

Effects of Mau Forest Evictions on Human Security of the Ogiek Community, Kenya

Betty Chemutai Koech¹
Crispinous Iteyo²

¹bettykoech@gmail.com

²citeyo@mmust.ac.ke

^{1,2}Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

ABSTRACT

Forest communities have had to globally endure evictions, sometimes forceful, due to the need for governments to conserve the environment by protecting forests from negative human actions. The Ogiek are hunters and gatherers and rely mainly on wild fruits, beekeeping, and game hunting as a source of livelihood. Animals, e.g., hyrax, were hunted. The Ogiek's lives and sources of livelihood are highly dependent on the forest. The Ogiek community of Mau Forest, Kenya, is a forest community that has faced a similar fate since the colonial period. This study sought to establish the effects of Mau Forest evictions on the human security of the Ogiek community in Kenya. The study used a descriptive research design. The study sampled 465 respondents, who included 384 household heads, 1 county commissioner, 2 deputy county commissioners, 7 chiefs, 14 village elders, 1 county police commander, 2 sub-county police commanders, 5 conservationist organisations, 5 environmentalist groups, 1 UNEP officer, 1 UN Habitat officer, 1 officer from the ministry of environment, 10 officers from Kenya Forest Service (KFS), 10 officers from Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), 5 officers from NGOs, 1 officer from the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), and 15 heads of NGOs and CBOs. The study applied simple random, purposive, and census sampling techniques. Interviews, questionnaires, FGDs, and observation made up the data collection instruments. SPSS version 26 was used to analyse quantitative data. The data revealed that the Mau forest evictions had negative effects on Ogiek human security, including deaths (86%), injuries (97%), destruction of homes (98%), farms (80%), livestock (52%), illness (95%), lack of sanitation (92%), gender-based violence (69%), disruption of schooling (100%), loss of culture (94%), separation from family (88%), loss of livelihoods (98%), and increased human-wildlife conflicts (78%). 100% of respondents feared for their safety. The study revealed that the evictions had negative effects on the Ogiek community on virtually all seven elements of human security, namely economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security. The study contributes to the literature on indigenous land rights and human security, informs policymakers, and assists policy implementers in carrying out government directives without violating people's rights. It is also essential for civil society leaders. The study recommends that clear and transparent guidelines regarding the eviction process and any form of compensation be set and discussed with the affected households so as to avoid unnecessary impoverishment and protect livelihoods. The study further reckons that the government should adopt a more humane and sustainable relocation policy and provide alternative ways of livelihood to the victims.

Keywords: Evictions, Forest Community, Human security, Ogiek Community

I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, protected areas such as national parks, conservation zones, and nature reserves are defined by governments primarily to preserve the natural environment for the benefit of flora and fauna, that is, for the public good. According to Chan et al. (2019), there are over 120,000 protected areas in the world, covering around 13% of the earth's land. While the level of restriction varies across protected areas, people who depend on the resources within these areas often face strict limitations on their activities. In the case of tribal communities, this can mean being compelled to change their traditional way of life or relocate, resulting in the loss of their connection to their territories and livelihoods (IUCN & UNEP-WCMC, 2012).

Brockington and Igoe (2006) found that over 70% of parks in tropical areas are inhabited, with an even higher percentage of parks relied upon by surrounding communities. These communities are often removed from these places because they are deemed "the enemies of conservation" (Survival Kenya, 2014). This is because they are seen as engaging in activities deemed harmful to the protected areas. This approach more often than not fails to recognise the valuable role the communities can play in conserving the environment, as they are often the "eyes and ears" of the forest (Survival Kenya, 2014).

Throughout history, the Ogiek community has been known for inhabiting forested areas, including the Mau Forest in south-eastern Kenya. As a hunter-gatherer society, the Ogiek are highly skilled in hunting and trapping

techniques. Their traditional economy and diet heavily rely on honey produced within the forest, which provides the community with sustenance and a valuable commodity to trade with neighbouring communities. In exchange for honey, the Ogiek often trade for grains to supplement their diet, which is centred on meat and honey. However, since the early 20th century, the Ogiek have continuously faced persecution and forced evictions from their ancestral homeland. The colonial rulers took over the Mau Forest in 1957, and even after Kenya's independence in 1963, land disputes and evictions persisted. The government repeatedly ordered the burning of Ogiek homes, forcing them to relocate multiple times. In the 1990s, the Ogiek even directly challenged the Kenyan government, led by the late President Daniel Arap Moi, after decades of uncertainty, resettlement, and fear (UN, 2021).

The concept of human security has its genesis in the gradual emergence of human needs, coupled with the threats posed by both natural and anthropogenic hazards (Matanga, 2018). Today, the concept has undergone a drastic expansion to incorporate issues such as economics, environment, and culture. This is attributed to the scholarly works of figures such as Chattopadhyay et al. (2018). The concept of human security is linked to human development (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 1994). In light of this, there is a widely held assertion that human security contributes to human development and that the core elements of human life, such as survival, dignity, and livelihood, are essential. This makes the concept of human security a people-centred approach to addressing the bedevilling human threats. Imperatively, the evictions of the Ogiek community from Mau Forest pose a huge threat to their survival, thus jeopardising their security and the pursuit of economic development and prosperity. Notably, the eviction has deprived them of what they claim to be their ancestral land. Additionally, since they depend on the forest for their livelihood, this too has been constrained by eviction.

The idea of eviction of forest communities like the Ogiek is based on the view that some areas, such as national parks and forests, among others, should be protected (Guha, 2000). This is done oblivious to the kind of impact these evictions would most likely have on the human security of the evictees. This study therefore sought to assess the effects of Mau Forest evictions on the human security of the Ogiek community in Kenya.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive research design. The study sampled 465 respondents, who included 384 household heads, 1 county commissioner, 2 deputy county commissioners, 7 chiefs, 14 village elders, 1 county police commander, 2 sub-county police commanders, 5 conservationist organisations, 5 environmentalist groups, 1 UNEP officer, 1 UN Habitat officer, 1 officer from the ministry of environment, 10 officers from Kenya Forest Service (KFS), 10 officers from Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), 5 officers from NGOs, 1 officer from the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), and 15 heads of NGOs and CBOs. The study applied simple random, purposive, and census sampling techniques. Interviews, questionnaires, FGDs, and observation made up the data collection instruments. SPSS version 26 was used to analyse quantitative data and was presented in tables, graphs, and charts. Narratives and verbatim quotations were used to present the qualitative data.

