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Background

The scanty rains in Isiolo West, Kipsing and Oldonyiro Divisions, have attracted livestock from Isiolo Triangle, North Eastern and North Rift with increased convergence experienced in Isiolo West.

The prolonged drought in Merti, Garba-Tulla, Laisamis, Samburu East, Wajir and Garissa have resulted in decreased pasture and water in these regions thus contributing to their influx and their livestock to Isiolo.

Since Feb 2011, the convergences in different location has been associated with raids, killings, assaults, highway banditry and its spill over experienced in urban centres.

Unlike before when the convergences were spread, there is concentration of livestock in Isiolo West with areas of Mulango, Kubi Foni, Loruko, Burat, Kipsing and Oldonyiro experiencing the largest convergences.

The convergence comes when Turkana and Samburu of Isiolo are blaming Somalis and Borana for increasing availability of firearms in Isiolo. They also claim that Somalis have on several occasions threatened them with the firearms which led them to have their livestock graze even in areas of residence. The Cushitic groups on the other hand have accused both Turkana and Samburu of Isiolo for not collaborating with Samburu from Samburu East and Rendille of Laisamis, but also carrying out raids themselves and providing safe passage for the raiders.

The grazing resources in Isiolo West are getting depleted given the high rate of livestock convergence verses the limited pasture and water.

Current Situation

Turkana Communities from Trakta village in Lowangila –Ngaremara Location in East Division of Isiolo, woke up to gruesome killings of 7 people among them 2 children on what is believed to be a revenge attack by Borana armed men. The Boran man in question is said to have been killed on 10th October 2011 and another injured by 5 or so Turkana armed men in Nauwa-Daaba.

Six out of the 7 killed were buried in Trakta village on 19.10.2011 and the other in Maili Tano, a burial that was not attended by Cushitic group of Borana and Somali communities.

Reports from the field indicate that livestock belonging to the Boran from Isiolo South especially Kulamawe, parts of Kinna and Garba-Tulla were being herded on the stretch of Isiolo West Location-Central Div of Isiolo for about three to four months. Some of the livestock started moving out after exhaustion of forage in the stretch.

In the process of heading back to Isiolo South, livestock passed through the vast areas of Ngaremara location, East division of Isiolo District. During the movement, the Turkana community complained that the Borana stole their livestock and destroyed their homes. The Borana on the other hand complained that Turkana have curtailed and frustrated their movement and that of their livestock and denying them passage.

This incident has led to the displacement of the Turkana community living in Lowangila, Attan, Atir Manyatta Zebra, Daaba, Nakupurat and Litungai villages in Ngaremara location.

A civic Leader in Ngaremara says that about 850 families are in Archers Post Catholic Parish in Wamba-Samburu East (Archers Post is about 20 Kms from Ngaremara), 309 Families in Chokaa and close to 1,500 people in Ngaremara Catholic Parish. The displacement has also disrupted learning in schools with schools like Ngaremara primary, Lowangila, Attan, Atir Daaba and Aremiet facing temporary closures.

Kenya National Teachers Union's office-Isiolo branch has disputed claims made by politicians that non-Turkana teachers in Shambani and Gambella primary schools have absconded duties.

Mashujaa Day

Mashujaa day (formerly Kenyatta day) commemorated to celebrate heroes and heroines of this country were marked with absence of Turkana Community of Isiolo. In what seemed to be a deliberate move by the community and was noted with a lot of concern. Political leaders and even Administration officials were not present. Some of the community leaders contacted denied that it was not by design and there was no community consensus to miss the occasion. Some said they had just buried their dead and were not in the mood to celebrate.

Implications

Renewed mistrust and curtailing of joint occasions among Turkana and Cushites might lead to re-emergence of inter tribal conflict in Isiolo. Internal conflict in Isiolo was experienced in 2009 when Cushitic group accused Turkana for not only collaborating with Samburu from Samburu East but also giving them safe passage, building alliance with them and leading them through the terrain of Isiolo during raids.

Recommendations (to all actors including active and relevant CSOs, CBOs and the CEWERU)

- There is serious need for community dialogues since there is likelihood of re-emergence of inter-tribal conflict in Isiolo. The Turkana of Isiolo are already viewed with a lot of suspicion by Cushitic communities (Borana and Somali).
- Sensitization among Chiefs since they are based at sub locational and locational levels on how to spread the message of peace and how to manage a conflict once it erupts- This should encompass conflict early warning and early response.
- There is great need to have peace dialogues at Convergence points

- Revival of Community policing programs – Citizen-Police co-operation in curbing crimes and sharing of conflict early warning information.
- Education and implementation of Modogashe /Garissa Declaration (Revised/Final edition).
- Revival of Traditional Institutions among the Borana, Somali, Turkana Meru, Samburu and Rendille
- Address the proliferation of illicit SALW which is proving to be a big problem
- Awareness and implantation of UN Resolution 1325 – Inclusion of women in peace processes