Conservation Workshop, February 1, 2019).

In a consultative meeting on security and conservation by various state and non-state agencies in February 2nd, 2019, it was noted that; security and conservation meeting referenced above it was noted that;

*Access to illegal arms in the region has led to insecurity and minimal access to schools due to the volatility of some areas in Isiolo especially in Modogashe, Merti, Garbatulla, Isiolo Central, Oldonyiro, Sericho and Kinna. (...*) These areas are conflict-prone areas due to cattle rustling and ethnic land clashes between the four indigenous tribes;
Turkana, Borana, Samburu and Somalis (...). The violence spilling over from these areas sometimes even affects businesses within Isiolo town forcing the shutdown of schools and disrupting learning activities. [There is an] increased rate of crime as robbery with violence has been recently rampant in Isiolo central; insecurity has also created fear of real and perceived threats of terrorism and livestock/cattle rustling which affect the economy of Isiolo county especially the tourism industry (Interview with senior administrator, Isiolo, September 8, 2018; security and conservation workshop, deputy senior national government administrator, Isiolo, February 1, 2019).

Respondents from communities in urban and peri-urban areas blame the new road for the increase in small arms which is posing a threat to their security, their properties, and their children, as school dropouts are the easy targets lured to acquire guns and commit crimes.

As well as various types of insecurity, the road also specifically facilitates the drug trade, as noted,

We also fear security risks because of the road as lately we have a lot of money circulation going on in Isiolo town from foreigners traveling into Isiolo via Nairobi from the Horn of Africa, [that is] Somali and Ethiopia. (...) The road has also led to increased drug circulation in Isiolo. For example, “khete” is a form of heroine drug being transported from Mombasa and it’s being brought into Isiolo using the road. The other drug is bhang/marijuana that is grown in the southern parts of Ethiopia. That drug gets into Isiolo through the road Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road and its transit is Archer’s Post where it is being dropped and then sent to other counties like Meru and Tharaka-Nithi using boda-boda as means of transport and even Mombasa via Nairobi with the buses
(FGD, Isiolo Peace Committee, October, 19, 2018; Interview, Ward Administrator, Isiolo January 25, 2019).

The majority of the respondents claimed that the crisis of insecurity in Isiolo has created cases of unemployment as many youths do not have proper education or academic requirements and skills needed to work in various companies around and those to come for the sake of LAPSSET corridor (interview, official from the Parliamentary Service Commission, Isiolo North Constituency, October 20, 2018; FGD, National Police Reservists, Ngaremara, January, 24, 2019; interview, local administrators, Duse location, October, 18, 2018).

Environmental and Social Impacts by Both Airport and Road Projects

Both road and airport projects have caused an influx of foreigners from the neighboring counties and even as far as from Nairobi into Isiolo. The influx of foreigners has caused an increase in the population of the county creating pressure and competition over resources, especially land. The indigenous respondents interviewed expressed their fear of population pressure, especially within Isiolo town, and what that will do to their culture and conservative way of life. They claimed that the influx of foreigners had caused the displacement of indigenous communities from Isiolo town to the rural peripheries of the town and it has increased resource-based conflicts among communities, especially on water and land (Interview with Mwangaza self-help group member, January 24, 2019).

The environmental justice report on the airport project noted that planes landing and taking off are causing noise pollution among the settlements around the airport. A respondent concurred:

*We experience noise pollution here constantly from the airport (...). The airport is close to two schools, Isiolo Girls secondary school and the Little Angel primary school and the*
noise pollution when the plane lands are always disturbing to students who are learning. (...) Secondly, there is no proper drainage system from the airport and the residents surrounding the airport, so during the flood the water from the airport is directed to the areas around here and this affects us. During floods there is no access, the Airports Authority should have built for us a bridge. There is nothing that has been done, and our children’s lives are in danger during rainy seasons (Interview, with Mwangaza resident, September, 9, 2018).

A civil society officer claimed that the expansion of the road also created noise pollution as construction hours extended even during night hours in some areas which violated the contract agreements that were made between the contractors and the local communities. The road construction also caused air pollution through dust during road works as sometimes contractors failed to pour water to minimize dust effects on the locals which were exposing many to health risks (interview, Officer for Natural Justice NGO, Nairobi, March, 2019).

Disruption of wildlife corridor and ecosystems was also not spared by the changes, as noted:

The road blocked the movement of animals from the other parks into our parks and conservancies because the government failed to put up an animal corridor where animals can pass through. This has affected the Buffalo Springs National reserve which has experienced a decline in buffaloes. The two projects’ effect on the environment and land has led to a change in land use which has been the survival technique of the pastoralist communities. The environmental effect of these two projects on Isiolo people has also contributed to rural-urban migration as many indigenous communities are abandoning
their ways of life in the rural areas and are embracing the idea of setting up businesses along the highway (Interview, Mwangaza resident, Isiolo, January, 25, 2019).

According to the media, Isiolo leaders demanded that the LAPSSET route be changed because of fear of the anticipated environmental impact, specifically on the ecosystem (The Star, April 8, 2017). The new LAPSET proposed route by Isiolo leaders is to pass through Isiolo-Lerata-Maralal-Baragoi and end in Lokichar, whereas, the original route was Isiolo-Lokichar via Nginyang. The same call was made regarding the proposed resort city in Kipsing-Gap, Isiolo Central sub-county which leaders requested be changed to Kulamawe or Archer’s Post (The Star, April, 8, 2017).

4.3.3 LAPSET, emerging contestations between the communities and the state relations in Isiolo County

4.3.3.1 County boundary disputes

According to the report of the ad-hoc Committee on the Boundary Dispute between Meru and Isiolo that was established in August 2013, there have been numerous complaints about the boundary between these two counties since the Kenya Land Commission of 1932, however, the present grievances arose as a result of territorial identity which began with the introduction of county governments and the coming of mega-projects (Isiolo County Assembly Boundary report, 2019). The officials interviewed from Isiolo county government argued that in the present day, the county government of Meru has continued to commit “acts of aggression against Isiolo county by initiating development projects within Isiolo County, which was unjustly demarcated before independence when the Northern Frontier District was in a succession dilemma (interview, a member of the Civic Education County Cohesion Department, Isiolo, October, 17, 2018; Interview, official from the Parliamentary Service Commission, Isiolo, October 20, 2018).
According to some of the officials interviewed from Isiolo county;

*Meru County which has currently alienated large areas in Isiolo county lacks factual basis, rights of occupancy, ancestral rights and rights of judicial administration (Interview, a member of the Civic Education County Cohesion Department, Isiolo, October, 17, 2018).*

The respondent disputed the claims by Meru county government that parts of Waso area are in Meru County citing that the record does not show any evidence of the signed consent between Meru and the colonial government giving them land for settlement in Meru (ibid.),

As noted, elders and local leaders in Isiolo claimed that it was during the Shifta War and independence period that the Kenyan government unilaterally changed the district boundaries to favor the Meru ethnic group who claimed the “Meru concession area” together with other grazing lands with high ecological potential. The areas that were affected by these claims and which in the opinion of Isiolo respondents are still disputed include: Isiolo leasehold area (currently Livestock Holding Ground), the Meru concession area, part of Isiolo town and part of Waso-Borana resource border areas (Interview, a member of the Civic Education County Cohesion Department, Isiolo, January, 24, 2019).