III. FINDINGS

3.1 Effects on the Specific Elements of Human Security

In examining the effects of Mau Forest evictions on the human security of the Ogiek people, this study sought information on how the evictions influenced their lives and those of their neighbours. From the questionnaire responses, the findings were captured as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Effects of Evictions on Human Security of the Ogiek Community

Effects of evictions	Affected % (F)	Not affected % (F)	Don't Know
Economic security			
Loss of income/ livelihoods	98% (376)	2% (8)	0%
Killing of livestock	52% (200)	46% (176)	2% (8)
Health security			
Illness caused by extreme weather	95% (365)	5% (19)	0%
Lack of proper sanitation	92% (353)	8% (31)	0%
Food security			
Destruction of farms and crops	80% (307)	17% (65)	3% (12)
Environmental security			
Human-wildlife conflicts	78% (300)	12% (46)	10% (38)
Personal security			
Destruction of homes/shelter	98% (376)	2% (8)	0%
Injuries	97% (372)	3% (12)	0%
A feeling of being marginalized	87 (334)	13% (50)	0%(0)
Deaths	86% (330)	10% (38)	4% (16)
Increased sexual and gender-based violence	69% (265)	22% (84)	9% (35)
Political security			
Lack of proper representation in leadership positions	93% (357)	7% (27)	0%
Community security			
Disruption of schooling	100% (384)	0%	0%
Safety concerns in the community	100% (384)	0%	0%
Loss of culture	94% (361)	6% (23)	0%
Separation from family	88% (338)	12% (46)	0%

The respondents (household heads) reported various effects of evictions, categorised as economic, health, food, environmental, personal, political, and community security.

3.1.1 Economic Security

The most significant effect of the evictions on economic security was the loss of income and livelihoods, reported by 98% of the respondents (n = 376), followed by the killing of livestock, reported by 52% of the respondents (n = 200).

3.1.2 Loss of Income/ Livelihoods

Loss of income has a significant effect on the Ogiek people as a result of Mau evictions. The majority of the respondents (98%) agreed that the evictions had led to the loss of sources of income and livelihoods. Another 2% of the respondents, however, felt that the evictions were not a cause for the loss of livelihoods. This finding was supported in the FGDs, where village elders gave their views on their job losses. One of the participants, a village elder had this to say:

Being a motorcyclist, I had to move with my family during the eviction process. Moving with my family meant that I ventured into a new route where I was prone to mugging or getting lost. Majorly, my job has been centred on our village, and the movements and evictions have resulted in a loss of my customer base and a whole new market to explore. I have had to keep my motorcycle in a neighbouring village until things settle. For now, I have no business, and I have to look for other means of survival, such as soft loans (FGD, village elders).

Loss of sources of income among the Ogiek community due to the evictions from the Mau Forest Complex has not only led to food insecurity but also an overall decrease in their standard of living. This aligns with the human needs theory, which highlights that individuals require certain basic needs to be met to achieve an acceptable standard of living

(Woodburne, 2000). The loss of livelihoods and income has negatively impacted the Ogiek people's ability to meet their basic needs, including access to food, water, shelter, and healthcare. As identified in a report by the FAO (2017), this loss of income is further exacerbated by a lack of alternative livelihood opportunities in the settlement areas, leading to increased poverty and food insecurity.

Moreover, the public interest theory contends that government decisions should prioritize the well-being and benefit of the general public over the interests of a particular group or individual (Witter, 2021). However, in the case of the Ogiek community's eviction from their ancestral land, it appears that the government's decision was motivated by the interests of a selected few rather than the public interest. The Ogiek people, who have relied on their land for their livelihoods, have been marginalized and have lost their sources of income due to this decision. The unequal power dynamics at play here suggest that the government may have been swayed by the interests of those in power rather than considering the needs of the broader society (Wells, 2010). Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize the public interest and consider the potential impacts of decisions on marginalized communities to ensure equitable outcomes for all.

As outlined by a report by Amnesty International (2020), the Ogiek people have lost their sources of income in the evictions, which has led to families going hungry and even needing special help to meet their daily energy requirements. The loss of sources of income has been heavy on the individuals who depended on their income for self-sustenance and those of their families. The report further outlines the involvement of community help groups, including some humanitarian groups, in the settlement schemes in a bid to help alleviate the problem. The findings of this study are further supported by a report by the UN (2016), which classifies the Ogiek community as facing serious poverty from the loss of their livelihoods, including beekeeping and herbal trading. The community herbalists have been rendered jobless. The report further adds that the normal Ogiek family lives below the dollar mark, classifying the community as in dire need of external interventions from the government or international bodies.

3.1.3 Killing of Livestock

The respondents were asked whether they were in agreement with the statement that killing livestock resulted from evictions. There was almost an equal division amongst the responses, where 52% of the respondents attributed the killing of livestock to the evictions, while another 46% disagreed that the evictions led to the killing of livestock, and another 2% had undecided claims on the research statement.

One of the respondents, a village elder, during the FGDs supported this view with sentiments on how his 20 heads of cattle were burned in their shed during the evictions.

I inherited two heads of cattle from my father, one female and one male. Through my inheritance, I have managed over the years to build a name for myself and my family. In the Ogiek culture, cattle are an investment, and when someone owns a good herd, they are considered rich. I had developed my herd to 20 heads when the ordeal struck. This was about 10 years ago. We had barely slept when we heard ululations and wails from the next homestead; their house was on fire, and a lot of noise was coming from their side. I thought I heard a gunshot or two, but amidst the chaos, I could not make out whether it was or was not actually a gunshot. I jumped from my bed, leaving my wife and kids behind in the safety of the house, while rushing out to see what was up. Upon reaching the door, I was surprised by the sight of my own cattle shed on fire. An announcement came over a loudspeaker that we were required to exit. The government was taking back what was theirs, and it was very painful to watch one's decades of hard work go down the drain, but due to the unsafe conditions, my safety and my family's safety were the first issues of concern. I can never forget that day (FGD, village elders, October 21, 2022).

Further, this study defines nearly half of the respondents who define the evictions as not attributed to cattle killing and that their livestock were not killed in the process. These sentiments were evidenced in the FGDs, where one of the respondent witnesses, a village elder, of the evictions said the following:

I can recall the situation at these evictions, with which I have experienced more than four evictions. In the evictions, the police would rough up the residents, telling them it's time to move out while throwing their belongings out of the houses. The security officers then made sure the people obliged, and they would make sure to destroy the basic structure of the houses to pass along their messages. You were given about 15 minutes to pack and leave while an officer would be alert, waiting for your exit. At the elapse of time, you would be forcefully or leniently forced out of your house and homes, depending on your submission. All the cattle were set free, and it was upon you to rough them up. I did not witness the killing of livestock during all four evictions, though (FGD, village elders, October 21, 2022).

The killing of livestock during evictions highlights the importance of considering the human needs theory in policy formulation. According to the theory, human beings have certain basic needs, including food, shelter, and safety,

that must be met for them to lead a fulfilling life. Therefore, evicting people without considering their basic needs can result in significant violations of human security.

The findings agree with the findings of Adhiambo (2016), who defined isolated cases of inhumane treatment in the evictions, where the areas that were handled by the junior security officers without the supervision of their bosses suffered the most inhumanity. The writer describes that the evictions led to cattle deaths through the burning of cattle houses, with cattle being killed by stray bullets whose shooting had been meant to scare away the villagers. However, these incidences were isolated and not common to all the evictees, as described by the writer.

Livestock plays a vital role in the livelihoods of the Ogiek community, as they rely on them for food, income, and cultural practices. The killing of livestock during the evictions not only results in immediate economic losses but also has long-term consequences for the community's food security. This observation is consistent with the research of Kweyu (2022) on pastoralists in Kenya, where the author found that the loss of livestock leads to food insecurity and malnutrition, as the pastoralists lose a vital source of protein and income.

3.2 Health Security

The most significant effect of the evictions on health security was illness caused by extreme weather, reported by 95% of the respondents (n = 365), followed by the lack of proper sanitation, reported by 92% of the respondents (n = 353).

