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The Role of Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanism Actors on Land Use Management in Pokot Central Sub-County

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Abstract

This study sought to assess role of indigenous conflict resolution mechanism actors on land use management in Pokot Central Sub-County. The study employed qualitative and quantitative research designs. The target population was 781. The sample size was calculated using Roasoft sample size calculator, which gave 537 respondents. Simple random sampling was used to select households' heads while purposive sampling was used to select national government administration, council of elders and lands officers and snowball sampling was used to select disputants. Interviews and questionnaire were the main instruments of data collection. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while interviews were summarized based on themes. The study established that indigenous dispute resolution actors play a significant role in land use management. In dealing with cases arising from land use the council of elders play vital roles which include presiding over a case; in this case the elders select one elder amongst them to chair and the chair takes control of every undertaking in the course of the case, arbitration, mediation, decision making, peace-making, permit traditional oath and link the living with gods. This study recommends that; the community needs to incorporate women as council of elders, the government needs to come up with a structure framework specifying the roles played by different actors, make detailed legislation and policies to guide their operations and sensitise the community to appreciate and value this mechanism and realise its importance in discharging its mandate to the society.

Keywords: Role, Indigenous Conflict Resolution, Actors, Land Use Management

Introduction

The proper management of land use depends on the roles of the actors involved in ensuring that the valuable resource is used for the common good of the community and as part of management, conflict resolution takes a centre stage and calls upon the involvement of the highly experienced, knowledgeable and skilled persons. The quality of conflict resolution in management of land determines the degree of peaceful coexistence among the land owners, users and the disputants.

Land dispute may mean a societal issue related to property in which more than one party is engaged, some of the root causes of the conflict may include: difference in interests on the property rights: the usage right of the valuable resource called land, to get access to manage the land, for generation of an income from the property, to alienate people from it, for transfer purposes and the right to be compensated (Wehrman, 2005).

People Republic of China is faced with a great challenge of securing the fertile and productive land fit for agricultural production and the need to construct cities which are in rapid growth. In terms of controlling the land property, there is also the conflict in relation to the control to it where state owns the urban land and on the other hand community collectively owned the fertile agricultural land. However, because of land control in China – the urban land owned by government and the hard processes involved in conversion of the community owned land which is very fertile for agriculture into the state owned land, then converting it into private land either through the right to use the land or to be granted the land for the purpose of personal use. In relation to this, there were several options contrary to law trying to avoid state's policies. This results in decrease of agricultural productive land for the local community, unlawful land conversion from agriculture based property into city and the enrichment of local leaders. There have been also several challenges facing the rapid growth of urban areas in which, government officers take part in illegal lease and selling of land use rights on government land because of the huge profits (Ma, 2007).

According to Olaoba (2002) the Yoroba people of West Africa derive their laws basically from their traditions and customs. The community had verbal performance which was associated with literacy as opposed to the thinking that it was only written pieces that were associated with literacy. In addition, Yoruba community whose legal traditions were unwritten, present their cultures in performance as a way of preserving for its survival and make them enjoyable, and in so doing it ease its understanding. In matters arbitration the community and her elders derive their source of power from the wisdoms, cultures and traditions left to them by their forefathers which were always performed in form of drama.

According to MercyCorps (2011) most land disputes in Acholi land in Uganda are categorised into conflict between and among individuals, families, clans, relatives, neighbours and private investment. In most cases the members of the community found themselves in conflict as a result of ownership of land, the right to use the piece of land and drawing of boundaries. The Acholis like any other community with family structure, land use disputes split the structure into two halves; there existed conflict between the seniors and the juniors members of the family, widows were in conflict with the family members of the late husband. In addition, the community was faced with illegal possession of land by people within a family or neighbouring households or even within or outside villages. Some members of the community also had behaviours of selling a property that belong to a given family without their authority. Other types of land disputes in

Acholiland were conflicts between land lords and the squatters and change of land ownerships that are not recorded.