Media reports have opined that the current border row between Meru and Isiolo counties is linked to Vision 2030 projects. An official from the LCDA argued that;

*(...) the boundary issue is something administrative that is way beyond LAPSSET authority, that is a matter that only the government can handle and we have heard the case is in court so the projects cannot stall because of the court cases, the projects will*
go on and the government will figure the issue between the two counties (LCDA official, Nairobi, February, 19, 2019).

The building of an airport on disputed land claimed by both Meru and Isiolo counties also escalated boundary tensions between the two counties. The LCDA official acknowledged that LAPSSET had triggered a boundary issue that has been there between Meru and Isiolo from the 1960s. The timing of the project and increased contestations around the disputed areas are perceived to be related to the prospects of the mega projects.

In Garbatulla Ward, some elders interviewed echoed the same boundary issue arguing that:

Kwa hivosasa, sisinakaahapanajiriyetuhapani Meru. Meru nasema mpaka hii barabara yote ni yake (...) unaona? (now here we stay, our neighbors are Meru, and they claim even this road(Isiolo-Modogashe)is theirs (...) you see?Meru wanasemahiiipandehuuyotempaka “Nyambene”, mpaka “Yak”, mpaka “Selo” niyake. (Meru claims all this place until, Nyambene, till, Yak and Selo is theirs).

ImerukampakaWaso (it has stretched up to Waso) (...) They claim even entire Shab. (FGD, with elders in Kulamawe, October 18, 2018).

The boundary conflict was also said by Isiolo Peace Committee to be a time bomb that will create internal conflicts and external conflicts with Meru County if not resolved (FGD with Isiolo Peace Committee, October, 19, 2018).
4.3.3.2 Boundary issues and LAPSSET

For the LAPSSET land required by the government, the Borana and Turkana communities in Isiolo County will be affected more than the other communities they live along the corridor’s route, that is, in Wabera and Ngaremara wards (Interview, resident of Ngaremara ward, February 2, 2019) and media analysis (Abdi, 2015 and 2016; Abdi & Francis, 2015; Abdi & Kenneth, 2014; Barasa, 2014; The Star, April 3rd, 2018 and Darlington and Abdi, 2017).

Commenting of the current land claims between Meru and Isiolo, ward administrator from Ngaremara noted that “politically the areas contested by Meru county are in Isiolo because the people are registered voters in Isiolo County but administratively the named areas are in Meru County based on the administrative boundary drawn in the colonial period (interview, local ward administrator, Ngaremara, January, 28, 2019).

**Contested Land claims in Isiolo close to LAPSSET Corridor-Wabera and Ngaremara wards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGAREMARA-ISIOLO</th>
<th>NGAREMARA-SPECIAL WARD-MERU</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ngaremara-village</td>
<td>Nakuprat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zebra</td>
<td>Gotu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aukot</td>
<td>Bojidera</td>
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<td>Atan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corner village</td>
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<td>Daaba-juu</td>
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<td>Itungai</td>
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<tr>
<td>WaberaWard</td>
<td>Airport land; Kiwanja-Ndege; Chechelesi; LMD – Isiolo leasehold area; the Meru concession area, part of Isiolo township and part of Waso-Borana resource border areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 4.1: (Source: Authors own extract from ACLED Data, media analysis and field notes, 2019)
Ngaremara Special Ward

In 2015 Meru County created a special ward through affirmative action powers vested in the county government, following the court ruling on the boundary case between Isiolo and Meru County, whereby a parliamentary committee was to review the boundary issue afresh. The ward administrator said that Meru County realized that these were communities who are in Meru land and decided to find a way of helping (interview, ward administrator, Isiolo, January 28, 2019).

The first visit to Ngaremara Ward was made by the former Meru governor Peter Munya between 2012-2013, during the campaign in Kiwanjani, Chechelesi and Ngaremara and he announced his intentions to bring development activities to the region including the construction of livestock market, access road, and water boreholes. This was after LAPSSET was launched in 2012 by the three heads of states from Kenya, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. However, Ngaremara has been under Isiolo (then district) since colonial time and continues to get their services from Isiolo and have no connection with Meru county (interview, ward administrator, Isiolo, January 28, 2019).

A resident of Ngaremara echoed this, “Ngaremara is an electoral ward in Isiolo, and the Member of the County Assembly sits in Isiolo County Assembly, not Meru” (interview, resident Ngaremara, Isiolo, February 2, 2019).

The second visit was made by the current Meru governor, Kiraitu Murungi, again in 2018, whereby he distributed bags of maize to the Ngaremara village and milk to Early Child Development Centre (ECDC) pupils in Kisima primary school and sunk three boreholes in Ngaremara Ward. He promised that he was going to allocate 30 million Kenya shillings for development of that newly created ward. The special ward currently has its ward administrator, and supporting staffs and ECDC teachers employed by Meru County and the rough population was 7,000 people (interview, ward administrator, Isiolo, January 28, 2019; interview, an official
from the Parliamentary Service Commission, Isiolo North Constituency, October 20, 2018). These gifts and promises were not welcomed by all; officials from the Borana Council of Elders argued that:

The land that we have owned for our kids, the land that our ancestors left for us, and the land that we have been administering for the whole years are now under siege (...). Our game reserve is here, the locations are there, the schools which are there are run by Isiolo County, the dispensaries and health centers which are there are run by Isiolo County, but today Meru claim it’s their land. (...) Just two weeks ago the governor of Meru came here and announced a special ward which is going to advocate for administration and allocated 30 million for development in that ward (Interview, Borana Council of Elders, Isiolo, October, 19, 2018).