3.2.1. Illnesses Caused by Extreme Weather

The Mau Forest is located in an area prone to high rainfall throughout the year. Being a tropical forest, the region also experiences extended periods of high heat throughout the year. In the case of the Ogiek evictions, by defining the extremities of the weather conditions, the respondents were asked if the evictions led to exposure to the elements, leading to illnesses caused by the extreme weather conditions. 95% of the respondents agreed with the research question, while another 5% did not agree with the research question. This study's data was in agreement with the findings of Kweyu (2022), who outlined several diseases associated with the evictions of the Ogiek from the Mau Forest. During the FGDs, one of the respondents, a village elder, gave an early history of the Mau evictions by the colonial government.

The Ogiek of Sorghet were evicted in 1932. They were pushed out of the forest. Some went and camped in the Soliat area at a place called Kabokyek, named after the Ogiek. While at Soliat, the elderly got sick. They were attacked by anthrax, and all their animals died. Some people died too (FGD, village elders, November 24, 2022).

The minor percentage of the respondents who felt the illnesses were not caused by the extreme weather conditions were of the opinion that the illnesses were caused by the carelessness of the evictees since during the evictions the government gave the Ogiek settlement options that were not far away from their homes. Another respondent, a village elder, in the FGD supported this by stating:

In the first place, these settlement camps were located on a different plane of the rift valley region. The areas were prone to continuous sunshine, which the Ogiek had not well adapted to. People developed complications from the long sun exposures, and the heat was a torture to most. People died in the evictions too; they contracted diseases from drinking unclean water and sleeping in the cold. Some were bitten by insects such as mosquitoes and could not attend to health care services for fear of being arrested (FGD, village elders).

The Ogiek community that was evicted from their homes suffered untold experiences. Some of the people who were evicted in the night did spend the rest of the night by the roadsides in a bid for their security. By the roadside, these people did not have any shelter against the weather elements and thus contracted diseases, some long-term and some short-term. The writer Adhiambo (2016) gives this narrative through respondents in her study. Some of the respondents even experienced death as a result of the untold illnesses and the distance from their known remedies. The writer outlines bilharzia, malaria, dehydration, and heatstroke as the main weather-related illnesses recorded by the Ogiek people.

The assertions made by Adhiambo (2016) were complimented by the narration given by an NGO head (HRM) in an interview. He said:

Eviction subjected Ogiek to a new environment, which was mostly comprised of shanties that had poor sanitation and lacked clean water. This environment led to the spread of diseases, which are mostly associated with improper hygiene. Some of these diseases were new to the Ogiek community, and therefore they were hesitant to seek proper medication without realising that they were in great danger. Instead, most Ogiek communities tried to seek intervention from herbalists who lacked knowledge and skills to treat those

diseases. A good number of Ogieks have lost lives in the hands of herbalists who treated bilharzia, cholera, and other such illnesses as a major disease (interview with NGO head on December 6, 2022).

The human needs theory asserts that human beings require basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare for their survival and well-being. The eviction of the Ogiek people from their homes in the Mau Forest Complex deprived them of these basic needs, leading to adverse effects on their health and well-being. Samorai (2020) found that displacement and eviction lead to increased vulnerability to diseases, malnutrition, and mental health problems. The study also noted that vulnerable populations, such as indigenous communities, are at higher risk of experiencing adverse health effects due to displacement.

3.2.2 Lack of Proper Sanitation

Proper sanitation is an important aspect of health, as it plays a crucial role in protecting the well-being of individuals and communities. Access to proper sanitation facilities, such as toilets and hand washing stations, helps to prevent the spread of diseases and infections, which can have serious negative impacts on health. Poor sanitation can lead to the transmission of diseases such as diarrhoea, cholera, and typhoid, which can cause illness and even death, particularly among vulnerable populations such as young children and those with weakened immune systems. Proper sanitation is also important for protecting the dignity and rights of individuals.

The results of this study echo findings from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2019) census in Kenya, where 90% of the inhabitants of the Mau region were reported to have limited or no access to diligent modern sanitation, including treated water sources, pit latrines, and proper waste disposal practices. The individuals were defined as highly at risk of vector-borne diseases by the census. The settlement camps were heavily populated, with residents having limited access to social amenities such as pit latrines that were designed to serve approximately 50 people per latrine. During an FGD, most respondents were in agreement with this study's findings, and the following was said by one of the respondents, who is a village elder:

After losing our homes, we had nowhere to go. The rationale for our evictions was that we were infiltrators of the natural resources of the country. We were described by various names by the government, including unlicensed poachers of the wild. We were thus a menace that needed to be discarded, and that was the main aim of the evictions. Those who were lucky were taken to settlement camps without any belongings. Just the members of the family. At the camps, they were forced to put up structures from leaves to protect them from the outward elements likely to pose negative consequences for their lives. Being that there was no source of clean water at the camps, they were forced to drink from the nearby rivers where they used to bathe. A large number of people suffered untold illnesses. Further, those of us who remained at the mercy of our neighbours had a similar story to tell. The Maasai gave us a small piece of land from the community land where we put up makeshift shelters, including using the bushes for nature calls. We had to adapt, and the children generally were poor at adapting and became sick, with some of them dying (FGD, village elders).

The findings highlight the need to consider human needs theory in the conservation of forests and the displacement of indigenous communities. Human needs theory, as presented by Woodman (2004), argues that human needs should be the central concern in development and conservation initiatives. The theory identifies nine basic human needs, including subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity, and freedom. The Ogiek people's eviction from the Mau Forest Complex has led to the violation of many of these basic human needs, including subsistence, protection, and identity.

This study also agrees with the findings of another study by Zocchi *et al.* (2020) in Kenya, which highlights that displacement and inadequate resettlement support lead to significant challenges in meeting basic human needs. The study found that displacement led to challenges such as loss of property and resources, displacement from traditional livelihoods, and inadequate compensation and resettlement support from the government. The findings of this study are consistent with the challenges faced by the Ogiek people, who have been displaced from their traditional livelihoods and forced to live in settlement camps without proper sanitation, water, and waste management facilities.

The findings are further consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) report 2020, which recognises the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, territories, and resources. The eviction of the Ogiek people from the Mau Forest Complex is a violation of their rights as indigenous peoples and highlights the need for the government to recognise and protect the rights of all indigenous communities.

3.3 Food Security

The most significant effect of the evictions on food security was the destruction of farms and crops, supported by 80% of the respondents (n = 307).

3.3.1 Destruction of Farms and Crops

Most of the respondents (80%) agreed that the evictions led to the destruction of their farms and crops, while another 17% disagreed with this research statement. However, another 3% of the respondents neither agreed nor denied this research statement and chose to say they did not know whether the evictions actually caused the destruction of farms and crops. This study data thus reveals two different sides of the community response, which can be attributed to the witnessed evictions, just as discussed in the FGD. One of the village elders supported this:

The evictions were grounded on the notion that we, the Ogiek people, had invaded the forest, carrying out farming activities that were not supposed to be done in the forest. I recall well that night of 2002 when the policemen visited our village. I had a family of four, and we were all beneficiaries of our small farm, where we had some vegetables to keep us going. I heard one of the policemen label me as a criminal. The policeman said, "This is one of the people who are ruining our forests with their farms. I was earmarked and thus was a higher target amongst the surrounding houses. My farm was just at my doorstep, as opposed to my neighbours, who had their small farms at various points of the forest away from the homes but within the villages for protection against the monkeys. First, even before the policemen began concentrating on us, the farm was levelled to the ground. This was our complimentary means of survival, apart from the hunting and the beekeeping. It meant that my source of livelihood was destroyed and that we didn't know where our next meal would come from (FGD, village elders, October 21, 2022).