The Agiriama community of Coastal Kenya had the oracle and the council of elders (*kaya*) as their main institutions mandated to resolving conflicts. The community had two groups of elders with different roles aimed at attaining the desired justice and truth to all parties involved in different disputes, land disputes included. To start with, there existed the *kambi* mandated to hear and address regular or daily complaints. The second group which was most honoured was the *vaya*. *Vaya* was composed of few selected elder who work as secret body of the community. Among the roles of the most honoured set-the *vaya was* to manage the affairs of the community by controlling and directing on what to be done in different seasons like cultivation, planting and harvesting. They also pray for rains and determine initiation of young persons into different age-sets. During judgements, the *vaya* presided over the process of determining ones innocence in the position of the oracles and in the whole process superstitions took the centre stage in matters dispute resolution, particularly in search of justice and truth (Kariuki, 2015).

The community of Pokot Central Sub-County experienced land disputes since time immemorial due to the growing population. The disputes are evident across all the types of land ownerships which are: private ownership, communal ownership and public land especially in areas of Sekerr, Muino, Lomut and Wei Wei which is largely agriculture based. The area has been faced with serious challenge on land use management that has opened opportunities for conflict as a result of ownership, utilization and control of the scarce resource. The existing conflicts are between farmers-farmers, pastoralists-farmers, and pastoralist-pastoralists.

Land conflicts in Pokot Central were either as a result of ownership of land by one clan that ought to belong to other clans or boundaries that are not clear. Because of drought, the communities living in lowland are forced to relocate to highlands in search of better livelihood and other resource. This movement which comes with claims of ownership of land in arable places resulted to conflict over the scarce resource (Huho, 2012). This study intended to assess role of indigenous conflict resolution mechanism actors on land use management in Pokot Central Sub-County.

Statement of the Problem

Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms are one of the practical tools for land use management. Indigenous conflict resolution mechanism has been in existence in Pokot Central Sub-County since time immemorial. Its aspect on the resolution of land use disputes has however been ignored and marginalized to the extent that there are intractable land use conflicts within the community residents in Pokot Central Sub-County. The government has not fully recognised the mechanism and the role played by indigenous actors and its relationship with the court system is wanting. In addition, the traditional system is not fully effective because the actors are selected basing on the circumstances people face at a given time, this selection of actors sometimes are not received well and putting their mandate into a test.

Even after several attempts known to the various actors on solving land use disputes, the cases are still reported including loss of lives, loss of property, insecurity, forced displacement of persons and land is continuously being destroyed, enmity and disharmony among disputants still exist. It is in this regard that this study proposes to assess the role of indigenous conflict resolution mechanism on land use management in Pokot Central Sub-County.

Literature Review

Land Use Management in Kenya

According to the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning (2016) most of the land covers in Kenya are categorised into the following: savannah grasslands, wetlands, fresh and saline water bodies, forests and deserts. These land covers that form the beauty of Kenya are beneficial in many ways which includes agriculture (crop and animal production), catchment to water bodies, human settlement, tourism and recreation, historical and cultural sites, fishing industry, energy production and mining among other uses and above all land is source of livelihood for the citizens of Kenya.

The policy further defined land use management as the regulation of land use with the aim of: preservation and sustainable use of land; promotion of quality living environment; fostering vibrant economic activities; deliver of competitive urban places that attract and retain local and foreign direct investment; coordination of various actor in land use management; providing and maintaining infrastructure and services in urban and rural areas; guiding the management and exploitation of resources both at the national country level. It also entails decision making in respect to: extension of use, subdivision of land, conversion of use and approval of commercial and residential plans in accordance to zoning plans and development (Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning, 2016)

Current land use management in the country is characterized by: abandonment of policies before they mature hence making it difficult to evaluate their effectiveness; lack of capacity within the statutory agencies mandated to undertake land use management. No clear guidelines on the use of public land thereby causing misappropriation and destruction of these resources. Poor natural resources management in turn has resulted to indiscriminate excision of natural resources, deforestation, overgrazing, intrusion into groundwater, erosion of coastal areas. It has also contributed to intrusion into the highest level of water body damaging marine existence. In addition, it resulted to mass extinction of species, infrastructural competition and insufficient and inappropriate technology which has negatively impacted on effective collating and dissemination of land use information.

To address problems related to land use management, the government shall: Enhance preparation of strategic spatial developments plans to guide investments; ensure enforcement of and compliance to approved development plans; develop a database and guidelines on usage of public land; establish a devolved institutional framework for management of public land at national and county level; adopt modern technology in land use management; develop a land use mapping system and formulate a resource tenure policy (Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning, 2016)

The government has not developed clear framework for management of communal land and resolving conflicts relating to communal land.