When asked a senior national government administrator in a follow-up interview in Isiolo County on the matter of creation of the special ward and how the administrations between Meru and Isiolo correlate, the response was that there are no laws in the Constitution of Kenya giving a county government the mandate to create a special ward. He added that it had never happened in history (interview, senior national government administrator, Isiolo, 28, January, 2019). The effect of this claim is that citizens are confused about where to go to for some services for which they are directed to either Isiolo or Meru County.
4.3.4 Stakeholder - Community Relations and the LAPSSET Project

This section argues that state authority is always fragmented and contested by a variety of actors in society. These various actors’ including the state compete for power and authority in setting rules of behavior, meeting the needs of the local communities and exerting monopoly on violence (Marc, Williaman, Aslam, Rebosio, and Balasuriya, 2013)

The National Government

The relations between the state and the communities in Isiolo have always been rocky even before independence. During the colonial period, the Northern Frontier District was created to act as a buffer zone between Abyssinia and the settled areas and the native reserves of Kenya. The region was considered unproductive, and it was thought that the population was too small to warrant attention which should be focused on the more densely inhabited areas of the colony. The North, therefore, has always been administered as a peripheral part of the country. The post-colonial government continued to treat northern Kenya, in the same way, classifying it as a low potential area in its first development plan-session paper No. 10 of 1965. Many respondents voiced that they do not feel like they are part of Kenya, because of the way in which the area has received little attention in terms of development.

As people of the Northern Frontier District (...) there is a reason we fought the Shifta War after independence to join Somali. We saw it coming, economic marginalization of our region, and now the state is coming with a development project that is further pushing us away, taking our land and this furthers their marginalization agenda. How can we even get employment along the LAPSSET corridor if the majority were denied a chance to go to school? (...) Can you count primary schools and the secondary schools
and teachers employed by the government in this region? (...) (Interview with the Borana council of elders’ officials, Isiolo, October 19, 2018)

As early as 1962 when the people of northern Kenya participated in a referendum to leave Kenya and be part of Somalia, that is when the disfranchised relations began to take form between the society there and the state. National government is always seen by the society as an enemy who is against them and with the coming of LAPSSET the community feel like the government has its agenda in the region of clearing the pastoral people. These negative opinions are coming as a result of unresolved historical injustices, principally occurring during the administrative regime of the late president Kenyatta (Kochere, 2016).

Majority of the respondents within Isiolo County interviewed felt that the LAPSSET project is a top-down approach and that it is not working for them. Lack of public participation in rural areas and minimal participation with elites in Isiolo County within Isiolo town and even along the corridor route in other counties was largely mentioned during the field interviews;

As for LAPSSET, people of Isiolo are not involved, it’s not meant for us, and it’s not going to benefit us. The feeling of the indigenous communities is that the project is pushing them away from the national government (...). The relationship between us and the state has not yet improved following what they did to us during the airport expansion. The state forcefully acquired our land and never compensated us leaving us squatters and now they want more land for the pipeline route, the resort city, the railway and other roads which won’t be beneficiary to the indigenous communities who are pastoralists. (Interview, a resident of Mwangaza location, Isiolo, January 24, 2019).
The only branch of the government the respondents from Ngaremara Ward and Wabera Ward said they enjoy is the security arm (Kenya Defense Forces (3 army barracks), all branches of Kenya police including the General Service Unit and the National police reservists who are locals and county administrators, as there was no other investment that was allowed to take place here until 2010 when the opening of the region begun slowly (FGD, Elders from Ngaremara, Isiolo, January 25, 2019).

The respondents interviewed also felt that they are still being marginalized by the government through the large-scale infrastructure project being implemented in their areas because they are pastoralists with no education or limited access to education. The constant question they kept asking is how they will benefit from the opportunity, when only foreigners are hired in such facilities citing the case of the completed Isiolo International Airport. The respondents feared that the projects being implemented in Isiolo would continue to marginalize them due to the historical injustices that the entire region was subjected to during the colonial period and after independence by the past regimes. Their biggest concern was, however, mass compulsory land acquisition for the project by the state.

From all the respondents interviewed in Isiolo County including Isiolo county officials, nobody was able to tell where exactly LAPSSET corridor is passing through. The community felt they were in the shadow and that the government is using that information as a weapon against them. The majority said that they have heard about the project coming, but they did not understand what it entails or how they will be impacted as a community. Only a few officials knew what the project is all about and its anticipated implication is creating a gap in knowledge between them and the majority of communities in Isiolo. The route presented in Google and on the vision 2030
website is misleading” a respondent claimed citing that there has been a change in the LAPSSSET corridor route (interview, Borana Council of Elders, October 19, 2018)

In response an LCDA official said that “(...) the slight changes of the LAPSSSET route were as a result of technical difficulties that were reported in the feasibility study which was conducted by the LAPSSSET authority on the ground following the initial route suggested” (LCDA official, personal communication, February, 22, 2019).

According to media reports, Isiolo residents accused LAPSSSET corridor authority of not consulting them on projects earmarked for the region. The residents threatened to block the construction of LAPSSSET project claiming that they have been kept in the dark as the government continues to implement the national projects that have continued encroached on their community land. A senior local administrator in Gotu noted that:

(...) The problem is the government assumes that this area is vacant, they should know these are community land; Northern frontier counties will never benefit from LAPSSSET project it’s a ghost project to us. The county is being overpopulated as the government believes that the area is free;(...) It is not free, yes there are no permanent structures (...) we are pastoralists don’t expect us to build big buildings (Focus Group Discussion, Gotu-Location, September, 8, 2018).
In summary the relation between the community and the state has been problematic over the years, the relations between the community and the county government is direct, but there seem to be some doubts from time to time. The relations between the community and non-state actors are also direct but shaky depending on the projects being pursued in the county. The relations between the community and the elites is problematic; there is no trust from the community who feel threatened by their presence and the relations between communities themselves is also not that strong amongst the five tribes who are the inhabitants of Isiolo County.

The County Government

Since LAPSSSET project was launched which has coincided largely with the introduction of county governments in 2013, county governments in project areas have been involved in representing the interests of the community and negotiating on their behalf with the national government. Isiolo County has been holding consultation meetings with the community and acting as the intermediary between the state and the community when it comes to issues of land acquisition, boundary conflict between Isiolo and Meru and several land claims experienced within Ngaremara Ward by Meru County. In an attempt to use legal means to resolve the boundary conflict, Isiolo County went to the high court and on November 18th 2015 filed a Constitutional Petition (No.511) with a notice of motion application seeking certain interim orders. The petition sought the following in part;

- According to the constitutional petition report 511 of 2015, it states that; pending the hearing and determination of this petition case an order for injunction and prohibition restraining the Meru/Isiolo Boundary Dispute Committee from whatsoever assuming or carrying out adjudication or surveying the boundaries
subject of this dispute with the intention of demarcation (Constitutional petition of 2015).