This was not an isolated case within society, and just like the 308 respondents, the community members acknowledged in unison by majority that the evictions saw the destruction of their farms and crops. However, the minority, 65 respondents, were beneficiaries of the new policies of the joint task force evictions of 2019. These respondents had their crops preserved for them and had a harvest even after the evictions. One of the respondents, a village elder, had the following to say in support of the more organised 2019 evictions:

I can testify that the government has tried to be lenient on the Ogiek people after the declaration of the African Community Court. As an evictee, I had a potato farm that I was tending during the evictions. However, due to the eviction schedule, the crops had not matured, and with all my investment lying on the farm, I took the option that was described by the deputy county commissioner: that we needed to register with our farms so that we could come back for the harvest when they were ready. I submitted my name, and true to their word, I was allowed to weed my crops and tend to them until I finally harvested and said a final goodbye to my home (FGD, village elders, October 21, 2022)

The findings of this study correspond to the conclusions of Adhiambo (2016), who defined the loss of farms and crops during the evictions. Through interviews, the writer defines cases of community evictees having to bear the biting pain of hunger while they initially had foreseen a bumper harvest from the promising crops that were destroyed. The writer further gave accounts of the settlers who wallowed at their misfortunes, where all their investments were destroyed in the farms along with the crops, and that they had nothing to live off of in their new settlements. The study conducted by Kweyu (2022) found that the destruction of farms and crops during evictions was a common phenomenon across Kenya. The study highlighted the influence of evictions on the food security of affected communities, which often led to a range of negative consequences such as malnutrition, displacement, and even conflict.

3.4 Environmental Security

Human-wildlife conflicts were the most significant effect of evictions on environmental security, reported by 78% of the respondents (n = 300).

3.4.1 Human-Wildlife Conflicts

The respondents were asked to respond on whether they agreed or disagreed with the research statement that human-wildlife conflicts are an effect of the Mau evictions on the Ogiek community and those of their neighbours, which in turn influence human security. 78% of the respondents agreed with the research statement, while 12% of the respondents did not agree with the research statement. Another 10% said they were not aware of any human-wildlife conflicts, wherein they chose the "I don't know" option on the response questionnaire. According to the reports by African Community Court (ACC, 2019), the Ogiek after the night evictions were left at the mercy of the wild animals and the forest elements. This report resonates with the findings of this study, where several witnesses of the court were recorded to have been involved in nighttime struggles with wild dogs that roamed the area.

Human-wildlife conflicts have been a significant issue in many parts of the world, and the Mau Forest Complex is no exception. As discussed earlier, the eviction of the Ogiek community from the forest has led to several environmental and social impacts, including deforestation and the loss of biodiversity. These impacts have also resulted

in increased human-wildlife conflicts in the area, affecting the Ogiek community's human security. According to a study by Wanderi (2020), human-wildlife conflicts have been prevalent in Tanzania, affecting both the community and wildlife. The study highlights that such conflicts are mainly caused by competition for resources, habitat fragmentation, and wildlife movements outside protected areas. This situation is similar to what is happening in the Mau Forest Complex, where the Ogiek community and wildlife are competing for limited resources, leading to conflicts.

Human needs theory can also provide insight into the human-wildlife conflict in the Mau Forest Complex. According to this theory, human needs are universal, and when they are not met, they lead to conflict (Galtung, 2016). In the case of the Mau Forest Complex, the eviction of the Ogiek community has resulted in the loss of their traditional way of life, including their livelihoods and cultural practices. This loss has resulted in frustration and anger, leading to conflicts between the Ogiek community and wildlife. Furthermore, the lack of proper compensation and resettlement support from the government has only aggravated the situation as the Ogiek community struggles to adapt to their new way of life. Therefore, addressing the human needs of the Ogiek community, such as access to resources and compensation for their loss, can help reduce human-wildlife conflicts in the area.

Another study by Naidoo *et al.* (2016) highlights the importance of community participation in mitigating human-wildlife conflicts. The study suggests that involving the community in conservation efforts can help reduce conflicts by promoting co-existence between humans and wildlife.

In agreement with Naidoo *et al.* (2016) findings, the head of CBO (Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)) stated that:

The conflict between animals and human beings has radically increased in recent years within the Mau complex area. The increased conflict has been a result of the struggle for survival between humans and animals. Ever since, the two have been enemies, and it is now time for man to learn how to protect wildlife and how beneficial it can be for him in the long run. As a community-based organisation, we are working closely with the Ogiek community to enlighten them on the importance of peaceful coexistence with wild animals and obtain the ultimate benefit from them. A good example is the training of the community on apiculture farming and how they can practice beekeeping in forests without degrading the biodiversity there. I consider beekeeping a more beneficial activity than logging and practicing agroforestry within Mau Forest (An Interview with CBO Head on December 5, 2022).

In the case of the Mau Forest Complex, involving the Ogiek community in conservation efforts can help reduce conflicts and promote the sustainable use of resources. The government can work with the Ogiek community to develop conservation strategies that take into account the needs and perspectives of the community. By doing so, the government can create a sense of ownership and responsibility among the Ogiek community towards conservation efforts, leading to long-term benefits for both the community and wildlife.

One village elder said the following:

On the night of the evictions, together with my family, we were forced to seek shelter by the roadside to avoid the roaming wild dogs that the area is prone to. The night was full of animal cries, and the animals also sensed something was wrong, making them even bolder. One of my uncles was bitten by a rattle snake in the night when he sat on the ground. During the night, we had to keep the fire burning next to our sleeping position and take turns keeping watch. I recall at one point, dead in the night, a pack of wild dogs was watching us from a distance. I could feel their staring eyes, and the cows were restless throughout the night because of the presence of these hunters. We were, however, lucky to not have been attacked by hyenas because some of my friends who had camped further away told us of hyenas who were menacingly laughing and confronting them during the 4 nights that they slept in the bushes (FGD, village elders, November 24, 2022).

A study by Kuyah *et al.* (2014) found that the evictions of the Ogiek have disrupted the traditional land use patterns of the community, leading to increased human-wildlife conflicts. The Ogiek have traditionally used a variety of strategies to coexist with wildlife, such as building fences and using traditional methods of crop protection. However, with the loss of their traditional lands, they have been unable to practice these strategies, leading to increased conflicts. Elephants and other wild herbivores invade the farms in the dead of night, leading to human-wildlife conflicts.

3.5 Personal Security

The most significant effect of the evictions on personal security was the destruction of homes and shelters, reported by 98% of the respondents (n = 376), followed by injuries, reported by 97% of the respondents (n = 372). Deaths were reported by 86% of the respondents (n = 330), and increased sexual and gender-based violence was reported by 69% of the respondents (n = 265).