Role of Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanism Actors in Land Use Management

Indigenous conflict resolution mechanism involves various actors in the conflict resolution process. According to Alula and Getachew (2008) in many parts of Ethiopia, the lineage system often involves in dispute resolution. Most of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in Ethiopia, aimed at resolving conflict, can be attained by all interested individuals. The actors participated in conflict resolution process in indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms can be

divided into three types. These are the conflicting parties (plaintiff and defendant), conflict resolver (elders) and the crowd. The crowd consists of any interested persons or sympathizer of disputants. These actors in a conflict resolution process have their own duty and rights (Daniel, 2016).

The defendant and plaintiff collectively make up the parties in the conflict. The conflicting parties are the main actor in the resolution process because; the existence of the system depends on the presence of conflicting parties, who bring their cases in search of justice. If conflicting parties were not there, it would not be possible to have the system of indigenous conflict resolution. The disputants' familiarities with the indigenous system, their trust on the elders, time and cost effectiveness of the indigenous system are some of the reasons behind the local people's persistence preference of the indigenous conflict resolution institution. Participants in the conflict resolution may be relatives, friends, and/or neighbors of the parties in the conflict or any passer-by can also attain the conflict resolution process. In most case these participants have the right to participant in discussing the case. However, they do not have a role in decision-making. The main actors involved in the conflict resolution process as mediator are elders and clan leaders.

Horowitz (2007) wrote that for disputants to have confidence and trust to a mediator, he/she has to have all the qualities and character acceptable to all including being respectful, honest and wise person. He/she must be willing and determined address the issue to the full satisfaction of the disputants. In this regard, conflict resolvers, are selected based on their good reputation, wisdom, exemplary deed, experiences, patience, commitment, talent in delivering just decisions, well versed in traditional law and other calibres. Tarekegn (2008) also noted that in many communities elders who are respected and accepted in their community by their wisdom, experience, moral standing, knowledge of the custom of the community, their ability to analyze and advise disputants, and being patient, impartial, incorruptible and respectful of diversity are selected in the conflict resolution process as conflict resolvers. Due to the above qualities of the conflict resolvers, they are highly trusted and respected by the wider society. As a result, conflict resolvers are effective in maintaining peace and resolving conflicts.

Traditional Conflict Resolution among the Kusasi in Ghana

Bukari (2013) indicated that according to the traditions Kusasi people, conflict is as a result of violation on the gods and the spirits. The community believes that when human blood is shed due to conflict, the anger of the gods has to be quelled to prevent the community from disasters. Kusasi believe that for peace to prevail after violence there should be the rite of the earth cult which starts from blood collecting and cleansing, burial of objects and finally merry making.

Blood collecting and blood cleansing involves sacrificing animals to appease the soil where human lives were lost due to violent conflict. To execute this process a got and a cock are slaughtered and used with *pito* (local beer) for the purification purposes (Bukari, 2013). The second step which is performed immediately after animal sacrifices involves burying of objects to shows the end to hostility. Among the objects to be buried by the parties involved in the conflicts were the okro stalks as a sign of reconciliation and end to fights. This step and practice is very symbolic since the okro stalk becomes sacred to the earth spirit as per the promises made by the disputants and the penalty to those who infringe the practice is death. The disputants have to be involved in the rite since they have to make covenant with gods/spirits in order to

finally restore peace and harmony and the successful completion of the rituals indicates restoration of peace and ultimately resolution of dispute (Bukari, 2013).

The last step among the Kusasi is merry making which is organized and celebrated at a big ceremony in the community traditional capital where the paramount chief sits. In this ceremony the disputants come together for celebration and declaration of their support for peaceful co-existence. This important celebration brings on board disputants, members of the community and government officials where the last animals sacrifice are made in readiness for merry making. To wrap up the whole process the ceremony has to be accompanied by dancing, singing and drinking and other forms of entertainments (Bukari, 2013).

Traditional Mechanisms among the Ambo Wareda Community in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has been using traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution for centuries. The institutions of *Gadaa* among the Oromo, *Joburas of Agnuak* and the *Shimagelle* by the Amhara are among others (Gowok, 2008). In Ambo town, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are most manifested in the form of *Jaarsummaa*, among others. There exists a high tendency in Ambo town to use traditional mechanisms to resolve their conflicts. Even though cases are submitted to court system, they are usually pushed back to local elders and other mechanisms of amicable resolution of conflict. This implies the fact that traditional mechanisms are a better option to the modern court system.