- The report continues that the Court does issue a prohibiting order against the then Cabinet Secretary in charge of the Ministry of Interior Co-ordination and National Government (the late Nkaisery) from interfering with the Meru/Isiolo boundary or any attempt to adjudicate on the Meru/Isiolo Boundary Dispute (Constitutional petition of 2015).

- The final appeal was an order for a declaration that an independent Commission should resolve the boundary dispute between Isiolo and Meru Counties set up for that purpose by Parliament according to the law (Constitutional petition of 2015). The ruling cited a declaration that the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed to the petitioners especially under Articles 1(1)(b), 1(4)(b), 2, 3, 10, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 40, 47 & 50 of the Constitution have been contravened and or are threatened by the Respondents (Constitutional petition of 2015).

The petitioners included the county government of Isiolo, and residents of Isiolo County and the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination. The respondents to this case were the national government, the Honorable Attorney General and the Meru county government with the National Cohesion and Integration Commission as an interested party. The petitioners claimed that the formation of a task force for surveying and demarcating the boundaries between these two counties did not consult them and that the Cabinet Secretary had no mandate to adjudicate on boundary issues. The ruling by justice Lenaola was in favor of Isiolo County stopping Meru County and the government from further land adjudication activities until the boundary issue is
resolved and since the petition ruling then no further attempts have been made to resolve the conflict.

However, the county government has not always been a saint in the community’s eye. Some respondents also felt that the county and the national government are working together against the community interests when it comes to LAPSSET project and land acquisition. The reason for their skepticism is that when the national implementers of LAPSSET project come to Isiolo, the county government is informed and all these meetings they attend yet genuine participation by community members is poor. Some respondents also felt that the county officials who are politicians have double standards when it comes to LAPSSET project being established in Isiolo County and that their leaders are not that vocal as those in Turkana or Lamu in fighting for the rights of the community for the injustices faced (FDG, Kulamawe, October 18, 2018).

Some groups within the community who were affected by the airport expansion complained that the county government has not fought for them to get compensation or to ensure that they are resettled as was promised. In retaliation two groups filed lawsuits against the county and the national government through the implementing agencies (Kenya Airports Authority) in court. These two groups include Mwangaza legal plot owners’ association in 2019 and the Kiwanja Ndege displaced persons in 2011 (interview, airport displaced victims, Isiolo, January 25, 2019).

The county government of Isiolo has been active in supporting the community’s interest when it comes to the issue of conservation and Northern Rangeland Trust. The county government has been seen to oppose certain NRT activities working outside their mandate by taking the role of the state in terms of security inside community conservancies and outside to the communities during cattle rustling operations within Isiolo, taking the same line as civil society groups, and
politicians (interview, civil servant, Gotu, March, 23, 2019). The county government is sometimes seen to be caught in between the state and the society and has to tread this path carefully.

The role of the county government and national government has however been confusing when it comes to taking responsibility to create civic education and public participation on LAPSSET project, community land acquisition, and compensation procedures. From the interviews with some county officials; it seems the county government blames the national government of doing little with the LAPSSET project yet articles 10, 118, 124, 221 and 232 of the constitution of Kenya, 2010 also gives them that mandate to do civic education to the community.

In summary, relations between the state and the community have always been characterized by feelings of disenfranchisement, although relationships with the county government are somewhat better because of the need to deliver in order to be re-elected.

**Vision 2030 Implementers, LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority and Different Agencies/Stakeholders**

Following interviews with different stakeholders involved, that is, LCDA, Vision 2030 Secretariat, and the National Land Commission, they all claimed that within the government there are different actors who are mandated with the task of implementing these visions and sometimes failure of one implementing agency should not necessarily mean that the whole government is to be blamed or it has failed to deliver on the promises. Within the LCDA, an official interviewed argued that they do not implement the project at the ground, but they have an oversight role (Interview, January, 19, 2019). The implementation of these projects is carried out by various ministries, such as the Kenya National Highway Authority, the Kenya Airports
Authority and the Kenya Ports Authority and the resort cities will be implemented by the Ministry of Tourism.

What was noted was that bureaucracy, hierarchy and devolved agencies in charge of the implementation of the LAPSSET corridor make it difficult even for the information to reach the top officials because there is also the chain of command within the administration governing these state projects. These implementing agencies are directed by policymakers and bureaucrats who somehow have powerful influence and interests which differ from those of the nation’s vision carriers (interview, local administrator, Gotu, March 23, 2019). The chain of communication sometimes has its administration challenges when it comes to implementation of the LAPSSET project and what the community contest at the ground.

The local administrator noted that the clash of interests in most occasions is between what the community wants and what the policy makers and implementers think is best for the community since they are the intermediaries between the state and the society. The problematic relations between the implementers and the society is that the implementers draft policies, draw maps and make decisions without consulting the community thinking that it is in the best interest of the people, the community also feels betrayed and sidelined in the planning process of these projects.

Elitism

The elite issue is Isiolo is not something new, but it is a problem that seems to have become more noticeable with the emergence of county governments which brought an increasing number of positions and interests to the county level. Elites have emerged to be powerful actors within the communities who have financial means and influence and they include businessmen, professionals, former politicians, current politicians, and civil servants both retired and those still
working. Their interests often differ from those of the community who cannot compete in the rush to grab opportunities. In Gotu location, the respondents in a focus group discussion argued that;

*We see land cartels coming either from Meru, Somalia, Mt. Kenya or Nairobi. These people have created land speculation in Gotu location in Ngaremara ward. Some also deceived the illiterate community that they will bring development when they take land in Boji-dera. The haves are after the community land as almost 80% of the community here are illiterate.* (FDG, Gotu Elders, Isiolo, September 8, 2018)

In an interview with one of the local administrators and a civil servant within Ngaremara Ward, they claimed that in January 2019 some tycoons arrived in their area and began misguiding the community about NRT and conservation issues. These people apparently represented a 180-strong group of people who had raised 44 million Kenya Shillings want to take 33,000 acres to create a group ranch inside a conservation area inside Nakuprat-Gotu conservancy close to LAPSSET. This led the community to suspect the group of speculative land-grabbing for the accumulation of community land for private economic gains in the future. Some of these elites are still in office, and others are former prominent people from Isiolo and Marsabit counties but of the same origin (Interview, local administrator, Gotu, March 23, 2019).