3.5.1 Deaths

According to the results of our study, deaths were considered to be an effect of the evictions on the lives of the Ogiek people and their neighbors. A significant majority of 86% (330) of the respondents acknowledged deaths as a possible outcome of the evictions, while 10% (38) of the respondents rejected this statement. A further 4% (15) of the respondents indicated that they had no knowledge about the potential impact of the Mau forced evictions on the community.

It is important to note that the evictions from the Mau Forest have had significant negative consequences for the Ogiek people and their neighbors. Displacement can result in a range of adverse outcomes, including the loss of access to resources, social disruption, economic hardship, and, in some cases, illness, malnutrition, and even death. Vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, children, people living with disabilities, and those with pre-existing health conditions, are particularly at risk of experiencing these negative effects.

During an FGD, the main cause of deaths amongst the Ogiek community resulting from evictions was discussed. The respondents linked the deaths to the evictions and stated that the deaths in the community were linked to the evictions from the Mau complex. In a key informant interview, a member of the UN Habitat Representative had the following to say:

People died as a result of the evictions, with some being burned in their houses while asleep. The people living with disabilities could not rescue themselves and died in the chaos. Some people fell into pit latrines while trying to escape the beatings. Mothers who were expectant and vulnerable at the moment collapsed while trying to escape. Even after the evictions, death still followed the community; the sick died while trying to navigate the exposure to the harsh weather elements. People contracted diseases from their new environments and died. Death followed the Ogiek from the onset of the evictions, and to make matters worse, very few of these deaths were attributed to their original causes (interviews, UN Habitat representative).

The findings of this study are supported by a case study of the Ogiek community in Kenya, which found that the eviction of the Ogiek from the Mau Forest had a serious influence on their health and well-being (Adhiambo, 2016). The evictions led to the loss of access to resources such as firewood, medicinal plants, and clean water, which had previously been provided by the forest. This, in turn, resulted in increased rates of respiratory infections, malaria, and malnutrition among the Ogiek. Some residents were exposed to new infections, including bilharzia, from drinking water from open sources, which they thought were safe from their forest experience. A village elder in an FGD said:

As much as there were deaths that occurred directly from the evictions on the eviction day and the days that followed, worse scenarios occurred after the evictions. People with wounds were infected; most of my fellow people contracted diseases that we could not even identify. I recall this disease known as anthrax; we never knew the cause, and most of my community members were not immune to it. People died. To make matters worse, we had no support from the government, and we were not willing to get any help from the health institutions because of the probability of getting arrested. We feared for our lives; people starved to death. It was a horrifying and helpless situation (FGD, village elders).

It is clear that the evictions of the Ogiek from the Mau Forest have had serious and potentially deadly consequences. The loss of access to resources such as firewood, medicinal plants, and clean water as a result of the evictions has also had negative impacts on the health and well-being of the Ogiek. These impacts, along with the social disruption and economic hardship caused by the evictions, can contribute to increased mortality rates and negative health outcomes among the Ogiek. The eviction of the Ogiek community from the Mau Forest in Kenya has had serious and potentially life-threatening consequences, including increased mortality rates. Studies have found that evictions in urban areas are associated with increased mortality rates among displaced individuals in low- and middle-income countries (Chen *et al.* 2014).

3.5.2 Injuries

This study also examined the potential for injuries to occur as a result of the evictions of the Ogiek people from the Mau Forest. The research found that injuries were a potential outcome of the evictions for the Ogiek community and their neighbours. This was in an effort to understand the full range of effects that the evictions had on the human security of the Ogiek people. The effects of the evictions on human security were examined based on aspects of human security, including health. Injuries resulting from the evictions directly impacted the health aspect of human security, leading to physical harm and trauma. From the respondent population, 97% of the respondents who were composed of household heads in the Ogiek community acknowledged the injuries they suffered due to the evictions. Further, 3% of the respondents defined the evictions as safe without risks such as injuries.

In an interview, a key informant opined that the evictions caused untold injuries, which, up to date, are still affecting some Ogiek. He stated:

We have been taking care of the members of Ogiek communities who were injured as a way of extending a hand to them and also welcoming them to our organization. A case of one man whose leg had to be amputated after he got a deep cut on his leg the night they were being evicted. Due to the traumatising situation that was surrounding the eviction process, the man was unable to seek medical attention, and therefore the leg got seriously infected, causing a lot of pain. With our assistance, the man was taken to the hospital, where they found the leg was beginning to decompose and the only remaining option was to amputate it. Currently, the man can do little to help his family (Interview with NGO Head on November 14th 2022).

In another instance where FGDs were being conducted by the researcher with community members, they outlined the main cause of injuries in the evictions as heavily attributed to the hurry in the eviction process, where several households were expected to be evicted on the same day. The rush to carry out the activities led to poor precautions in the process, with safety not being prioritized. This definition was outlined by a respondent from the FGDs with village elders:

I experienced phase 2 evictions. The eviction process in itself was physically harmful; even as much as the authorities tried to take care of us during the eviction, they were outnumbered by the members of individual communities, and thus they would use commands and rough tones to make sure the people were cooperating. I recall an officer shouting at my wife, who was organising both the children while helping out in the process. It was a nightmare since she had to endure multitasking and taking care of the kids. One of my children accidentally stood under some piled furniture that came crumbling down on him and had a broken arm. There's nothing the officers could do, and I was forced to compromise between my property and the safety of my child. I sought the opportunity to take my son to the clinic, but I was not given the opportunity, and thus we had to improvise a sling and watch the boy drown in pain as we packed our belongings, wanting to evacuate in the next minute just to get the boy better help (FGD, village elders, October 21, 2022).

Further, members of the community who had witnessed evictions from the previous regimes had an adverse account of events. The economic security of the Ogiek community was greatly affected by the evictions, as they lost their homes and livelihoods. Many of them were forced to abandon their farms, which were their main source of income. This resulted in a loss of income and food insecurity, as they could no longer sustain themselves through farming and beekeeping, which were part of income-generating activities such as the sale or exchange of honey with other commodities. In addition, the evictions had a negative impact on the environment, as the Ogiek people had been living in harmony with the forest for centuries. The study found that the eviction process disrupted this balance, leading to environmental degradation.

The evictions also had a significant impact on the personal security of the Ogiek community. The community members were traumatized by the evictions, as they had to watch their homes and property being destroyed. They also had to leave their ancestral land, which was a source of identity and cultural heritage. The study found that the eviction process had a psychological impact on the community members, leading to depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorders.

The legal and political security of the Ogiek community was also affected by the evictions. The community members felt that their rights had been violated as they had not been consulted or compensated for the loss of their land and property. The study found that the eviction process was carried out without due process of law, which led to a lack of trust in the government and the justice system.