The practice of traditional conflict resolution in Ambo town is chiefly depends up on arbitration systems. *Jaarsummaa* is one of the traditional mechanisms by which conflict is resolved among Ambo town societies. It is a system of reconciliation which is administered by the community elders. Selections of the local elders are determined by reputation they held, deep understanding of the local custom, individual talent and conflict resolution experience (Jetu, 2012). Employing such wise and knowledgeable elders, Ambo town community resolves conflict between the concerned parties. They listen actively and openly to the other person's explanation and find the solution together. At last they teach social norms in all cases and thereby making conflicting parties to go in harmony with societal values. *Jaarsummaa* is not the only method of traditional conflict resolution. Generally, conflicts in Ambo town as well as Ambo Woreda at large have been settled by wise elders, spiritual leaders, and highly honoured clan leaders (Zelalem and Endalcatchew, 2014).

Resolving Land Disputes among the Kipsigis

The Kipsigis Council of elders (*kamasian*) deals with various conflicts within the community. Some of the notable conflicts that they settle are land disputes, matrimonial disputes and murder. Concerning family land, disputes are not common since an old man makes an oral will before his death. Normally, the aged man invites his wife(s) and children and dictates how he wishes the property to be share. The share to be allocated to each child solely depends on the respect and care the child had to his/her father. Once the property is shared, and the boundary has been set, the old man would pose a question to confirm their satisfaction. If all parties are satisfied and delineation has been made, customary law held that there was no more issues to be raised pertaining to the piece of land after the death of the old man. Violating traditional will could lead to curse, death or even being struck by lightning (Kariuki, 2015).

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed qualitative and quantitative research designs. The qualitative research was used to collect information from respondents through interviews, this approach added value to the study since the respondents were free to give every detail of the information needed and the data was analysed basing on the opinions and free views from the respondents. On the other hand, quantitative design assisted the study to get numerical data through administration of questionnaires. The analysed information in tables, numerical data and statistics guided the study in making interpretation and conclusion.

Study Area

The study was conducted in Pokot Central Sub-County. Pokot Central Sub-County is among the four Sub-Counties in the County of West Pokot. The other sub counties are West Pokot, Pokot North, and Pokot South. Pokot Central has four wards namely: Sekerr, Lomut, Wei Wei and Masol (West Pokot County Government, 2013). The area's economic production is largely pastoralism which is undertaken mostly in lowlands and in the arable areas, small scale farming is undertaken. In Pokot Central Sub-County 60 per cent of land parcels do not have title deeds (WPCG 2013). The study was also narrowed down to Locations, Sub-Locations and Villages. Particularly, farming areas of Sekerr highland (Sostin, Mbara and Chepkondol), Muino in Wei Wei Ward, highlands of Lomut Ward and pastoralist areas of Sekerr Ward lowland, Wei Wei location in Wei Wei Ward, lowlands of Lomut Ward and the whole of Masol Ward where land use disputes often occur.

Target Population

The study covering Pokot Central Sub-County/ Sigor Constituency and its four Wards targeted a population of 781.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The sample size was calculated using Roasoft sample size calculator, which gave 537 respondents. Non-probability and probability sampling was used in this study. Simple random sampling was used to select households' heads while purposive sampling was used to select national government administration, council of elders and lands officers and snowball sampling for disputants.

Table 1: Sample Size

Target Population	Sampling Technique	Target Population	Sample Size	Per Cent (%)
National government administration Officers (Ass. Chiefs and Chiefs)	Purposive	60	20	30
Council of Elders	Purposive	339	102	30
Disputants	Snowball	N/A	40	N/A
Household heads	Simple random	372	372	100
Lands officers	Purposive	10	3	30
Total		781	537	

Data Collection Instruments

The primary data was collected by administering questionnaires and interviews to national government administration officers, council of elders, disputants, households' heads and lands officers and the secondary data was sourced from published literature.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The study used both descriptive and inferential techniques to analyse quantitative data. In descriptive analysis, percentages and frequencies were used to summarize the data through tables. Qualitative data was analysed basing on the content presented and developed interpretation from the thematic areas relevant to the study.