The issue is bringing tension as far as security is concerned claimed by a local administrator. The community in Gotu location has been targeted on the grounds that they are not originally from the area, (Interview, local administrator, Gotu, March 23, 2019) which may have provided a sense of justification amongst the indigenous elites as they felt that some non-indigenous people
were themselves trying to benefit from the new developments. Thus the issue is simultaneously about social class and influence, ethnicity/indigeneity and visions of future wealth.

The biggest challenge that the informants reported is that these elites are powerful individuals who know how to acquire areas of land they want, go to the Ministry of Lands and get title deeds without the communities being aware that their land is already taken. Since the land is communally owned, the community does not have direct rights to transfer or sell land directly so the elites who want land come through the county government who holds the community land in trust on behalf of the community (Interview, local administrator, Gotu, March 23, 2019). This adds another dimension of political power and influence to the issue of land-grabbing.

**Non-State Actors**

The non-state actors include NGOs working on various issues, including Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), tribal leaders, religious authorities and civil society organizations which all exercise a varying degree of political power over populations. Their powers tend to emanate from religion, the structure of resource distribution within the society, culture or the ability of the actor based on its might to provide basic social services (Marc et al., 2012).

NRT describes itself as a community conservancy organization, which operates in a number of counties particularly those in Northern Kenya, helping establish and support community conservancies. Within Isiolo, a number of community conservancies have sprung up in recent years, all under the umbrella of NRT. However, NRT is facing some challenges and complaints from communities over their operations. One problem is that community conservancies become embroiled in inter-communal conflict with other conservancies, just as the communities would do if the conservancy was not there. Given NRT’s involvement in resourcing and training of
armed National Police Reservists within conservancies, they have found themselves fiercely criticized over some recent insecurity issues. A particular problem is between conservancies in Isiolo and Samburu counties. Samburu County which is dominated by the Samburu community was one of the first to form conservancies, and it has ten to Isiolo’s five; thus Samburu dominates in terms of governance structures and also numbers of armed guards. The community also felt that their land is being taken by NRT in the name of conservation, and restricting them from the grazing land.

In various interviews conducted it seems that the community is influenced by some politicians and NGO groups who do not agree with the activities of the NRT in the region. Most people interviewed had a mixed stand when it comes to NRT and its activities in Isiolo County. Some felt that NRT had done more than what the county government has done since they came into office as they build schools for example in Gotu they have built two classrooms; creates some employment and provided scholarships to some bright students within the conservation areas who cannot afford school fees to continue with their education (Interview, local administrator, Gotu, March, 23, 2019; interview, NRT peace ambassador, Isiolo, September, 6, 2018).

On the other hand, some respondents also felt that the conservancy (although officially a community-owned entity) is taking land away from the community and that the conservation idea is the issue of elites who want to control and monopolize the security sector (in this case the National Police Reservists) within northern Kenya. While this suggests that conservancies favor elites an alternative view was offered by another respondent who claimed that “as long as the conservancies exist, nobody can grab that land,” so for the elites to acquire land, they have to break conservancies and chase away the people living here, and that is why they are misleading
and influencing the community negatively to be against NRT (interview, Merti resident, Isiolo, March 22, 2019).

However, the findings established that community conservancies had brought communities within Isiolo together where different ethnic groups share the designated area of communal land. In Ngaremara Ward, Turkana and Borana communities have been living peacefully since 2010 when the community conservancy came into being (Nakuprat-Gotu). In Leparua and Nasulu conservancies there was a similar story of different ethnic groups who would not have otherwise lived together peacefully. They no longer steal from each other or fight since they both gave part of their land for conservation (Interview, NRT council of elders’ former official, September 7, 2018).

**Isiolo Communities**

Isiolo has a long history of both alliances and rivalries between its five main communities. At the time of writing there has been some form of alliance between two traditionally rival communities, that is, the Borana and the Turkana who now live peacefully in Ngaremara ward. The Garre-Somalis and the Borana in Gotu also seem to exist peacefully and even intermarry because of the shared religion but there are still intra and inter-ethnic conflicts related to cattle rustling and land claims (interview, local administrator, Gotu, March, 23, 2019). As noted the conflict between Meru and Isiolo (mainly Borana) communities is related to LAPSSET but is played out at the local inter-communal level. Similarly, relationships between Somali pastoralists and other communities are strained by the move by the former to settle in certain areas in the hope of direct compensation when new developments arise (Mkutu, 2019).
4.3.5 LAPSSET Project and the Future of Isiolo County

Most elites (those who understand what LAPSSET project entails) interviewed were optimistic about the future of their county citing that they have hope for a brighter future full of more opportunities in terms of employment for those with skills in Isiolo county; less conflicts and more developments; that there will be more of the opening up of the Northern region; there will be improved infrastructure; more investors which means more investments and jobs in the future; that the impact will be felt positively to the local economy and improved living conditions.

However, they cautioned that to achieve that future hoped for, LAPSSET requires delicate management in terms of the interests of the stakeholders involved not only the government. As an official said that;

“The community wants development, but we want it done in a manner that captures the needs and aspirations of the Isiolo people, not the government alone” (interview, former county assembly official, Isiolo, January, 24, 2019).

The communities had a mixed imagination of their future in the era of mega-projects; they said that they see Isiolo being the future capital of Kenya, being a bigger city than Nairobi. They also see more development. However, they also had a fear of the influx of foreigners as they were worried that indigenous people would not be there to see that future. They will be pushed to the periphery as Isiolo will be hugely populated by foreigners like what is happening currently in Lamu County.

The elders and women interviewed also said they saw a lost future of their children (youths) due to drug use, radicalization, and school dropout as currently being embraced by Isiolo youths. The elders feared that the LAPSSET project would be forced to hire foreign labor because their
youths are not being empowered to pursue education like what is happening in Lamu County. Some of the major fears of the community cited severally were: culture loss; loss of traditions as they claim that development will affect their traditional way of life; environmental impact and increased resource scarcity (FGD, Alamachi village, Isiolo, January 26, 2019; Interview, ward administrator, Isiolo, January, 25, 2019).

Conclusion
In conclusion, this research found that, there were mixed expectations that the community had about the LAPSSET project’s first two completed components. The locals expected improved living standards and employment opportunities based on the two completed projects, but at the same time, the community had a fear of the consequences that come with large-scale land use changes for the sake of the LAPSSET project.

The discovery made during the fieldwork was that the current emerging fears follow the negative opinions had on the project, contestations in Turkana and Lamu counties and both the road and the Isiolo International airport project that left the communities in Isiolo as squatters, increased land conflicts and a triggered boundary issue between Meru and Isiolo. The findings presented a disorderly and corrupted balloting exercise for the airport expansion that left the communities around the airport land affected as they claimed their land was taken and no compensation or resettlement was done in return as was promised in Isiolo County.