3.5.3 Destruction of Shelter

The respondents were requested to define the destruction of shelters as an effect of the Mau evictions on the human security of the Ogiek people. The destruction of shelter also had implications for the safety and protection aspects of human security, while the stealing of livestock threatened the economic aspect of human security. All the respondents gave their views on this study statement. In the study, the majority of the respondents, 98%, acknowledged that the evictions resulted in shelter loss. However, 2% refuted these claims and acknowledged that no shelter was lost in the evictions. The findings of this study were supported by the findings in the FGDs, where the respondents gave their views with a strong claim on the destruction of houses as both an eviction means and a means of ensuring that the community members did not come back to their previous residences in the forest. One of the community elders shunned the destruction of shelter during the evictions:

Mimi nimekuwa mkaazi wa hii forest tangu nizaliwe. Baba yangu alizaliwa humu, hata babu yake na babu zao. Yanayotendeka kati ya wanaOgiek na serikali ni mambo ya kutisha sana. Iweje wewe mwenye makazi yako ukaja kwa wengine na kuwafurusha kwa madai yasiyo ya kimsingi? Sisi wanaOgiek tumeishi humu tukiulinda misitu tulivyoagizwa na mababu zetu, tumejenga kwa miji iliyotengewa ujenzi. Hatuharibu misitu kabisa. Sasa haja gani serikali iliyoleta upanzi wa majani chai katika misitu kuja kutuharibia makwetu. Nyumba zetu zimebomelewa tukaachwa bila makazi tukiambiwa tutafute pa kujikinga kwani sisi ni wahalifu wa kuharibu raslimali. Natamani kujulishwa kama hii raslimali sisi hatufai kufaidika kama wenyeji. Mbona nyumba zetu na makao yetu kuharibiwa. Haki ya wanaOgiek iko wapi? [I have been a resident of this forest since my birth. My parents, their parents, grandparents, and even great-grandparents were inhabitants of this forest. The wrangles between the Ogiek and the government are so disheartening. How is it that you, who have a home, come to other people's homes and drive them out without justification? As the Ogiek people, we have lived here taking care of the forest, just as advised by our ancestors. We have only erected our homes in designated areas. Our houses were destroyed, and we were rendered homeless while being told that we should look for options because we are criminals who have invaded the country's natural resources. I'd love to know if these natural resources are not meant for us as the original residents. Why are our houses destroyed? Where are our rights] (FGD, village elders, October 21, 2022)?

According to Adhiambo (2016), the Ogiek people suffered immense losses as their shelters were destroyed in either the eviction process or after the evictions in a reclamation bid by the government of Kenya. The writer further outlines that the settlement camps were provided as an option for the evictees. These camps established in the precolonial period were already run by initial evictees and could not viably contain the new evictees. These options were just another dead-end trap to have the evictees move from their homes, resulting in the loss of shelter. These findings were further cemented in a key informant interview:

In order to complete the reclamation process of the forest, we first have to get rid of human encroachment. Second, we have to get rid of human influence to pave the way for nature to take over. Here, we demolish all the man-made structures to create room for disintegration. After their destruction, we can choose to move them away or, alternatively, leave nature to take over the ruins. We plant trees and tend them until nature takes its course (Interviews, Director NEMA, and November 22, 2022).

This study finds agreement with reports from Amnesty International (2020), which outline the inhumanity in the evictions of the Ogiek from the Mau complex between the years prior to 2017. In the report, the police are shown to have broken down the homes of more than 90% of the evictees in a bid to prevent them from coming back to these settlements. The reports note that the police and the government considered the destruction of these homes as the final statement of evictions after several attempts at peaceful evictions. During the eviction deadlines, the police units would destroy the homes as a final statement to the locals, who were then forced out of the vicinity. A discussion by the security agencies, however, reveals a different direction for the eviction process. One key respondent from the agency said the following:

Even when carrying out the evictions, we must never lose sight of the environment that we are striving to protect. These homes have several chemicals that, when exposed to fire, produce chemical variations that are not only harmful in the air but also, when washed down by rain, choke the environment. In my capacity, during the evictions, we sensitise the community on the importance of removing all their belongings, including their roofs, to limit the harm already done to the environment. We discourage fires in all aspects, including those home owners who feel that the fires are meant to purify their exit (Interviews, Police Officer, November 14, 2022).

It is said in the study that the Ogiek have been violently evicted from their lands and that their houses and property have been systematically damaged during the evictions. The Ogiek have been compelled to abandon their homes and lands by a variety of aggressive tactics, including the demolition and torching of their dwellings. According to the human needs theory, property is one of the basic human needs that are essential for survival and well-being. The Ogiek community's eviction from their homes and lands, resulting in the destruction of their property, has affected their well-being and security. The Ogiek's loss of property is a significant challenge that has contributed to their displacement and poverty. The UNDP (2020) states that property rights are fundamental to social and economic development, and their violation is a form of discrimination that perpetuates poverty and inequality. The government's failure to adequately compensate and resettle the Ogiek community has resulted in significant socio-economic challenges, including the loss of property and resources.

Relative to the public interest theory, the government's action in evicting the Ogiek community and destroying their property was motivated by the perceived public interest. The government aimed at asserting control over the forest

land, arguing that it was necessary to protect the environment and promote sustainable resource management. However, this assertion has been challenged by the fact that the government has not only evicted the Ogiek community but also restricted their access to the forest resources, which has negatively impacted their livelihoods and well-being. This suggests that the government's actions may not have been solely motivated by the public interest but rather by a desire to consolidate power and control over the forest resources.

Amnesty International's research (2020) confirms that shelters were destroyed and set ablaze during the Ogiek's evacuation from the Mau Forest. The study depicts the evictions as planned and organised attempts to remove the Ogiek from the forest, and it cites multiple allegations of police violence, including beatings and gunshots. The findings of this study thus define shelter destruction through two main components: first, during the evictions, the Ogiek were driven from their homes, and the homes were destroyed to pave the way for nature. Secondly, the Ogiek were not offered alternative accommodative shelters to mitigate the initial shelter loss. As described by the author Adhiambo (2016), the settlement camps offered inadequate housing or no housing at all to the evictees, thus culminating in shelter loss.

The destruction of shelter during the evictions of the Ogiek people from the Mau forest complex has significant effects on their human security. According to the Human Needs Theory, shelter is a basic human need that is critical to survival and well-being. The loss of shelter not only exposes individuals to potentially dangerous elements but also creates insecurity, making it difficult for them to recover and rebuild their lives. The destruction of shelter, therefore, has a direct impact on the overall well-being of the Ogiek community, affecting their economic, health, and environmental security.

3.5.4 Increased Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

In this study, the respondents were requested to give information on increased sexual and gender-based violence as an effect of the evictions of the Ogiek from the Mau forest. The study aimed at describing the influence of the evictions on the human security of the Ogiek people. From this study, a definitive 69% of the respondents felt that the evictions led to increased sexual violence and gender-based violence amongst the Ogiek people. However, another 22% of the respondents did not attribute sexual violence and gender-based violence as influences of the evictions of the Ogiek people from the Mau Forest. A minority of the respondents, 9%, had no knowledge of gender-based violence and instead chose the "I do not know" option on the respondent questionnaire.

Furthermore, the power dynamics between the government and the Ogiek community may have contributed to the prevalence of SGBV during the eviction process. According to the public interest theory, actions taken by those in power should be for the greater good of society. However, in the case of the government's eviction of the Ogiek community from their ancestral lands, it can be argued that the government failed to act in the public interest. The power imbalance between the government and the Ogiek community allowed for the occurrence of sexual and gender-based violence during the eviction process, which was not in the public interest.