Findings**Roles of ICRM Actors on Land Use Management****Table 2: Roles of ICRM actors**

Actors	Roles	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Not sure		Total
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Council of Elders	Mediators	8	8.08	7	7.07	53	53.54	30	30.30	1	1.01	99
	Arbitrator	3	3.03	1	1.01	68	68.69	26	26.26	1	1.01	99
	Decision maker	7	6.86	6	5.88	60	58.53	29	24.43	0	0	102
	Peace maker	1	1.05	3	3.16	51	53.68	40	42.11	0	0	95
	Consult spirits	4	4.12	6	6.19	54	55.67	32	32.99	1	1.03	97
Disputants	File case	0	0	1	2.63	24	63.16	13	34.21	0	0	38
	Defense	1	1.5	0	0	16	40	23	57.5	0	0	40
NGA O	Decision makes	3	15	6	30	4	20	5	25	2	10	20
	Mediators	2	10	1	5	8	40	8	40	1	5	20
	Peace makers	0	0	0	0	10	50	9	45	1	5	20
	Chair	6	30	7	35	3	15	4	20	0	0	20
Households	Permit traditional oath	5	10	8	40	3	15	4	20	0	0	20
	Witness	47	13.58	58	16.76	99	28.61	133	38.44	9	2.6	346
	Decision makers	76	21.17	89	24.79	98	27.3	87	24.23	8	2.23	358
Lands office	Peace makers	62	17.22	78	21.67	97	26.94	117	32.5	6	1.67	360
	Management of communal land	0	0	2	66.67	1	33.33	0	0	0	0	3
	Manage public land	0	0	0	0	2	66.67	1	33.33	0	0	3
	Solve land dispute	0	0	2	66.7	1	33.33	0	0	0	0	3

Table 2 shows how respondents answered to the question on the roles played by different actors involved in ICRM on land use management and the problems related to conflicts arising from the land usage in Pokot Central.

This study indicates that council of elders play critical roles of being decision makers, arbitrator, Peace maker, mediators and lastly consulting the spirits. As shown in the table the council of

elders' role of arbitration agreed upon by 68.6% followed by decision making at 58.5%, linking the community and consulting ancestors especially during oath taking at 55.6%, at 53.6%, council of elders also play the role of peace keeping and they are as well sign of peace and lastly at 53.54% they do mediate as neutral third party who brings the warring parties together in participatory engagement that is aimed at achieving mutual agreement in relation to land in question. Macharia (2016) indicated that among the mechanisms used by Njuri Ncheke in resolving conflicts is peace crusade which was rated at 65% and instilling discipline at 70%

In addition, the interviews contributed to the findings that council of elders permit *msua* (oath) in case disputants want so, it was also noted that *poy* (elders) presides over all meetings and cases before them. One of the respondents said that they were given full mandate to solve all cases at community level by the former Chief Justice Dr. Willy Mutunga. They do participate fully in the whole process from the start to the last which is merry making and greetings as a sign of peace. According to the community, elders are sign of peace and hope during hard times. Their presence in conflict however much the conflict is it has to be solved in a reasonable manner.

Respondents also understood very well the roles played by disputants; both the claimant and the accused by agreeing with the options given in questionnaire and from the interviews. 63.16% and 34.21 % of the respondents representing the disputants agreed and strongly agreed respectively that their main duty is file or present their case before the elders with an aim of getting justice. 57.5% and 40% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that their role in indigenous conflict resolution mechanism in relation to land dispute is to defend themselves from the accusations levelled against them and they expect justice from the presiding team lead by council chair of the council of elders.

The residents of Pokot Central Sub-county which is the area of the study, as shown in table 7 above have confidence that their cases will be handled by experienced team full of wisdom in matters conflict resolution and land use. From the interviews the disputants believed in *poy* handling issues related to *kagh-pa rotiot* (border) because considering their ages, most of them were before anybody else and so they know the border better. Disputants participate fully during oath taking including looking for *wero ptio* who are entitled to hold *tontolwo* for the purposes of *muma* and they are also the main actors during closing celebration to make the end of rifts.