Based on the implications of the two projects within Isiolo County, contestations emerged whereby it is believed LAPSSET has triggered a renewal of boundary conflicts between Meru and Isiolo and currently between Garissa and Isiolo and various land claims within Isiolo County, creating intra and inter-ethnic conflicts within the communities.
5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives a summary of the study. It also discusses the results of the main findings based on the three research questions identified in chapter one. The discussion is divided into the implications of the LAPSSET project, contestations emerging and relations shaped by LAPSSET between the society and the state. This section also gives a conclusion of the whole study and the contributions this work will provide in terms of additional knowledge and policy reference as well as highlights areas that require further research.

5.1 Summary

The study explores the implications of the LAPSSET project to the communities in Isiolo. In terms of the current debate on the future of rural Africa and megaprojects, the study examined whether the increased pressure on large-scale land use change in Isiolo could become a source of conflict due to the presence of the LAPSSET. This is because entitlement to compensation and resettlement of land depends on legitimate and recognized. This study sought to establish an understanding of the implications caused by large scale state-driven development projects even though such projects expected to improve the human conditions in the areas they are established in.

The literature was reviewed on the concept of large-scale infrastructure projects, development, and the implications of such projects to the societies they ought to transform. The theory used for the study was the theory of state-society relations. The study was carried out in Isiolo-sub-county in Isiolo county, within two administrative wards namely, Wabera Ward, which is the home of Isiolo International Airport and part of the Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road as the completed
components of the LAPSSET Corridor, and Ngaremara Ward which will host various components of the LAPSSET project within Isiolo County such as the completed Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale road.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 The Implications of the LAPSSET Project: The Complete Isiolo International Airport and Isiolo-Marsabit-Moyale Road

Both Isiolo International Airport and Isiolo-Marsabit Moyale road were expected to contribute to the sustainable development of the Northern counties, improve living conditions and alleviate poverty, facilitate revenue from tourism and promote access to cross border investments within the region (LCDA, 2017). However, the case of the airport project in Isiolo has illustrated what Vermeulen & Cotula (2010) say that large-scale land use change for commercialization by states are often accompanied by widespread results of corruption in the land deals as well as disruption of livelihoods, displacement, and dispossession among the poor locals.

The issue of unsecure land tenure brought in corruption as several cases of double and triple allocation of land and allotment letters was reported in a disorderly and corrupted process that left genuine airport victims affected. The scenario of dispossession in Isiolo seems similar to what Hervey and Hall et al., (2003 and 2015) highlighted with regard to large-scale land use change for commercialization of neoliberal projects, asking, “What happens when land is needed, but labor is not?”
In both case studies, the plots fronting the projects and behind the projects were either claimed by the state, the society or private investors. Both projects caused displacements, disruption of livelihoods, destruction of properties, loss of land and lack of compensations at different magnitudes as the airport had an extreme effect. The road project too caused harm to the residents whose land was taken, who were evicted and never resettled or compensated.

5.2.2 The Contestations between the National and Communal Interests Arising as a Result of the LAPSSET Corridor Project in Isiolo County

The emergence of the airport project which was built on a contested land brought boundary disputes between Meru and Isiolo county governments as both counties claim ownership of the facility (HakiJamii report, 2017; Kibugi et al., 2016). The contestations in Isiolo are also in the form of land claims which have increased in the recent years in Ngaremara and Wabera wards, creating land conflicts. The airport project also triggered inter-tribal conflicts between Meru and Boranas from Isiolo County following historical land injustices. The fear is that the boundary contestation between Isiolo and Meru will bring new forms of violence in the county as was the case from 2011 till 2015 when the contestation of boundary disputes between these two counties was intensified and left some dead (Bett & Jebet, 2017; Bett, 2017).

LAPSSET project is currently dealing with issues of displacement of indigenous people, same as those of Gumuz and Berta who are considered more vulnerable to the involuntary resettlement plan by the government of Ethiopia following the construction of the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (Mulat et al., 2014). As in Isiolo, these indigenous communities’ risks include loss of their source of livelihood, unemployment, and impoverishment since they hugely depend on fisheries and forest resources as most of them are hunters, gatherers of fruits, honey, and firewood for livelihood (Ibid).
In this study are also implications similar to those of Inga Dam III project in DR Congo which experiences the same social fractures to the indigenous people living in Bundi valley within SNEL’s concession area (SNEL is a government electricity company operating in Bundi valley). It is estimated that this project might disrupt the livelihoods of between 12,000 to 20,000 Congolese living in Bundi valley, marked as a protected area. The local population includes Basangela people who are considered to be the indigenous group in the valley among other communities who have been living and working in the Bundi valley following the construction of Inga dams I and II from the 1960s to 1980s (Repercussion of Large Scale Hydro Dam Deployment: The Case of Congo Grand Inga Hydro Project, 2018).

5.2.3 LAPSSET Project and the shaped State and Society Relations

The respondents interviewed felt that the LAPSSET project in Isiolo is just a national project driven by power and interests of the elites which have led to a disconnect between the people and the national government. LAPSSET project is hotly contested, and people protest as they claim they were not involved in the planning. What people want and what the government wants are different and do not match the local economy.

The clash of interests between the state and the society based on the two projects investigated relates with Scott’s claim that most bureaucrats draw maps without taking into consideration the people physically on the ground (Scott, 1998). One respondent claimed that interventions of the two projects were made from Nairobi’s Harambee House and that the ideas and agenda of LAPSSET project contribute to one side of the interest, that is, the state, and not the community (interview, Cohesion Department Officer, Isiolo, January, 24, 2019).
From the findings, the LAPSSET project in Isiolo brought several actors into play with different levels of interactions and relations. These relations have been discovered to be conflicting and disfranchising for the communities, based on different actors’ level of power, influence, and interests which differ from those of the weak community with not so much power and might to fight the state.

The major neglect from the state’s side after establishing these projects is the failure to resettle the displaced communities as it becomes a formidable challenge which in the long run triggers conflict due to lack of social sustainability. The projects the literature interacted with indicated contestations in the form of communal resistance, rallies, marches, and blockading of these vast projects which in the long run, in different circumstances, result in social conflicts and severe brutality which further weakens the state and the social relations (Bridger, 2017).

5.3 Conclusion

In trying to answer the research question that is the implications of large-scale state-driven projects on the communities in Isiolo, the consequences established from the findings from Wabera and Ngaremara wards based on the completed airport and road projects were increased land conflicts, filed lawsuits by the community members against the state, and several land claims. These two projects have left a lasting impact on the community as increased squatters and landlessness are leading to resistance by the communities on the yet to be established projects based on the implications the first two projects had on them.