The absence of sexual and gender-based violence during the eviction process is a positive outcome, as such violence can have long-lasting effects on the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of individuals and communities. However, it is important to recognise that sexual and gender-based violence is a pervasive problem in many displacement situations, and steps should be taken to prevent and respond to it in all contexts. A study by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) found that the risk of sexual and gender-based violence is higher for women and girls in displacement situations due to factors such as lack of privacy, inadequate lighting, and lack of access to healthcare and legal services (IRC, 2018). The study also found that perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence are often members of the community or security forces responsible for providing protection.

In addition to the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence, addressing the underlying power imbalances between different groups is also important for promoting human security in displacement situations. A study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) found that addressing power imbalances and promoting social inclusion can improve the well-being of marginalised groups, reduce violence and conflict, and promote sustainable development (UNDP, 2019). Therefore, efforts should be made to empower marginalised groups such as the Ogiek community and ensure their meaningful participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives and livelihoods.

3.5.5 A Feeling of Being Marginalised

From the study data, 87% (334) of the respondents acknowledged that they had felt marginalised by the government, which was inclined to have them exit their homes. However, another 13% (50) of the respondents acknowledged that they did not feel marginalised by the government in a bid to have them move. This study's findings resonate with the findings of ACC (2019), which led to the declaration of marginalisation of the Ogiek by the Kenyan

government. In the reports, the court ruled out that the government had been issuing threats to the locals to have them move. Other than threats, the court outlined other forms of marginalisation, including not providing government service to the Ogiek people and poor representation.

A key informant in an interview lamented the mistreatment and marginalisation of Ogiek. He said:

The Ogiek community has been marginalised ever since due to their small numbers compared to other major communities. My claims are well indicated in national politics, where no Ogiek community members get any meaningful positions at the national level, so we have no one to present the grievances of the community. Other than the distribution of power, the community is also marginalised in the shearing of resources by the government. Children from the Ogiek community hardly go to school as they are busy doing farming and other sorts of activities. It is time for the government to establish programmes to support the Ogiek community, not just evict them (interview with CBO head on December 5, 2022).

The Ogiek people were also not involved in public shared amenities such as hospitals, and any injury leading to hospitalisation of the Ogiek would be considered a result of poaching leading to arrests. The court also outlined that the Ogiek who were found hunting in the forest were considered poachers and were subjected to the anti-poaching laws of the country.

3.6. Political Security

The most significant effect of the evictions on political security was the lack of proper representation in leadership positions, reported by 93% of the respondents (n = 357).

3.6.1 Lack of Proper Representation in Leadership Positions

The study sought information on the representation in leadership of the Ogiek people. In the study, the resident household head members of the Ogiek community were asked through questionnaires if the lack of proper representation in leadership positions was a resultant effect of the evictions from the Mau forest ranges. Here, 93% of the respondents said they were affected, while 7% of the respondents said no. The results of this study, in comparison with the reports by Amin (2022), give a nearly identical conclusion where the writer defines low representation of the Ogiek community in leadership positions because of the assimilation of the Ogiek into other communities. The results of this study are further confirmed in the FDG, where one of the respondents gave an account of the assimilation of the Ogiek people by the other communities.

Another group from Sorghet went and settled at Chepalungu. The aim of the colonialists was for the Ogiek to be assimilated by the Kipsigis so there could be no one to complain about going back since Sorghet was very fertile (FGD, village elders, November 23, 2022).

The assimilation of the Ogiek community was the initial step in the disintegration of the community as a whole and also marked the beginning of the misrepresentation of the Ogiek community. A study by Kweyu *et al.* (2020) reveals that the tussle and land rows between the Ogiek and the government have been primarily carried out between the government as a supreme power and the Ogiek as subjects. The land rows have not had any legal proceedings in the country and have often involved political declarations where, through conservation declarations, the government has made uncontrolled efforts into the reclamation of the Ogiek land. This fact is outlined by one of the OPDP leaders who was present in the African Court committee fighting for Ogiek rights. An elder said the following:

As the Ogiek people, we are so disadvantaged because we are not represented in government positions. In the Ogiek leadership, it is through our learned volunteer friends that we learned about the possibility of suing the government because of the atrocities we have experienced in the past. Prior to the African court proceedings of 2017, the Ogiek have been immensely treated as aliens in this country. Through subdivisions and occasional evictions, the Ogiek community is doomed in that even those with the best political ambitions cannot meet the quorum needed for the votes. This community has been disintegrated, and in 2019, there were around 52,596 members of the ethnic Ogiek community scattered all over the central rift regions. The number of pure speakers of the Akiiek language was as low as 500. The quorum is never enough to send a representative into any political position. As well, the government has also sidelined the Ogiek in administrative positions for fear of motivating an uprising. Until after the 2017 African Court declaration, the Ogiek were poorly represented, and the development of the OPDP is a step towards the representation of my people (FGD, village elders).

The findings of this study are supported by the UN (2015) reports that defined the lack of leadership representation amongst the Ogiek community due to their low turnout during the voting process. The report outlines that the disintegration of the community has led to an assimilated community that lacks the ability to raise a

representative for leadership positions. The report also records that members of the community at the settlement camps are so busy fighting for their daily livelihoods that they lack the motivation to fight the system within the system. The Ogiek have been known to fight the government by moving back into their homes after evictions and hoping the government tyres of the daily harassment.

3.7 Community Security

The effect reported on community security was the disruption of the school calendar, which was reported by all respondents (n = 384). Loss of culture and separation from family were reported as having effects on community security by 94% (n = 361) and 88% (n = 338) of the respondents, respectively.

3.7.1 Disruption of Schooling

This study sought information from the respondents regarding the disruption of schooling as an effect of Mau evictions on the human security of the Ogiek people. As noted by the residents in the FGDs, these disruptions were common to Ogieks children as well as neighbouring communities that shared the same learning institutions. This was supported by 100% of the respondents. The disruption of the school learning programme as a result of the evictions of the Ogiek people from the Mau Forest Complex is not only detrimental to the academic performance of the affected students but also to the future of the community. The Human Needs Theory postulates that education is a basic human need that is critical to the growth and development of individuals and communities (Woodburne, 2000).

The disruption of the school calendar and the subsequent impact on the academic performance of Ogiek students is a clear violation of this fundamental right. From a public interest theory perspective, the evictions of Ogiek from the Mau forest are meant to safeguard the biodiversity and thus restore the forest cover, which will serve the interests of many people, but the right to property under Article 14 can be restricted in the public interest where such restriction is necessary and proportionate. However, it rejected the government's public interest justification for evicting the Ogiek from the Mau Forest; the preservation of the natural ecosystem and the intentional disruption of the academic calendar by the government may be seen as an attempt to exert power and control over the Ogiek community. This view is reinforced by reports of the government's use of force and intimidation in evicting the Ogiek people from the Mau Forest complex.

3.7.2 Loss of Culture

In a bid to define the effects of the Mau evictions on the human security of the Ogiek people, this study, through the respondents, who were household heads of the Ogiek community, sought information on the loss of culture as an effect of the Mau evictions on the human security of the Ogiek people and that of their neighbours. In this study, there were 384 respondents. Out of the respondents (94%, a majority of the population agreed that the Ogiek suffered a loss of culture. Another 6% of the respondents, however, refuted the claims about the loss of culture. The loss of culture among the Ogiek community is a significant human security challenge that has resulted from the Mau evictions. The Ogiek community, which has a rich cultural heritage, has suffered cultural erosion due to the constant evictions from the forest.