The respondents' answers in relation to the roles played by national government administration indicates that the role of peace-making was agreed and strongly agreed by the majority at 50% and 45% respectively, mediation at 40% agreeing and strongly agreeing, and decision making at 25% and 20% agreeing and strongly agreeing respectively. However, majority of the respondents representing (NGAO) at 40% and 35% disagreed with the role of permitting traditional oath and presiding over or chairing meetings. From the interviews chiefs and assistant chiefs have little influence on land cases handled by elders. According to Morena (2008) the Chiefs and the Paramount Chief who are government officers similar to National Government Administration Officers in Kenya are involved in cases on land issues. Paramount Chief and Chiefs heads traditional courts and give their opinion and determination on land conflicts. This means government officers in Botswana have some influence in traditional mechanism than in Pokot Central Sub-County.

The households' heads play vital roles in relation to this study. As indicated in the table above, 28.61% and 38.44% agreed and strongly agreed with the role of witnessing in these cases and the whole process, the second option was peace making at 26.91% and 32.55% agreed and

strongly agreed respectively and lastly 27.3% and 24.23% agreed and strongly agreed with the option of decision making. Households' heads presence in every stage is important for the purposes of reference, so they act as witnesses. Being witness for either of the parties adds value to the evidence presented to elders for the purposes of making determination. According to Pokot community *poror* (neighbour) is of great importance in one's life or undertaking, neighbour is the first person to come to ones rescue in times of need. In this study the households' heads closer to one or one's *poror* comes to disputants rescue and represent him/her during case hearing as observers and the selected few give evidence. The council of elders also consult households' heads that may have knowledge and the truth in relation to the land in question. In case conflict erupts in the course of deliberations, households' heads mediate and separate the warring teams until the situation calm. Therefore the role of peace making has to be available at all times.

Lands ministry officers indicated with 66.67% and 33.33% that they agree and strongly agree that manage public land respectively, on management of communal land 66.67% disagreed and 33.33% agreed and lastly on solving land use conflicts 66.67% disagreed and 33.33% agreed. This means the powers of managing land on behalf of the county and national government is in the hands of lands officers. However, the powers are limited according to the type of ownership. For instance, Pokot Central Sub-County which is largely communally owned, the land officers have little influence on its management, the land is largely managed by the elders. Public land is largely managed by the lands ministry with some assistance from the elders especially allocation of piece of land to public institutions like schools, hospitals church, cattle dips, among others. With the assistance of local elders as stakeholders in managing public property, land grabbing becomes minimal.

From the interviews, respondents representing lands officers indicated that they do not handle any case relating to communal land and they do not have any influence in indigenous conflict resolution mechanism. They only take part in solving conflicts through modern justice system. It was also noted that most of the parts of Pokot Central Sub-County have not been gazetted as section. Therefore locals rarely present any case to lands offices instead they present them to the elders. Some lands in Muino and Sekerr is in the process of getting legal documents but so far almost 90% of the area is under the management of local elders.

The main actors in ICRM among the Pokots are the elders (*poy*), disputants and the witnesses and the presence of *poy* is highly regarded unlike the Tswana and the Akan, who value the involvement of traditional herbalist, healers and diviners (Osei-Hwedie, Kwaku and Rankopo, Morena, 2008). Pokots do not need the help of diviners and herbalists in dealing with land matters.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Pokot council of elders are the most trusted persons in settling land related conflicts since most of the lands belong to clans and the clan elders narrated the history of their land to every young generation. In dealing with cases arising from land use the council of elders play vital roles which include presiding over a case; in this case the elders select one elder amongst them to chair and the chair takes control of every undertaking in the course of the case, arbitration, mediation, decision making, peace-making, permit traditional oath and link the living with gods. Claimant and the accused in land use conflict also take part in making sure that the process runs smoothly

by presenting their case in timely manner. During the material day for hearing and determination by the elders, they argue properly and present defence that gives council of elders and other responsible partners an opportunity to make judgement. Households' heads who in this context play a great role of witnessing the whole exercise in search of truth and justice, also take part in bringing peace in case the disputants engage in unnecessary dispute or violence in the course of deliberation.

In relation to the different actors involved in ICRM and the roles played by these actors, this study recommends that the community needs to incorporate women as council of elders. Woman also does have some degree of wisdom and can take the task placed on her shoulders to her perfection. The government needs to come up with a structure framework specifying the roles played by different actors. The government needs to make laws that protect their operations and the decisions they make, make detailed legislation and policies to guide their operations and sensitise the community to appreciate and value this mechanism and realise its importance in discharging its mandate to the society.

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