The research has used several case studies of different mega-projects embraced within sub-Saharan Africa currently and globally to support the argument that mega-project indeed can act as a source of conflict due to their implications on the society which often affect the relations
between the state and the society. In relating the case of the LAPSSET to some of the global and regional case studies, the community’s mega-projects are supposed to transform against them as the disputes revolve around land security and the level of compensation offered by the state to the indigenous communities (Bridger, 2017).

LAPSSET project within the two wards of focus has proved to be capable of not only transforming the landscape of Isiolo County and the entire northern region but also the social relations, livelihoods, and institutions, akin to what Gellert and Lynch (2003) called mega-projects as a cause of displacements and conflicts. The project targeted pastoral lands and the intensification of land use change in response to the expansion and commercialization activities by the state at the expense of the indigenous communities who are the majority users of land are creating new forms of conflicts on top of what the county has experienced in the past conflicts.

The findings show that there was more harm than good for the first two projects to the indigenous communities whose culture and traditions seem distant from the urbanization and land use change taking place in their rangelands. However, the indigenous communities are still optimistic that LAPSSET will bring development and they want the project though they want their interests also to be incorporated in planning and implementation of the corridor route.

The two projects have also shown how the diffused power of the state through devolution of power from the central government to the local administration has brought further confusion in governing community land and on whose terms should negotiation for compensation be addressed to. The case of LAPSSET based on the airport and road implications saw communities fighting alone and even taking both the county government and the national government to court.
The community land is held under trusteeship by the county government on behalf of the community.

Questions which arose from the findings included: Who should be consulted on community land acquisition by the government: Is it the county government or the community directly? Who should be compensated for the land taken and how? Is it the county government or the local community? Should it be a joint compensation to the community or to individual families whose plots are taken by the project? These questions seemed difficult to find direct answers to, even from the National Land Commission officials interviewed as clear law on community land acquisition and compensation is yet to be enforced into law since the Act was passed in parliament in 2016. It still awaits the president’s signature. The National Land Commission officials argued that their powers are limited and in extreme cases they expect the government to step in.

This research therefore argues that large-scale projects which have been pursued by states in the desire to fulfill economic development within the society has left the communities which these projects were meant to impact worse off than before. This is not only in the case of Isiolo and LAPSSET but even with regard to the other mega-projects within the region that the study interacted with. The study also argues that based on the deep-rooted perception of many societies impacted by these mega-projects, the majority of indigenous population groups do not see infrastructure development and mega-projects in general in a positive light.

The critical debate interrogated is “whether development should be a progressive change that allows the society to adapt to its environment or should it destroy that which the society depends on and has lived on in the event of a new transformation pursued by the state.”
The consistency with the case studies on megaprojects either globally, regionally, and locally which this research has incorporated is that; the state’s designed and planned visions for the new social order in the “underdeveloped regions” as viewed by the state tend not to incorporate the society’s interests and acknowledge the already established and functioning social orders that have been present for centuries.

The study concludes that the unresolved land cases along the corridor route show that the state is not a single authority that works in isolation, and sometimes its intentions might as well be frustrated by powerful actors who work in isolation of the society. The study, therefore, contends that megaprojects can be a source of conflict either by triggering underlying issues or leading to the formation of new conflicts as was established in the findings of the two projects in Wabera and Ngaremara wards respectively.

**Conflict-sensitive analysis tool:** This can be incorporated into the project implementation stage because these projects take place in a complex social context. Every project should at least have its analysis tool to make it easier in addressing different implications different projects will have on the society. This tool can help the government to handle land issues and social, economic, and environmental issues along the corridor route.

**Social mapping:** This tool can be useful in identifying relevant stakeholders, their motivations and how they will be affected to distinguish genuine victims to be affected by future megaprojects. This tool can reduce controversies emerging during compensation of the genuine squatters and the opportunists taking advantage of the situation like the case Isiolo airport presented. This approach can minimize land conflicts and malpractices.
LAPSSET corridor authority should also include corporate social responsibility along the corridor. This can be done through employment-creating jobs specifically designed for the indigenous communities to allow project ownership and the inclusion of all stakeholders irrespective of culture and education background. This tool will also help the government to identify community needs like providing water, nutrition education. The government can also build local factories along the corridor’s special zone areas to incorporate local economic activity to sustain indigenous livelihoods like in Isiolo; the government can create a leather factory for the locals because livestock production is 80% to appreciate local economy.

5.4 Recommendations

- To the national government, a policy intervention should be emphasized on registration and regulation of community land holding and tenure system across counties which are still under customary land tenure system in Kenya. Communities require a further grace period for registration of community lands, and proper sensitization and assistance on this issue.

- To the county government through the office of civic education and public participation should sensitize the public and create awareness. The emphasis is as a result of the findings which discovered that almost 90% of the indigenous communities in Isiolo do not know what LAPSSET project entails, its benefits and implications as well as its route as much as it traverses their communally owned land. This also includes the gazetted areas, so as to minimize land speculation and land banking going on in the wars perceived to hold the project components.
● For Ngaremara Ward, the national government should address as soon as possible the new created Ngaremara special ward. This will prevent land claims and land conflict and possible violence between communities who feel they will be divided by the new claims between Meru and Isiolo.

● For Wabera and Ngaremara Wards, the government should address the land irregularities that stopped the 2018 adjudication of land because it will be the only possible way to identify genuine landowners to identify even those who lost land during the airport expansion and the administrative injustices on Isiolo side. And also embrace social corporate responsibility program across these two wards so that they can enjoy the benefits of the two completed projects.