The loss of culture among the Ogiek community is not unique to the Mau evictions. Several studies have documented the cultural erosion that indigenous communities experience when they are displaced from their ancestral lands (World Wildlife Fund [WWF], 2019). In addition to the loss of culture, the Mau evictions have resulted in the loss of traditional knowledge and practices among the Ogiek people. Traditional knowledge and practices are critical to the cultural heritage and well-being of indigenous communities. The loss of traditional knowledge and practices can also have a negative impact on the environment and natural resources (Kiage, 2019). Therefore, the loss of traditional knowledge and practices among the Ogiek people is a significant human security concern.

3.7.3 Separation from Family

Families are important because they provide individuals with a sense of belonging and support. Families can offer emotional, financial, and physical protection and can help individuals feel loved and valued. Families can also provide a sense of identity and pass down cultural traditions and values from one generation to the next. In addition, families can be a source of encouragement and can help individuals develop important life skills and coping mechanisms. In a bid to define the effects of the Mau evictions on the human security of the Ogiek people, this study sought information on the separation from family as an effect of the Mau evictions on the Ogiek community and that of their neighbours. In this study, 88% of the respondents agreed with the research statement, while 12% had conflicting ideas.

Separation from family is a significant issue that affects the human security of individuals and communities, particularly in situations of eviction. The human needs theory suggests that one of the fundamental needs of humans is the need for social connections and belongingness. Separation from family members can lead to social isolation, which can have adverse effects on the mental health and well-being of an individual. In addition, separation from family members can also result in economic insecurity, as individuals may lose their support systems and means of livelihood.

The findings of this study reflect the findings of Adhiambo (2016), who was investigating the effects of the evictions on the Ogiek community. In her study, the writer defines that 90% of her respondent population could not trace back to the existence of their extended families who they were separated from. The writers describe the lonely lives of the individuals in the community who lost their parents and other family members in the evictions. Further during an FGD, village elders narrated a sombre state in the community as families lost loved ones through physical separation or death. He said:

A neighbour lost a husband in the evictions. I am one of the members of the community who are fighting for the rights of women who are suffering from all these happenings. A widow narrated to him that it was the night of the evictions in 2002, when family was sound asleep and the night was still young. She heard a loud bang just next to the house, followed by noise and war screams. She looked at her partner, who was sound asleep, but realised he was not moving. She tried waking him up, but he was silent. Then I saw blood that was flowing towards the bedding of the children. All four children were quite awake and were confused by the little one crying out. She knew she had lost her man, and it was a moment to protect the children. Before she could make a step, the grass-thatched roof of the house was already on fire. She was forced to flee with the children into safety (FGD, village elders).

Another respondent who lost their family after the evictions gave the following testimony:

The last time I saw my brother and his family, we had decided to take separate routes because the government was on our necks and we had no lace or enough resources to accommodate the whole family caravan, which included more than 20 souls. We separated on a basic and extended family basis, where each of us led 10 people with the hope of finding someone who would agree to accommodate us. I was lucky to have found a Maasai elder who was concerned about the welfare of my community members. He welcomed me and my family into his home, and until today, we have lived as a family. For my brother and the other portion of the family, we haven't seen one another for close to two decades now, and every effort I make at tracing them has been very unsuccessful. There's a part of my heart that went away with them, and that hole is still vacant. I always seek the ancestors' protection for my brother and the family that I lost every time I kneel down to pray (FGD, village elders, November 24, 2022).

As outlined by Adhiambo (2016) the writers describe that the Ogiek families were forced to move into different locations cutting family ties and connections. The study also found that the trauma and stress caused by the evictions had a negative impact on the mental health and well-being of Ogiek individuals, making it more difficult for them to maintain relationships with family and friends. Further, the writers outline that the daily life struggles of the evictees including pursuit for food, shelter and sanitation has had a negative impact on the community's basic family setup where everyone is competing for the limited resources.

3.7.4 Safety Concerns in the Community

From the study data, all the respondents reported feeling unsafe in the community. Through a questionnaire response, 100% (384) respondent household heads recorded feeling insecure in the community. The results of this study are in agreement with the discussions in the report, which outline that the Ogiek community has faced a number of challenges that have made them feel unsafe in their own community. These include government evictions, ongoing conflict in the region, and discrimination and marginalisation from wider society. These issues have had a significant impact on the Ogiek's sense of security and well-being.

Further, the report notes that, in addition to insecurity from evictions, the Ogiek have faced discrimination and marginalisation from the wider Kenyan society. They have historically been discriminated against due to their indigenous status and have often been left out of decision-making processes that affect their lives. This has contributed to their feeling of being outsiders in mainstream society and not being fully accepted or protected by the government. These arguments are further outlined during the FGDs in this study. One of the key informants had the following observations:

Mishandling the process of the Ogiek evictions will cause the Ogiek to become militant in other communities and in the government itself. The government should find a way to accommodate the Ogiek by settling them on arable lands like Mau-Narok and Molo, where the government owns large pieces of land. The

government should never lose sight of the environment or the people at large. The forest should be protected as well as the residents (Interviews, NGO Head, December 19, 2022).

According to Adhiambo (2016), the importance of feeling safe as a community cannot be overstated, and this is especially true for the Ogiek people in Kenya. The Ogiek have faced a number of challenges that have made them feel unsafe in their own community, and addressing these issues is crucial for the well-being and prosperity of the Ogiek people. Ensuring that the Ogiek feel safe is essential for their fundamental human rights, social cohesion, economic development, cultural preservation, political participation, and overall well-being.

IV. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Regarding the effects of Mau forest evictions on human security, the study found that the evictions had direct effects on seven aspects of human security among the Ogiek. The components include economic, health, nutritional, environmental, individual, community, and political security. The eviction resulted in the loss of their traditional means of subsistence, such as foraging, gathering, and beekeeping. The loss of livelihoods resulted in a substantial decrease in income, which exacerbated destitution and unemployment.

Regarding health security, the study found that the Ogiek were exposed to extreme weather conditions and a lack of sanitation facilities, which resulted in pneumonia, malaria, and other maladies.

Under the category of food security, the study discovered that the devastation of farms and crops led to food insecurity, which in turn led to malnutrition and hunger.

In terms of environmental security, the study found that the forced relocation of the Ogiek to areas outside the forest led to conflicts between humans and fauna. They confronted the possibility of animal attacks and property destruction. In addition, the Ogiek were compelled to slumber outside in the cold and interact with animals.

In terms of personal safety, the study found that the eviction resulted in the devastation of homes and shelter, leaving the victims unprotected against the negative effects. This exposure resulted in injuries and deaths, especially among infants and the elderly. The eviction also compromised personal safety by increasing the likelihood of sexual and gender-based violence, especially against women and girls.

The effect of political security on evictions was a lack of appropriate representation in leadership positions and a lack of legal protection. This made it challenging for the Ogiek to contest the evictions in court.

As a consequence of the disruption of community structures, evictions led to the loss of culture, separation from family and social networks, and the loss of traditional knowledge and practices.

4.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that in order to address the negative influence of evictions on the human security of the evictees, the government should prioritise the development of proper compensation and resettlement plans and further ensure that any loss of property, resources, and livelihoods that are experienced as a result of evictions is compensated.

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