5.5 Areas of Further Research

My research did not hugely incorporate women’s place, perspective, aspirations, and visions of these large-scale state-driven projects since they are the most affected when displacement around mega-projects occurs. It would be interesting for further research to look into mega-projects and gender to understand the role of women and where society places them in terms of their visions in the future making. Hence it will be interesting to understand the implication of LAPSET on women and their place in the future of rural Africa.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Components of the LAPSSET project

A summary of the proposed megaprojects within the LAPSSET Corridor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>Cost USD$</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isiolo-Moyale road</td>
<td>Kenya-Ethiopia Complete</td>
<td>429 million</td>
<td>EU and AFDB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isiolo Int. Airport</td>
<td>Isiolo-Nairobi Complete</td>
<td>77 million</td>
<td>Kenya Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berths LamuPort</td>
<td>Lamu On going 5 billion</td>
<td>Public-private partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldoret-Nadapal Road</td>
<td>Kenya-South On going 599 million</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamu/Turkana Airports</td>
<td>Lamu-Turkana Preliminary 15.1 million</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railways</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resort city</td>
<td>Lamu, Isiolo, Turkana Not yet</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isiolo Dams</td>
<td>Crocodile Jaw Not yet</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abattoir at Isiolo</td>
<td>Isiolo On going - Isiolo County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isiolo-Modogashe</td>
<td>Kenya-Somali On going - World Bank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1; Extract from LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority report, (2017)
## Appendix B: List of Key Informant’s and Focus Group Discussions Table 5.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Merti Integrated Development Program member</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24-Jan-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Borana Council of Elders</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19-Oct-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Northern Rangeland Trust</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19-Oct-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elders from Chechelesi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23-Jan-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Isiolo County Executive Commissioner of Tourism</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28-Aug-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wabera Ward Administrator and executive officer of the court</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-Jan-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Wabera Member of County Assembly</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24-Jan-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>former Isiolo county assembly deputy speaker</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24-Jan-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ngaremara special ward administrator</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28-Jan-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Garbatulla Ward administrator</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18-Oct-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Wabera Ward Assistant chief</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24-Jan-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Duse Location chiefs</td>
<td>male &amp; Female</td>
<td>18-Oct-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Isiolo county government officials</td>
<td>male &amp; Female</td>
<td>24/25-Jan-19 and Oct-17-2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mwangaza Legal Plot owners Self-Help group chairman</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25-Jan-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>residents of Mwangaza, Kiwanjani and Kambi ya Gabra</td>
<td>male &amp; Female</td>
<td>9/10-Sept-18 and 14-Mar-2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>resident of Ngaremara Ward</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2-Feb-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>National land commission</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21-Feb-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vision 2030 secretariat Official</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15-Feb-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LAPSSET corridor Development authority cooperate affair</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19-Feb-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LAPSSET corridor development authority chief economist</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19-Feb-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LAPSSET corridor development authority field personnel</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20-Feb-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Isiolo/Samburu security and conservation workshop</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|     | **TOTAL**                                                                    |         | **94**          |
Focus Group Discussions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>WARDS</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Burat ward</td>
<td>Burat Youths</td>
<td>October, 19, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Garbatulla ward</td>
<td>Kulamawe Elders</td>
<td>October, 18, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ngaremara ward</td>
<td>Gotu Elders</td>
<td>September, 8, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wabera ward</td>
<td>Isiolo peace committee</td>
<td>October, 19, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wabera ward</td>
<td>Isiolo Int. airport victims</td>
<td>January, 25, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ngaremara ward</td>
<td>Kenya Police reservists</td>
<td>January, 25, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ngaremara ward</td>
<td>Ngaremara Elders</td>
<td>January, 25, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oldonyiro ward</td>
<td>Residents of Alamachi village</td>
<td>January, 26, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wabera ward</td>
<td>Isiolo peace link</td>
<td>August, 28, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3

Appendix C: Letter of intent

Halo, I am Evelyne Owino, a student at United States International University of Africa doing my Master’s degree in International Relations and specializing in peace and conflict. I kindly request you to participate in this academic research on Megaprojects as a source of conflict: the case of LAPSSET corridor on the communities of Isiolo. I hereby request you to answer the questionnaire below. These questions are purely for academic purposes and your contribution will help the researcher write a report of the project which is a partial requirement for fulfillment for the award of Masters of Arts in International Relations. You are hereby notified that the information provided towards this research work will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be available to any third party upon your approval and express permission from you or your own representative.

Thank you for your time

Yours Sincerely

Evelyne Owino
Interview Guide

Guiding questions for Isiolo respondents/interviewees on the implications of LAPSSET project in Isiolo County

1. Have you heard about LAPSSET project and if so what does it mean to you?
2. What do you feel about the airport and road projects? What are your reasons for these?
3. Has the construction transformed your life in any way?
4. Did the airport/road construction affect you or your house, family land, religious ground in any way?
5. Did you or your friend or family benefit from the compensation by the government or the Kenya Airports authority or any other interventions by other CSOs?
6. What form of benefits were they and how did you feel about the benefits?

Guiding questions with the affected communities in Isiolo on the contestations as a result of the LAPSSET project in Isiolo County

1. What issues do you have with the airport and road construction?
2. What do you want done differently by the national government?
3. What have been the reactions of the Isiolo communities to the airport and LAPSSET projects?
4. What issues have they raised with the projects? What are their grievances?
5. How did the government carry out their compensation programs if at all it was done in Isiolo?
6. What groups benefited and what groups are having issues with compensation of the airport land?
Guiding questions for the Isiolo respondents on the Relations between the national government and the community shaped by the LAPSSET corridor project

1. How have you resisted the introduction/implementation of the LAPSSET projects?
2. How have you responded to or resisted the compensation benefits put in place for you people?
3. What are your impressions about the government based on these national projects? Why?
4. What projects would you prefer the government to do for your people here?
5. Do you think more Isiolo people have benefited or will benefit from these government projects or is it the other way round? Has the LAPSSET project brought more benefits or more losses for Isiolo people?
6. What are your future aspirations with these mega projects will there be conflicts or peace?

Appendix D: Work Plan Time Table-Table 5.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal writing and approval</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Data collection</td>
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<td>Data analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final report writing and submission</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Survey map of Isiolo airstrip expansion plan-2005

Figure 5.1; The land Meru county donated for the expansion of Isiolo International Airport in 2005 retrieved for Wabera ward administrator’s office (January, 25, 2019)
Figure 5.2; The land Isiolo county donated for the expansion of the airport expansion in 2005; retrieved for Wabera ward administrator’s office (January, 25, 2019)
Figure 5.3; Map of the total Land that was acquired for the airport expansion from both Counties-Meru and Isiolo for the airport; retrieved for Wabera ward administrator’s office (January, 25, 2019)
Appendix F: Field Photos

Figure 5.4: Land claims in Gotu location; Meru county claims part of Gotu location and marked their boundary with the painting (Isiolo, September, 2018)

Figure 5.5: Squatters residents around the airport area (Mwangaza, September, 2018)

Figure 5.6: Changes in terms of investments around Mwangaza area part of airport area (Mwangaza, September, 2018)
Figure 5.7: Large-scale land use change in Gambela along the corridor’s route. Land owned by private investor (Isiolo, 2018)

Figure 5.8: Photo from field work on the current land use change in the indigenous rangelands (Isiolo, 2018)